THE UNIVERSITY
OF ILLINOIS
LIBRARY

268.05
WE
v. 11-12

PANTAGRAPH
BLOOMINGTON
ILLINOIS.
To duplicate
this style, bind-
ing, order
No. 7J-43

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2017 with funding from
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

https://archive.org/details/westminsterteach1112pres

THE LIBRARY OF THE
OCT 19 1932
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

THE WESTMINSTER TEACHER.

VOL. XI. JANUARY, 1883. NO. 1.

—*This number of the* WESTMINSTER TEACHER *is sent to many pastors and superintendents who heretofore have not been subscribers. It is sent soliciting the privilege of monthly visits hereafter. It seems to us that you really cannot afford to do without the* TEACHER, *if you are in any way engaged in Sabbath-school work. If it should so seem to you we shall be pleased to come again. On the next page of this number the article entitled "Forward Steps" will have interest for those engaged in labor in our Sabbath-schools.*

—If 1883 is to be made a beautiful year the time to begin is the morning of the first day, then making each one of the three hundred and sixty-five beautiful.

—The Rev. J. A. Worden tells us this month *how to teach* the lessons. He certainly ought to know, and we may expect much help from his suggestions.

—There may be a teacher somewhere that does not receive the WESTMINSTER TEACHER. It might be a pleasant act for you, the present reader of this paragraph, to supply that want.

—Don't spend an hour of January in morbid and tearful lamenting about how poorly you lived last year; be sure you make a better record this year. Don't spend an hour dreaming about the great things you are going to do this year; begin instantly to do them.

THE TEACHERS' MEETING.—If your teachers' meeting is getting into a rut or growing dry, see if you cannot get it out of the rut. One plan worth trying, just for an evening or two, is to reverse the ordinary way of conducting it. If you have been in the habit of asking your teachers questions, turn the tables and let them ask you the questions. Start with the first verse of the lesson, thus narrowing the surface and concentrating thought, and request your teachers to put to you any questions on that they choose. Then go to the next verse. Later in the study hour let them ask you how you would teach the lesson to a class of young boys, of older boys, of little girls, of young ladies—what points or point you would seek to impress upon a class or individual. There may be some holding back by the teachers at first, but wait for them; or, better, in advance request some of the bolder spirits to be ready to lead off and others will follow. It is worth an experiment if your meeting has grown dull. A writer in the *Baptist Teacher* reports having tried this plan with success in a large adult Bible-class in Philadelphia.

A REMEDY FOR DRONES.—The king-bird has had a bad name as an enemy of the working honey-bee. Now we are told that this is a mistake; that the king-bird is a discriminating creature, who passes by the industrious workers of the hive, but slays the drones. Would it not be a good thing to have a Sunday-school king-bird to move noiselessly among the teachers, picking off the drones and leaving the field to the true workers? But perhaps it is not best to introduce this executioner too hastily. Human drones may be transformed into workers. We must labor with them, must stimulate them, feed them, teach them, coax them, drive them, and note the results of our treatment. It may be that they will be transformed into valuable workers. But the incorrigible drone, the teacher who occupies space with no profit to his pupils, who cannot, or will not, bring honey to the hive, must be gotten rid of. In the last resort the superintendent must be king-bird to these drones.

Making Memories.

WE are all making in our to-days the memories of our to-morrows. Whether they will be pleasant or painful to contemplate depends on whether we are living well or ill. Memory writes everything down where we shall be compelled to see it perpetually. There have been authors who, in their last days, would have given worlds to get back the things they had written. There have been men and women who would have given a right hand to blot out the memory of certain passages in their lives, certain acts done, certain words sent out to scatter blight or sorrow. There have been artists whose eyes looked in old age upon the pictures they had painted, finding rare pleasure in the thought of the beautiful things they had wrought; and there are hearts that are like picture galleries filled with the memories of lives of sweetness, purity and blessing. We are thus, each of us, pre-

paring for ourselves the house our souls must live in in the years to come.

While we are sowing the seeds of memories in the hearts of others, by our words and acts, we are also making memories for our own souls to feed upon in the after days. Carsten Niebuhr, the distinguished traveler, was blind in his old age; but he had traversed many lands in his earlier years and had looked upon many lovely scenes, and as he sat in the darkness his face would often brighten into a rich glow, as if some inner light were shining through. He was looking again upon some gorgeous scene, pictured on the walls of memory in bygone days. So we may make in our days of youth such memories as shall brighten all the days of old age when they come.

The poet Longfellow, in one of his tender poems, has these lines:

"Childhood is the bough, where slumbered
Birds and blossoms, many-numbered;
Age, that bough with snows encumbered.

"Gather, then, each flower that grows
When the young heart overflows,
To embalm that tent of snows."

The thought is very beautiful—that youth must gather the sweet things of life, the flowers, the fragrant odors, while they lie everywhere, to have old age filled with sweetness and gladness. We do not realize how much the happiness of our after-years depends upon the things we do this year.

It is our own life that gives color to our skies and tone to the music that we hear. Holding a polished shell to our ears and hearing from within it a sound like the distant roar of its former ocean home, we fancy that it is the echoed dash of the waves on the rocks that the shell gives forth; but when we learn the facts the fancy of the ocean's treasured music vanishes, and we discover that it is only the quivering of our own fingers, the throbbing of our own pulses against the hollow, resonant shell that causes the sound. It is not the ocean's roar at all, but the beating of our own heart's pulses that we hear. So the voices that we hear in this world, whether musical or discordant, are really from within our own hearts, the echoes of our own yesterdays.

What is true of our individual lives is true also of our homes. We are making their memories day by day and year by year. What they shall be in the end will depend on the home-life we are living now. We can make our home a fairy palace, filling it with delights, covering the walls with beautiful pictures, planting lovely flowers to fill the halls and chambers with delicious fragrance, and hanging cages of singing birds everywhere to pour out sweet notes of song; or we can cover the walls with hideous images and ghastly spectres to look down upon us, and plant only briers and thorns about the doors to flaunt themselves in our faces while we sit in the gloom of nightfall. We may make the memories of our home so tender, so precious, so sacred, that each life that goes out of our doors shall carry a holy benediction upon it wherever it moves. Or we can make its memories a blight, a burden, a curse, which shall never be lifted or removed.

Surely the subject is important enough for at least one earnest thought at the beginning of the year. If we are wise we will always test our actions, as we go through life by inquiring how they will appear when we get past and beyond them and look back at them. Those things that will make a sweet memory we may safely do, but things that will cause regrets and pangs when we remember them far down the years or nearer, we had better leave undone.

If we are to live for ever amid the memories we are making hour by hour, is it not worth our while to give to each hour some memory to carry that will be sweet for ever? Is it not better to plant roses than thorns for the path of our feet in the after days? We must remember, too, that we pass this way but once. Days never come to us a second time, and they are swiftly gone, bearing whatever memory we give them to treasure for us. If we would write any memory of blessing upon them we must do it as they glide on.

Forward Steps.

THE New Year invites us to forward steps in everything that is good, and certainly in everything pertaining to our Sabbath-school work. It is the aim of the Presbyterian Board of Publication to heed this invitation, and to meet it by improvements at every point.

The rapid increase in the subscription list of our WESTMINSTER TEACHER attests, what we frequently hear with gratification, the fact that it is highly and increasingly esteemed by our superintendents and teachers, as well as by parents. The editors can only say that they will aim to make it still more helpful in the year on which we now enter. May God bless all who use it!

The Westminster Question Book has a circulation which is a constant surprise to us, in view of the increasing circulation of our other helps. It is evident that it meets a real want. This year's volume is, we think, the best yet issued by the Board. *Fifty thousand* copies of it have been printed, but it will not be surprising if the edition is sold before all have sent in their orders.

268.05
WE
v 11-12

The Westminster Quarterly for Scholars will receive earnest attention. Its circulation has increased every Quarter since it was first published.

To meet the call for still cheaper helps the price of the *Westminster Lesson Leaf* has been reduced from $7.50 to $6.00 per hundred for a year. That is five thousand two hundred leaves for six dollars—only six cents a year for each scholar! *The Westminster Primary Lesson Leaf*, by Mrs. Alden, has been put at the same reduced price, as has also our *German Leaf*. The subscription lists of all of these publications were growing at the old price. What they will do at these low rates we do not know!

The Sunbeam is so absolutely satisfactory to its growing army of little readers that it seems best to keep it on its way with a steady attempt at improvement.

In the *Sabbath-school Visitor* a decided change has been made. It is now to be issued twice in each month, whilst, to meet the demand for a very low-priced illustrated paper for the young, *The Morning Star* will be published twice a month at the price of a half cent a paper. Certainly this will meet the exigencies of our feeblest congregations. At the same time, the price of our illustrated paper for the older young people, *Forward*, has been very greatly reduced.

We trust that our wide-spread constituency will see in these statements evidences that the Board of Publication is alive to the needs of the churches and schools, and that it is determined to do all in its power to aid them in their work.

It May Be Explained.

HOW comes it that one class in the Sunday-school will "run out" whilst another, not unlike it in composition, will be steadily and increasingly full? A little study of the ways of the teachers will show that this is a mystery quite capable of explanation. Care for your class, and your class will care for you; as you treat it, so will it treat you: that is the explanation.

Here is Mr. Anthon's class dwindling away from seven boys to three. Certainly; and no wonder. Mr. Anthon is late about three times in four, and he is not late the fourth time because he is not present at all. The boys conclude that Mr. Anthon does not care for them, and they cease to care for him. If he will not be at the trouble to be punctual, neither will they. If regularity is not important in a man, it certainly is not in a boy. The class "runs out." In the next form is Mr. Bangs. The superintendent has to be early not to find Mr. Bangs in his chair. Twenty minutes before the school opens is his latest moment for being in his place. As Tom and Jim and Sam enter, Mr. Bangs is *sure* to be there to shake hands with and welcome them. Is it any wonder that his boys learn regularity and that his form is full when the opening bell strikes?

Hard by is Mr. Cutter, looking uncomfortably at those vacant places before him. Where can those boys be? "I'd like to know what's the use of a teacher that can't teach you anything. I know as much about the lessons as he does. He has to bring his WESTMINSTER TEACHER and read it to us out of the page. Why, Bill Smith don't know anything—but he could do that," says a sharp youngster. And do you wonder? Will young people go week after week to be taught by one who has not prepared himself for teaching? Not unless compelled to go. Mr. Cutter thinks it not worth his while to attend the teachers' meeting; and, then, is not the lesson better explained in the TEACHER than he could explain it? In fact he does not care enough for his class to work for it, and his class cares just that much for him. Two of his boys manage, by a prolonged absence, to get out of his tutelage and then enter the class of his neighbor Dunton, where they are as regular as are Mr. Dunton's old scholars. They are taught; they get something, and they come because they get something. Their teacher cares enough for them to study his lessons, to devise means to make it interesting, and to secure God's help by prayer.

And what is the matter with Brother Egbert's class? "Oh," cries sallow-faced George Summers, "I wasn't at Sunday-school for five weeks, and the teacher never came to ask what was the matter. I might have died for all that he cared," and he begs the superintendent to put him in Mr. Fowler's class, "'cause he cares for a feller, anyhow." The truth is, that the superintendent has any amount of trouble in keeping the overgrown class of James Fowler within limits. He follows up his boys so closely that he never loses one and his full ranks attract others. Boys are like men—they prefer the *full* place.

Poor Mr. Groves is as unsuccessful as his friend Egbert. For some reason he cannot hold his scholars; they slip through it as water through a sieve, until his superintendent loses all heart, and declares that not another boy shall be lost to the school by being put in that class. This is a case of downright, unquestionable lack of Christian love for the young. So utterly indifferent to all that is boyish, warm, lovely or affectionate is Mr. Groves (in manner, at least), that his scholars are repelled as are

813706

iron filings from the wrong end of a magnet. So far as appears, literally and absolutely, he does not care for them. Of course they do not care for him. They look with envious eyes at the form next to them, where Mr. Hope's youngsters cluster about him as the ants do about a ripe pear. Mr. Hope is not brilliant; in fact, has not half the brains or education of Groves, but he has a heart, and he makes it felt in a way that boys understand.

Is it unreasonable to demand each of these qualities of the successful teacher in those who have the charge of the classes in our schools? Is it not possible for any one of us to be punctual and regular, to study the lesson, to look after our scholars when absent, to pray for them and to show them that we really love them?

Care for your class and your class will care for you.

The Pause in the Prayer-Meeting.

MANY of our prayer-meetings are painfully afflicted with the pause — the pause that is unlooked for, undesired, and hence that is chilling to the spirits of those assembled. The leader feels it and each individual feels it, with a wretched consciousness that every other person in the room is uncomfortably wondering why some one does not do something, no matter what. Each second aggravates the discomfort and uneasiness grows with accelerated speed. To break the silence becomes more and more difficult as the silence lengthens. This "pause" is death to the spirit of the meeting and destructive to its life. What shall we do to deliver our prayer-meetings from it?

There are two lines of treatment—one is to accept the pause; another is to abolish it. We may accept these periods of silence as recognized parts of our devotional service. The Quakers do, and so may we. If no one is moved of the Divine Spirit to pray or praise or exhort aloud, there is no voice heard, desired or expected in their meetings. Each individual is understood to be engaged in silent meditation and communion with God. Hence there is nothing painful in the silence. There being no necessity for a vocal utterance of religious thought, its absence does not produce the embarrassed and mortified discomfort of which we are so conscious. If the pastor or leader will recognize the usefulness of a brief season of silent meditation and prayer, and will invite the people to it, in the absence of any desire on the part of the brethren to speak or pray aloud, the embarrassment of the pause will cease. It will become profitable.

But if the "pause" is not accepted and used, it must be abolished. This may be done, but it will require forethought and action on the part of the leader of the meeting, if the voluntary system is maintained. Let him prepare occupation for the time. He can tell Mr. A. of the topic to be presented and ask him to be ready either to speak briefly or to pray sincerely when no one else is ready; and so he can ask Mr. B. and Mr. C. to stand prepared for emergencies. If Miss D. leads the singing he can request her, or one of the male singers, to be ready, with or without an intimation from him, to start a verse of some well-known and spirit-stirring hymn. Let her have the pages in her hymn book marked, for many good singers need this support to give them assurance in thus leading others in the service of song.

Finally, and let it be understood by the leader especially, that it is a senseless stupidity to hold people together for sixty minutes, merely because they are not to be kept longer than sixty minutes and that is the ordinary length of the meeting. If all that is to be said and sung and prayed, all the worship that is ready to be offered, has been concluded in fifty minutes; call for the doxology at once. Praise God for fifty minutes, or for forty-five minutes, or forty minutes of devotion, and close the meeting. It is as true of a prayer-meeting as of a single talk or prayer that it should *stop when it is done.*

The Primary Class—Its Importance.

BY THE REV. JAMES A. WORDEN.

OFTEN the primary teacher feels that few, if any, appreciate her work. Is not this proof that we have not always *shown* our regard for it? It might be well for every pastor and superintendent to put himself through the old-fashioned process of self-examination on this point. Do I practically recognize the importance of the primary class? Do I give it the time, thought, patient work and plans which it deserves? Do I help, encourage, strengthen and cheer the primary teacher as I should?

At least one-fourth of all our Sabbath scholars are in primary classes—one hundred and fifty thousand of them in our Presbyterian Church. They average thirty scholars to every teacher. Who are these scholars? Our *youngest.* A friend of mine beautifully says of them: "They are the *dearest* of all; they are the *weakest* of all; they are the *strongest* of all; they are the *purest* of all; they are the most *accessible* of all; they are the most *susceptible* of all; they are the most *promising* of all." They are the exact likeness of those whom Jesus took

up into his arms, put his hands upon and blessed, saying, "Of such is the kingdom of God."

What would Christ's Church be without these little ones? You will not blame me for repeating our Longfellow's lines—

Ah! what would the world be to us,
If the children were no more;
We should dread the desert behind us
Worse than the dark before.

Come to me, O ye children,
And whisper in my ear
What the birds and winds are singing
In your sunny atmosphere.

For what are all our contrivings,
And the wisdom of our books,
When compared with your caresses
And the gladness of your looks.

Ye are better than all the ballads
That were ever sung or said;
For ye are living poems,
And all the rest are dead.

These are the precious materials in the primary teachers' hands. They have never been to the church-school before. They are getting their first impressions of Sabbath-school work, ideas that they never lose. The hearts of many of these boys and girls have been moulded by a mother's magic and holy hand. But next to that mother or father, that primary teacher is their guide to God. To many of the others she is their first and only teacher, preacher, Christian example and friend. Is there a position on earth more delicate, difficult, important?

The thought of it fills every such teacher with mingled awe and delight—awe at the responsibility, delight at the opportunity and privilege. To such she is a substitute for Christian father and mother. Often she is the only link between those young souls and Christ and heaven. To them she is a representative, an ambassador of Christ. To them she dispenses the high and holy word of God. All future Bible study by these scholars will be affected by their present teaching. Their very prayers will be influenced by the prayers of the primary teacher. Who doubts that each one of these little ones is capable of knowing, loving, trusting and obeying Jesus? Who doubts that we should labor, pray and expect every one of them to be converted to Christ in the primary class and then be simply trained in the intermediate and senior class? [While writing the last two sentences I have been interrupted. An excellent teacher has just come into my study and told me that she was led to Christ in Mrs. B's. primary class when only four or five years old, and how she has carried in her heart, ever since, Mrs. B's. loving instructions.] O teacher of these little ones, your looks, your manners, your tones, your gestures, your words, your character, your atmosphere, your *self* are leaving their mark on these sensitive souls to abide whilst life and thought and being last, or immortality endures.

If your church organ were so strangely made that whoever first played on it left himself forever in it—if no matter who first touched those pedals, or keys, or stops, his tone, his style, his good or bad character would forever sound like a spirit's voice, weirdly mingling in all its after music, might not that first player well tremble as he sat down to the key-board? How cautious would you all be that that first organist should be not merely a musical artist, but pure and Christlike. Every child in the primary class is such an organ. Touch that little heart, stir that young soul, mark that child-mind, you will see the mark of your fingers on him in eternity. The song that he sings in the paradise of God will ring with the tones of your soul, O primary teacher.

"Oh, let not then, unskillful hands attempt
To play the harp whose tones—whose living tones,
Are left forever in the strings."

If thou art cast down by such truths, hope thou in Christ, made of God to thee strength and wisdom.

Restful Work.

BY KATE W. HAMILTON.

WITH the new year opening before us like a great white page with its space for fresh resolutions, its suggestions of grand possibilities, its silent monition to forget the things that are behind, and press forward, new purposes come naturally. We rightly wish the work of the coming year to be an improvement upon that which is passed, and we are tempted to ambitious planning. But let us be careful not to make our plans so inflexible that they will not readily adjust themselves to God's planning, which we shall doubtless find, as the days go on, running counter to ours at many points.

Looking back over the year just ended we may possibly find that though we have had both interest and zeal in our work, we have had very little comfort in it. We have been anxious and disappointed. Human probabilities are the most improbable of all things, and events have not been what we expected. Many of our most earnest projects have been frustrated. How often it happened that, when we had studied most carefully to fit some strong point or appli-

cation in a lesson to the need of a particular pupil, the Sunday found that one pupil absent. Or when we had reserved what we believed to be the most important truth of the lesson until the last, that it might be thoughtfully carried home instead of crowded out by anything else, it was omitted altogether because one of those gentlemen "whom you will all be pleased to hear" (superintendent's vocabulary), arrived upon the scene, and occupied the last ten minutes of the session with his plea for a mission-school. Then there was the Sunday when we had the very choicest study of the quarter, one that we thought would surely interest and help the class; and that was the day when a blinding headache held us a prisoner at home through all the weary hours!

How can we plan against these things? Suppose we *plan for them* instead, and admit that even in matters like these—too small for sympathy, not great enough to be called trials—God's ways may be higher than our ways, and his thoughts higher than our thoughts. The absent scholar could not run away from God. The mission-school man may have been on the king's errand even though, the superintendent to the contrary notwithstanding, we were *not* pleased to hear him. In any case we were not responsible for his coming. And who shall say what better lesson than any we had planned the Master may have had—nay, *did* have, since the event was of his ordering—for both teacher and class, on that Sabbath, when we could not be in our accustomed place? Is it hard for us to believe? We are very like the children at whom we often smile when we see them proudly busy over some task, getting it wretchedly crooked, yet resenting the mother-love and wisdom that would set it straight—reaching after it with ignorant, impatient hands, and saying petulantly: "I know how; I want to do it my own self!"

We do indeed pray to be guided, but so often we secretly desire to "follow the leadings of Providence by going ahead and showing the way," that we are constantly meeting disappointment. "Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him," says the Psalmist. If we should substitute the word *fret* for "rest," and *impatiently* for "patiently," it would certainly make a peculiar reading, and one that we might deem irreverent. Yet is not that the way in which, practically, we often render it?

Let us not, then, make our new year plans so pressing and energetic that they shall leave us no time to wait for, no quiet to hear "the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees." Doubtless our best resolve of all is that we will be among those "who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." And now, as of old, those who journey under Divine guidance must be faithful and strong to press forward tirelessly, where the cloudy pillar of the Presence leads the way, but be also ready, patiently and trustingly, to stop where is stops.

Timeliness in Duty.

THE element of time is a vital matter in many duties. Done at the right moment there is a blessing in them; delayed, they were as well not done at all. If we sleep through the hour for duty, we may as well sleep on after the hour. Waking then will not avail to accomplish that which we were set to do.

There are many applications of this principle. Whatever we do for our friends we must do when they need our help. If one is sick, the time to show our affection and our sympathy is while the sickness continues, and not after the friend is well again. If we allow him to pass through his illness without showing him any attention, there is no use, when he is about again, for us to wake up and begin to lavish kindness upon him. He does not need it now, and it will do him no good.

If one of our friends is passing through some sore struggle with temptation, and is in danger of being overcome, then is the time to come up close alongside of him, and put the strength of our love under his weakness to support him. If we fail him then, we may as well let him go on alone altogether after that. Of what use is sympathy when the struggle is over? Of what use is help when the battle has been fought through, and won without us? Or, suppose the friend was *not* victorious; suppose he failed in the battle; failed because no one came to him to help him, because *we* came not with the sustaining strength of our sympathy. Suppose that, left to struggle unaided with enemies or adversities, he was defeated, and sank down crushed and hopeless. Is there any use in our hurrying up to him now to proffer our assistance? Is not the time past when help could avail him? Can our sympathy now enable him to retrieve what he has lost? Can our faithfulness to-day atone for our unfaithulness yesterday?

Most of us are the guardians of other souls. The time to fulfill our duty of guardianship is when the dangers are imminent. There is no use for the look-out on the ship to become vigilant only after the vessel is among the rocks. There is no use for the sentinel in the time of war to arouse and begin to watch when the enemy has stolen in and captured the field.

Are you your brother's keeper? Are you set

to watch against danger to his soul? Are you a parent, set to guard your own children against the perils of sin that lurk in ambush all about them? Are you a teacher, with a class entrusted to your care, to shield and keep? Are you a sister, with brothers dear to you, whom you are to protect from temptation? Are you a brother, and have you sisters tender and exposed to danger, whose defender you should be? Are you a friend, and is there one beset by perils, over whom God has set you as guide or protector?

Are you watching, or are you sleeping? Remember that the time to watch is before the danger has done its deadly work. When, through your negligence, it has come and destroyed the precious life, you may as well sleep on. Watching then ever so faithfully will not undo the evil which is done.

In the preparation for duty or for struggle the same principle applies. There is a time for it, and if it is not done then it cannot be done at all. It is a rule of providential leading that opportunity is always given to every one to prepare for whatever part he is to take in life, and for whatever experience he is to meet. If one only embraces and uses his opportunities as they come to him, one by one, he will never be surprised by any sudden emergency in life, whether of duty or of trial, for which he will not be ready. For example, before life's stern, fierce conflicts which put manhood's strongest fibre to the test, we have childhood and youth as seasons for preparation. He that rightly improves these seasons is fully ready for whatever life may bring.

It is just because these opportunities for preparation come to us so quietly and without announcement that so many fail to improve them. The school-boy does not see what good it will do him to know the simple things that are set as his daily tasks, and neglects to learn them. Twenty, forty years afterward, he fails in the position to which he is called, because he slurred his lessons in the quiet school-days. The young apprentice takes no pains to perfect himself in the trade he has chosen, and is only a third or fourth class workman all his life. The young professional man dislikes the dry drudgery that the early years bring to him, and neglects it, waiting till some great opportunity comes to lift him into prominence. The opportunity comes at length, but he fails in it, because he has not improved the long series of preparatory steps that came before.

On the other hand, a school-boy does every task faithfully. He never slights a lesson. He goes thoroughly over every day's studies. He does not see either of what use these things will be to him when he is a man, in active life, nor does he ask; his only care is to be faithful in every duty. Years later he rises to high places which he never could have filled had he slurred his boyhood's tasks. A physician is suddenly called to take charge of a critical case, requiring the best skill in the world. He is successful, and wins fame for himself, because in the long, quiet years of obscure practice he has been diligent. If he had not been faithful in those years of routine work, he must have failed when the great opportunity came. He could not have made preparation at the moment. The case could only be met by the instant use of knowledge and skill already acquired.

It is a secret worth knowing and remembering, that the truest, and indeed the only, preparation for life's duties or trials is made by simple fidelity in whatever each day brings. A day squandered anywhere may prove the dropped stitch from which the whole web will begin to ravel. One lesson neglected may prove to have contained the very knowledge for the want of which, far along in the course, the student may fail. One opportunity let slip may be the first step in a ladder leading to eminence or power, but no higher rounds of which can be gained because the first was not taken. We never know what is important in life. The most insignificant duty that offers may be the first lesson in preparation for a great mission. Indeed, every hour of life holds the keys of the next, and possibly of many hours more.

So the times of preparation come silently and unawares, and many neglect them, not knowing what depends upon them; but neglected, and allowed to slip away, they can never be regained. The man who finds himself in the presence of a great duty or opportunity which he cannot take up or accept, because he is not prepared for it, cannot then go back to make the needful preparation. The soldier cannot learn the art of war in the face of the battle. The Christian cannot in an unexpected emergency of temptation gather all needed spiritual power in a moment. Not to be ready in advance for great duties or great needs, is to fail.

The lesson is important and has infinite applications. You cannot go back to-day to do the work you neglected to do yesterday. You cannot make preparation for life when the burden of life is on you. Opportunities never return. They must be taken on the wing, or they cannot be taken at all. There is a time for every duty. Done then, its issues and results may be infinite and eternal. Deferred or neglected, it may never be worth while to take it up again.—*Editorial in S. S. Times.*

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FIRST QUARTER.

1. Jan. 7.—**The Ascending Lord.** Acts 1 : 1–14.
2. Jan. 14.—**The Descending Spirit.** Acts 2 : 1–16.
3. Jan. 21.—**The Believing People.** Acts 2 : 37–47.
4. Jan. 28.—**The Healing Power.** Acts 3 : 1–11.
5. Feb. 4.—The Prince of Life. Acts 3 : 12–21
6. Feb. 11.—None Other Name. Acts 4 : 1–14.
7. Feb. 18.—Christian Courage. Acts 4 : 18–31.
8. Feb. 25.—Ananias and Sapphira. Acts 5 : 1–11.
9. March 4.—Persecution Renewed. Acts 5 : 17–32.
10. March 11.—The Seven Chosen. Acts 6 : 1–15.
11. March 18.—The First Christian Martyr. Acts 7 : 54–60 and 8 : 1–4.
12. March 25.—Review.

Lesson I. **THE ASCENDING LORD.** *Jan. 7th, 1883.*

Acts 1 : 1–14. Memorize vs. 6–11.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up."—Acts 1 : 9.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 1 : 1–14 ..... *The Ascending Lord.*
T. John 20 : 19–31 ..... *"Alive After His Passion."*
W. Luke 24 : 36–48 ..... *Infallible Proofs.*
Th. John 14 : 15–28 ..... *The Promise of the Spirit.*
F. Eph. 4 : 1–16 ..... *Ascension Gifts.*
S. 1 Thess. 4 : 8–18 ..... *The Second Advent.*
S. Matt. 25 : 31–46 ..... *The Final Judgment.*

TOPIC.

Christ's Departure from Earth.

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Last Meeting. 2. The Parting Promise. 3. The Departing Lord. 4. The Waiting Disciples.

Time.—May 18, A. D. 30, forty days after the resurrection. **Places.**—Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives.

Catechism.—Q. 1. *What is the chief end of man?* A. Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 155: "Christ the Lord is risen to-day." Other hymns, 153, 157, 158, 160.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—The book of the Acts was written by Luke, the author also of the third Gospel. Very little is known of him personally. From Col. 4: 14 we learn that he was a "beloved physician;" from 2 Tim. 4: 11, and Philemon 24, that he was a companion of Paul and one of his fellow-laborers. In Col. 4: 10–14 Paul seems to distinguish him from the Jewish Christians, making it probable that he was a Gentile. The book of the Acts is a continuation of the gospel history from the time of the ascension of our Lord, A. D. 30, to the time referred to in chap. 28 : 30—a period of at least thirty years.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

1 The former treatise have I made, O Theoph'i-lus, of all that Je'sus began both to do and teach, [Luke 1 : 3.]

2 Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen: [Luke 24 : 51; Matt. 28 : 19.]

3 To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: [John 20 : 19–26; 21 : 1–14.]

4 And, being assembled together with *them*, commanded them that they should not depart from Je-ru'sa-lem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, *saith he*, ye have heard of me. [Luke 24 : 43–49.]

5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. [Matt. 3 : 11.]

6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Is'ra-el? [Isa. 1 : 26; Dan. 7 : 27; Amos 9 : 11.]

7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. [Matt. 24 : 36; 1 Thess. 5 : 1.]

8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Je-ru'sa-lem, and in all Ju-dæ'a, and in Sa-ma'ri-a, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. [Acts 2 : 1–4.]

9 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a

cloud received him out of their sight. [Luke 24: 51; John 6: 62.]

10 And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; [Matt. 28: 3; John 20: 12; Acts 10: 30.]

11 Which also said, Ye men of Gal'i-lee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Je'sus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. [Matt. 24: 30; 1 Thess. 4: 16.]

12 Then returned they unto Je-ru'sa-lem from the mount called Ol'i-vet, which is from Je-ru'sa-lem a sabbath day's journey. [Luke 24: 52.]

13 And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Pe'ter, and James, and John, and An'drew, Phil'ip, and Thom'as, Bar-thol'o-mew, and Mat'thew, James *the son* of Al-phæ'us, and Si'mon Ze-lo'tes, and Ju'das *the brother* of James. [Matt. 10: 2, 3, 4; Luke 6: 15; Jude 1.]

14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Ma'ry the mother of Je'sus, and with his brethren. [Luke 23: 49, 50; Matt. 13: 55.]

REVISED TEXT.

1 The former treatise I made, O Theophilus, concerning all that Jesus began both to do
2 and to teach, until the day in which he was received up, after that he had given commandment through the Holy Ghost unto the
3 apostles whom he had chosen: to whom he also shewed himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing unto them by the space of forty days, and speaking the things
4 concerning the kingdom of God: and, being assembled together with them, he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which,
5 *said he*, ye heard from me: for John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.
6 They therefore, when they were come together, asked him, saying, Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?
7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father
8 hath set within his own authority. But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of
9 the earth. And when he had said these things, as they were looking, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their
10 sight. And while they were looking stedfastly into heaven as he went, behold, two
11 men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? this Jesus, which was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven.
12 Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is nigh unto
13 Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey off. And when they were come in, they went up into the upper chamber, where they were abiding; both Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James *the son* of Alphæus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas *the son* of James.
14 These all with one accord continued stedfastly in prayer, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

1 *The former treatise.* Referring to the Gospel of Luke. See Luke 1: 1–4. *Theophilus.* Nothing whatever is known of this person except what may be gathered or inferred from the use of his name by Luke. In the Gospel he is called *most excellent* Theophilus, indicating that he was a person of noble rank. The fact that Luke dedicated both his books to him implies that he was a Christian, and probably a prominent and influential man in the early Church. In the Bible dictionaries may be found conjectures concerning him, but these are the only known facts. *Jesus began.* There is a peculiar force in this word "began." It implies that in the writer's mind Christ's personal work on the earth, as narrated in his Gospel down to the time of his ascension, was but the beginning of his work, and that the work of the Church, to be narrated in the book of the Acts of the Apostles, was really a continuation of the same ministry. Christ, though in heaven, was still the author of all that was done through his apostles and the Church. What he did on earth was only the beginning of his great redemption work. It was laying the foundation, so to speak, on which afterward the fabric was builded. It was preparing the salvation which subsequently was offered to the world. *All that Jesus.* Luke here claims that his account was full and complete, that is, covered all periods of his life, although he does not mean to say that every word and every incident had been recorded. The other evangelists gave facts which he had omitted, and from John 21: 25 we infer that even all four of the writers combined did not relate all of Christ's deeds. *To do and teach.* The two words embrace all of Christ's ministry, his acts and his words.

2 *Until the day.* Luke's Gospel closed at this point, the ascension being the last act of Christ's earthly life. The event is described again in this place as the beginning also of his invisible presence and ministry. *Was taken up.* Revised Version: *Received up.* The ascension is here regarded as an act of the Father. There is in this receiving up by the Father the suggestion that the work he had done was approved and accepted; also the suggestion of exaltation and honor. See Phil. 2: 9–11. *After that he.* The commandments here referred to are especially his final instructions to his apostles. See Matt.

28: 19, 20; Mark 16: 14–18; Luke 24: 46–49; John 20: 21–23; 21: 15–17. The word "commandments" indicates the authoritative character of these commissions and instructions. *Through the Holy Ghost.* Christ himself was filled with the Holy Spirit. See Luke 4: 1, 14, 18; Matt. 12: 28.

3 *He showed himself alive.* On the different appearances of Christ to his friends and disciples see the Lesson of December 17. He stayed for forty days on the earth, until the slowest of all the disciples to believe had been fully convinced of the truth of his resurrection, his passion, his suffering and death. *Infallible proofs.* He gave them many evidences, showing them the wounds in his hands and feet and side, eating with them, walking and talking with them. "Infallible" is not in the Greek, but is included in the meaning of the noun, the word signifying proof of the very strongest possible proof. *Speaking of the things.* During the forty days he gave them definite instructions concerning the kingdom of God, whose spiritual nature they had never comprehended during his life.

4 *Being assembled together.* It cannot be positively determined at what place this meeting was held. If v. 6 refers to the same assembling, it was on Mount Olivet, near to Bethany. Some suppose that a different meeting is here referred to, and that it was in Galilee. See Matt. 28: 16. *That they should not depart.* They were to go out to preach, but not at once. A further qualification was necessary. *The promise of the Father.* The promise of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It is called the promise of the Father, because originally it was given by the Father. See Joel 2: 28; Isa. 44: 3; Ezek. 36: 27. Jesus also reminds the disciples that he had told them of this promise. See John 14: 16–20, 26; 15: 26, 27; 16: 13, 14.

5 *Baptized with the Holy Ghost.* See Luke 3: 16. The baptism of John was external only, simply a rite, a symbol; the baptism of the Holy Spirit should be internal, effectual, regenerating. *Not many days hence.* The promise was sure, the time would not be long, though it was not definitely revealed to them.

6 *When they were therefore come together.* If the previous verses refer to a meeting in Galilee, this verse begins a new paragraph, as it refers to the final meeting on the Mount of Olives. *Wilt thou at this time?* Christ had spoken to them of the promise which they should receive, not many days hence. Their question may have been suggested by this announcement. It seems to imply also that the disciples were not even yet altogether free from their old idea of a temporal kingdom, although we cannot gather definitely from these questions their precise idea of the kingdom.

7 *It is not for you to know the times.* He does not rebuke their question, nor does he say that the kingdom is not to be restored; the only thing in his answer is that the times of the fulfillments of God's plans and purposes are not disclosed to men. Nothing can be proven or even legitimately inferred from our Lord's words here concerning the future of the Jewish nation or their hope of restoration. He gave neither approval or disapproval of the expectation expressed in the question, merely subduing their curiosity with regard to the time, and turning their attention to the practical duties which lay before them. *Which the Father hath put in his own power.* Revised Version: "Set within his own authority." God *has* a plan, and everything is definitely fixed and appointed in that plan. There is no chance in this world. The things that come to pass are the things that God has appointed.

8 *But ye shall receive power.* They could not know anything about the time, but they would have something to do in bringing it on. The power here promised was that which they received through the Holy Spirit. It was partly extraordinary—power to work miracles, and partly ordinary spiritual power, grace and strength. They would have work to do, and they would be divinely qualified for it. *The Holy Ghost shall come upon you.* So it was on Pentecost. See Acts 2: 3. This was the "baptism with the Holy Ghost," spoken of in verse 5. A distinct intimation is here given as to the mode of baptism. *Ye shall be witnesses.* Not only should they *bear* witness by telling what they knew of Christ, but they should *be* witnesses, in their character, in their conduct and bearing, in their whole life. The idea of a *witness* lies in the word. They knew the facts of Christ's life and work from actual personal knowledge and experience, and not merely from hearsay. *In Jerusalem . . . Judæa . . . Samaria . . . uttermost part.* These words cover the whole world. They were to begin at Jerusalem, the place where Christ had been crucified, and then extend their work, first over Judæa, then reaching out into Samaria, and after that sweeping out until the uttermost parts of the earth were embraced. The gospel was not for the Jews only, but also for the Gentiles. Our study of the Acts will show us how the disciples fulfilled this command of their Lord—preaching in these countries in the order named.

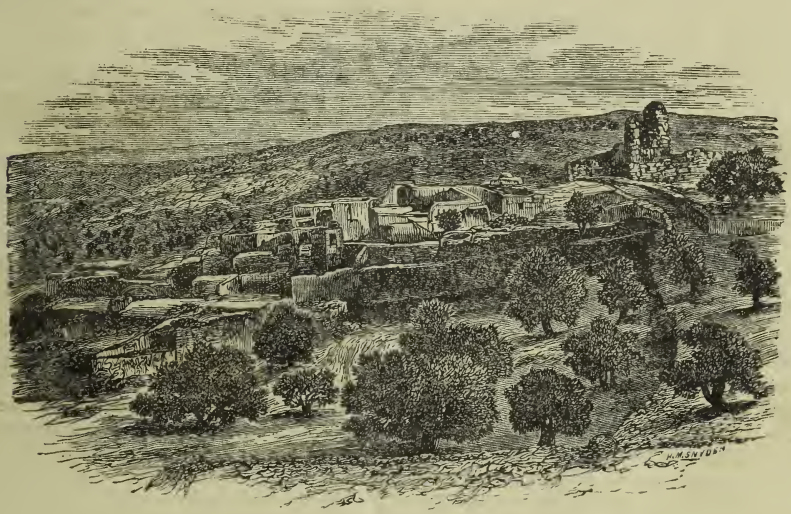
9 *When he had spoken these words.* Immediately after. *While they beheld.* Revised Ver-

sion: "As they were looking." Their eyes were intently fixed upon him at the time. *He was taken up.* See Mark 16: 19; Luke 24: 50, 51. They saw him as he arose in the air. *A cloud received him.* Probably the shekinah of the Old Testament. It also enveloped him at the transfiguration. Matt. 17: 5. When he comes again it will also be in the clouds. For a time the ascension was visible to the beholders; then the cloud received him and hid him from their view in its folds.

10, 11 *Two men.* They were no doubt angels in human form. Their white garments were emblems of their purity. *Ye men of Galilee.* The eleven were all Galileans. *Why stand ye gazing?* The angels thus gently rebuked their idle, regretful looking. They must not sorrow. Duty was urgent. *Shall so come.* That is, he will not only return, but it will be in the same manner in which he has departed. His second coming will be visible, personal, in the clouds. No time for this event is mentioned by the angels, this being also among the secrets which belong alone to the Father.

12 *The mount called Olivet.* Luke in his Gospel (24: 50) places the ascension at Bethany. It was not in the town, but near, somewhere also on the mount. The exact place is not known, although tradition, as usual, claims to know the site. *A sabbath day's journey.* A little less than a mile. It must, therefore, have been nearer Jerusalem than the village of Bethany.

13 *When they were come in.* Into the city. *An upper room.* A room in the second story. It may have been the same room in which the last supper was eaten by the Master and his disciples, and the same also in which the risen Lord had twice visited the eleven after his resurrection. The Revised Version implies that they were all staying together in this upper room.



MODERN BETHANY.

14 *These all continued.* The Revised Version has "continued stedfastly," implying great earnestness and importunity. *With one accord.* With great unity of fervor and zeal. *With the women.* Probably the same referred to in the close of the Gospel as having ministered to Christ on the way, having been last at his cross and first at his tomb. *And Mary.* This is the last mention of the mother of Jesus in the New Testament. All after this is only tradition. Here she is found praying with the other disciples. They are not praying to her, nor are they on their knees before her imploring her to intercede with her Son. *With his brethren.* Formerly they did not believe on Jesus. John 7: 5. Here they evidently believe on him.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

All that Jesus began to do and to teach. He began when he was on the earth but he did not finish, for he is still doing and teaching in our world. For a few years he stayed here in human form, that we might see him working and teaching. Then he went away as to his bodily presence, but he is still here by his Spirit. He still works in his Church. The book of the

Acts is simply a continuation of the Gospel. Christ has not left our world. He did not take hold of it to save it, teaching and working in it for a time, and finally dying for it and then let it go. He is here as really as he was when his feet pressed the paths about the Sea of Galilee, or walked on the path over the Mount of Olives. He is as near to us now in our need and sorrow as he was to the sick people who flocked to him when he went through the country. He is our Teacher just as truly as he was of his disciples. He only *began* his work when he was here in the flesh; he is carrying it on yet, and will carry it on until his kingdom fills the earth.

He showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs. When we look into the matter we find that the truth of the resurrection of Christ is the very foundation of the Christian faith. Everything depends on it. If it can be disproved the whole system of Christianity is swept away. If there is room for a doubt here, the doubt applies to everything that we build on Christ. If God did not raise Christ up from the dead, what evidence have we of the acceptance of his work of atonement on our behalf? If our high priest died at the altar and never rose again, he is not entered within the vail to present his offering and make intercession for us. We have no one then to stand for us before God as our Advocate, our Brother, our Friend, to represent us at heaven's court. If his dust mingles with the dust of ages about Jerusalem, how can he help us in our struggles in life, in our trials and duties? If death was too strong for him, and he could not burst its bonds for himself, how can he conquer death for us? Thus we see how much depends on the fact of his resurrection. Read what Paul says about this in 1 Cor. 15: 14–19. This shows how important it was, not only that Christ should rise, but that he should give such proof of his resurrection as should be for ever beyond refutation. This he did. He remained on earth for forty days, until all his disciples were convinced beyond doubt that he was truly alive. It makes the proof all the stronger that some of them were slow and hard to convince, for every one of them was in the end thoroughly satisfied and ready to give his life in witness of the blessed truth. So we have a foundation without one flaw. No fact in all the history of the world has had surer proof than that Christ rose from the dead.

Commanded them that they should . . . wait. Usually the best time to do anything is now, at once, immediately. But sometimes waiting is a duty. Here is one case in which the disciples of Christ were commanded not to do anything at all. When Christ wants us to wait, though it may seem to be a waste of time, we can serve him best by simply waiting. Indeed we can serve him then in no other way. For example, an active, earnest worker is taken sick and all work must be stopped. It is Christ's will that he should wait for the time, and he is pleasing his Master just as well in doing so, if he does it patiently and submissively, as he did in other days when he was always active. A Christian woman, long active, now ill, explained her quiet, peaceful resignation by saying: "When I was well I used to hear Jesus say, 'Go and do this or that;' but now I hear him say, 'Lie here and cough,' and I know that it is my duty, and I do it as well as I can."

Wait for the promise. They were not ready yet for work. They could not do anything without further preparation. There may be a good hint here for a great many of us. We are in too great hurry to get to work. Some young men can scarcely restrain their impatience to get through college and theological seminary to begin to preach. They want to "jump" as many years as possible so as to get into the field. It seems time wasted to take so long a course. No doubt Christ's work is very pressing, and he loves to see zeal in his servants; but sometimes the duty is not to work, but to seek preparation *for* working. Then the lesson applies to those who are intellectually ready for the work, but not spiritually. There is a preparation which cannot be gotten from books or from living teachers. These men had been well instructed. Christ himself had been their teacher. Yet with all their knowledge and training they must not go out until they had received the Holy Ghost. *We* should not go out to do any work for Christ until we have received the same baptism. After the preacher has prepared his sermon he should wait for the promise before he enters the pulpit. After teachers' meeting and all the study of the week, the teacher should wait in prayer till he is endued with heavenly power before he goes to his class to teach. It would be a blessed thing if there were much more of this *waiting* in our busy lives.

It is not for you to know the times or the seasons. There are some things God does not reveal to us and does not intend us to know. There are very many things it is far better we should not know. For example, there are things before us in our own lives which it would only cloud and sadden all our bright years for us to know beforehand. It is a mercy that we do not know them until we come up to them and the vail is lifted for us. God wants us to live all the while in such a way as to be ready for whatever

may come. Then we shall never be taken by surprise.

But ye shall receive power . . . and ye shall be witnesses unto me. They might not know what the future had in store, but instead they were to have some part in making the future. Instead of idly prying into hidden things, work was given them to do. This lesson is important for us. We are told to watch for Christ's coming, but the way to watch is not to sit down in idleness and wonder if he will come to-morrow, but to keep our hands ever full of earnest work in his service, work which will help to hasten the coming of his kingdom, work at which we would like him to find us when he comes. Work is better than curious prying.

Ye shall be witnesses unto me . . . in Jerusalem. They were to begin right there where Christ had been crucified. This is a wonderful illustration of the love of Christ. We would say that since Jerusalem had put him to death he would send his disciples away to other places to offer mercy. But the very first persons to have pardon and life offered to them were those who had clamored for his blood, dragged him to the cross and nailed him there. This is just like the gospel. It carries to the guiltiest first and most swiftly the offer of salvation. There is a suggestion here also for all who would witness for Christ. We should begin at home, just where we are. It is so easy to have great compassion for the Chinese and Hindus at a distance, while we have no compassion whatever for the unsaved close about us. We are to begin at home, and then extend our influence as widely as possible over the world.

Ye shall be witnesses. Some notice should be taken here of the way the disciples were to serve Christ. It was by being witnesses to him. He did not say that they were to *bear* witness, but that they should *be* witnesses. They were first to tell what they knew about him, testifying to his life, teachings, death and resurrection. We are here to keep in mind the idea of a witness—one who knows, who has seen for himself, not one who talks from hearsay. They were also to *be* witnesses in their own lives, in their conduct, in their character, in their faithfulness. Most of them became witnesses in the highest sense—martyrs—giving their lives in testimony of their belief. All who are Christ's disciples must be witnesses. But what sort of witnesses are we?

While they beheld he was taken up. He was taken up into heaven. His body was taken up. He is now in glory as our Lord, our Priest, our Advocate, our Friend, our Saviour. He went back to the glory which he had left to come to earth. He went away to prepare a place for his people. He was received up and is now on the throne of the highest glory, and all powers and dominions bow down to him. He was received up, but he will come again to receive his people to himself that where he is there they may be also.

Why stand ye gazing up into heaven? There was no occasion for sorrow. He had not forsaken them. They had not lost him. He had told them it was expedient for them that he should go away that he might send the Comforter. Besides, he had not gone to stay. In due time he would return again. Pensive gazing is never the best occupation. Working and witnessing are better. When our friends leave us we are not forbidden to sorrow, but certainly we are forbidden to sorrow in a way that breaks up our life of duty and service. I know a mother who lost a beloved daughter years ago, and she has done scarcely anything ever since but visit the cemetery and mourn. She dropped all her church work. Her home duties have been neglected. The living members of her family have received almost no care. She sits and gazes up into heaven and weeps for her child. This is not the way our Lord wants us to do. He wants us to go at once back to our duties again, thoughtful and serious, yet earnest and faithful, looking for blessing from heaven and witnessing by our faith and hope to the glory of our Saviour.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Christ is still working and teaching in his Church; he has not left the earth. v. 1.
2. The proofs of Christ's resurrection are so strong that not a shadow of a doubt rests about the fact. v. 3.
3. There are times when quiet waiting is our highest duty. v. 4.
4. The best prepared teachers need the baptism of the Holy Spirit before they are ready to teach. v. 4.
5. Water baptism is not enough; only the Spirit's baptism can cleanse the heart. v. 5.
6. Christ discourages curious prying into the secret and unrevealed things. v. 7.
7. Instead of trying to find out what the future will be we should fill the present with earnest duty. v. 8.
8. We are to *bear* witness and *be* witnesses for Christ. v. 8.
9. Our witnessing for Christ should begin at home, close about us. v. 8.
10. The Church is to carry the gospel into all the world. v. 8.
11. Christ left the world in the attitude of blessing. v. 9; Luke 24: 51.
12. The worship Jesus wants is not idle gazing, but earnest working. v. 11.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

BY THE REV. JAMES A. WORDEN.

Take a moment on the preface to this book of Acts, verses 1–3. When your scholars have read the first verse, ask, What do these words imply—"all that Jesus *began* both to do and to teach?"

Bring out the point that "this same Jesus," who personally began to do and to teach in the Gospels, is now in Acts going on to do and to teach; only here he acts through the apostles. This is really the book of *The Acts of the Risen and Ascended Jesus* wrought through his apostles.

Then pass to what you may call Jesus parting from his disciples. (If the class is sufficiently advanced call for a list of all the appearances of Jesus after his resurrection.) Then ask, What is the title of this lesson? What two men does the Old Testament tell us were taken up bodily into heaven? Read 2 Kings 2: 9–12.

I. A WORD PICTURE.—Have every book closed and each scholar join in picturing the ascension of Jesus. The object of this exercise is to enlist the attention and co-operation of every scholar, and to enable all to *realize* the wonderful scene. The general rules for such word pictures are found in "Westminster Normal Outlines—Junior Course," page 90.* Such description must be *minute*, and be "(1) instructive, (2) graphic, (3) distinct, (4) accurate in (*a*) place and buildings, (*b*) customs and manners, (*c*) persons, (*d*) grouping, (*e*) attitude and expression, (*f*) leading feature." The teacher must not himself do all the word picturing, but should bring each scholar to add his part. Draw out a description of the place, thus:—Mount of Olives. Behind them, to the left, Bethany—home of Martha, Mary and Lazarus; in front, Brook Kidron, Garden of Gethsemane, the temple; farther beyond, Calvary and the place of the sepulchre.

PERSONS.—The eleven (name them). How *grouped?* Jesus. Time, May 19, A. D. 30.—The beautiful season of flowers.

Now bring in the conversation—What did Jesus first say? verses 4, 5. What question did the apostles ask? verse 6. Jesus' answer containing the promise. vs. 7, 8. Reverently picture out the Lord's ascension, the attitude of Jesus as he arose (Luke 24: 5), the cloud, the two shining ones and their words of cheer, the joy of the returning apostles and the meeting for prayer.

II. Having set all the facts in this framework, go at once to their *application*. Select as your great lesson—for example, JESUS LIVES—LIVES FOR EVER WITH THE FATHER. Bring out, by questioning, that the reason why Jesus rose thus in the view of the apostles was to impress them with the fact that he had gone up alive to heaven. Ask, *How do you know that Jesus lives?* Let each give his answer. Take them all.

An adult class may bring forward the evidences of Jesus being alive in the time covered by the Acts and since: He poured out the Spirit (Acts 2: 32, 33), received Stephen (7: 59, 60), converted Saul (9: 5). The success of Christianity, the divine power of Jesus shown to-day in revivals and the conversion of men.

The younger scholars may be led to answer, "Jesus lives because he answers prayer," "pardons our sins," "I can talk to him in prayer," "he talks to me in the word." Illustrate this fact that Jesus lives and reigns by Joseph in Egypt, alive and reigning while Israel was mourning him.

N. B.—Select for study through the week such points as the following from next Sabbath's lesson: The design and way of celebrating the feast of Pentecost; the facts of Peter's life before Pentecost; the gift of tongues; geography of places named in verses 9–11; prophecies in Old Testament about the Holy Spirit; proof that the Holy Ghost is God—is a person. Assign, on a slip of paper, one of these to each scholar for study at home.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

BY MRS. G. R. ALDEN—"PANSY."

The year's work properly commences with a review of the closing lessons of 1882. Christ crucified, buried, risen. Forty days on earth, after he had conquered the grave, and then surrounded by his disciples, near that familiar Bethany where so many wonderful and precious events had taken place, having spoken tender, parting words to them and blessed them, he ascended by his own power.

Marks for the disciples on the mountain, and a cloud outlined, will make the scene more vivid; of course no attempt will be made to outline the form of Christ.

Two blue arches mark important features in this lesson-promise. Under one print

* Presbyterian Board of Publication. 20 cents in paper; in cloth, 50 cents.

"POWER," while you recall to class the promise of a wonderful friend who was to come and *abide* with the disciples when Jesus went away. One of his names was to be Comforter. He was to remind them of Jesus, to help them in all their work, and to give them power to do many wonderful things.

As a primary teacher I desire to use these and following lessons to impress upon the children the personality and *power* of the Holy Spirit. In this connection it will rest the class to rise and recite the lines found on *Westminster Primary Leaf*, commencing, "Jesus hath said it."

The second arch should have printed in it the word "WITNESSES." It is a great honor to be a witness for Jesus. It was a special promise to the disciples—it is for all disciples. Witnesses are expected to tell what they know about a matter. What do your children know about Jesus? Be careful to teach that we witness by *acts* as well as by words.

GOLDEN TEXT.—When this has been recited open the large Bible and read to class what the angel said, and close the lesson with the following thought: "If Jesus were to come to-day, what would he find the children in this class witnessing?"

Notice the lesson hymn, and carefully explain the word "bequeathed." It belongs to a class of words which convey no meaning to children until made plain.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

BY J. HOWARD SEAL.

The Purpose of the Lesson.—To show that "Christ's ascension is the bridge to heaven," and that while he is engaged in heaven for us ("I go to prepare a place for you"), we are to be engaged on earth for him ("Ye shall be witnesses for me"). Says John Newton, "Christ has taken our nature into heaven to represent us, and has left us on earth, with his nature, to represent him." And then he has positively declared that he will come again to receive us unto himself. What a privilege, to be witnesses for him; what a comfort to know that he will come again. If preferred the following may be placed upon the board:

> *"THIS SAME JESUS . . . SHALL SO COME IN LIKE MANNER."*
>
> *"EVERY EYE SHALL SEE HIM."*
>
> *WILL YOU BE FOUND A FRIEND OR FOE WHEN HE RETURNS?*
>
> or,
>
> *"YE SHALL RECEIVE POWER After that the HOLY GHOST is come upon YOU."*

Hints as to coloring.—Crown in yellow; "I go to prepare a place for you," white shaded lightly with red; "Ye shall be witnesses for me," blue shaded with white; "To heaven," green shaded heavily with yellow; "Christ's ascension the bridge," white shaded with orange; "I will come again," brown shaded with orange.

Lesson II. **THE DESCENDING SPIRIT.** *Jan. 14th, 1883.*

Acts 2 : 1-16. Memorize vs. 1-4.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost."—Acts 2 : 4.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 2 : 1-16.....*The Descending Spirit.*
T. Lev. 23 : 10-21.....*The Feast of Pentecost.*
W. Isa. 44 : 1-8.....*Water Upon the Thirsty.*
Th. Joel 2 : 28-32.....*The Prophecy of Joel.*
F. Matt. 3 : 1-17.....*Baptism from on High.*
S. Mark 16 : 9-20.....*New Tongues.*
S. Acts 2 : 17-36.....*The Witnessing Disciples.*

TOPIC.

The Baptism of the Holy Ghost.

LESSON PLAN.

1. Strange Signs. 2. New Power. 3. Great Wonder. 4. Prophetic Fulfillment.

Time.—A. D. 30. The day of Pentecost, ten days after the ascension. **Place.**—Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 2. *What rule hath God given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him?* A. The word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 496: "Lord, I hear of showers of blessings." Other hymns, 485, 491, 492, 494.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—The disciples continued to wait for ten days in united prayer, according to their Master's command. During this interval Matthias was chosen by lot to fill the place from which Judas had fallen. On the day of Pentecost the parting promise of their Master was fulfilled, as we learn in to-day's lesson.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

1 And when the day of Pen'te-cost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. [Deut. 16 : 9, 10; Acts 1 : 14.]

2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. [Acts 4 : 31.]

3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. [Isa. 6 : 6.]

4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. [Mark 16 : 17; Acts 10 : 46; 19 : 6; 1 Cor. 12 : 10.]

5 And there were dwelling at Je-ru'sa-lem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.

6 Now, when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

7 And they were all amazed and marveled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Gal-i-læ'ans?

8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

9 Par'thi-ans, and Medes, and E'lam-ites, and the dwellers in Mes-o-po-ta'mi-a, and in Ju-dæ'a, and Cap-pa-do'ci-a, in Pon'tus, and A'si-a,

10 Phryg'i-a, and Pam-phyl'ia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Lib'y-a about Cy-re'ne, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes,

11 Cretes and A-ra'bi-ans, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

12 And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?

13 Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine. [Luke 7 : 34.]

14 ¶ But Pe'ter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Ju-dæ'a, and all *ye* that dwell at Je-ru'sa-lem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:

15 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is *but* the third hour of the day. [1 Thess. 5 : 7.]

16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Jo'el. [Joel 2 : 28, 29; Isa. 44 : 3.]

REVISED TEXT.

1 And when the day of Pentecost was now
come, they were all together in one place.
2 And suddenly there came from heaven a
sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind,
and it filled all the house where they were
3 sitting. And there appeared unto them
tongues parting asunder, like as of fire; and
4 it sat upon each one of them. And they
were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the
Spirit gave them utterance.
5 Now there were dwelling at Jerusalem
Jews, devout men, from every nation under
6 heaven. And when this sound was heard,
the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them
7 speaking in his own language. And they
were all amazed and marveled, saying, Be-
8 hold, are not all these which speak Gali-
læans? And how hear we, every man in
our own language, wherein we were born?
9 Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and the
dwellers in Mesopotamia, in Judæa and Cap-
10 padocia in Pontus and Asia, in Phrygia and
Pamphylia, in Egypt and the parts of Libya
about Cyrene, and sojourners from Rome,

11 both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians, we do hear them speaking in our
12 tongues the mighty works of God. And they were all amazed, and were perplexed, saying one to another, What meaneth this?
13 But others mocking said, They are filled with new wine.
14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and spake forth unto them, *saying*, Ye men of Judæa, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto
15 you, and give ear unto my words. For these are not drunken, as ye suppose; seeing it is
16 *but* the third hour of the day; but this is that which hath been spoken by the prophet Joel.

1 *The day of Pentecost.* The word Pentecost means *fiftieth*, and this name was given to the festival because it occurred fifty days after the passover feast. See Lev. 23: 15, 16. It was called also the "feast of weeks," because it was celebrated the day after a *week of weeks* (or seven weeks) from the day after the Passover Sabbath. It was one of the great annual festivals of the Jewish nation. It was a harvest festival, celebrating the completion of the harvest. Ex. 23: 16; Deut. 26: 5–10. By some the feast was regarded also as commemorating the giving of the law, which was delivered from Mount Sinai on the fiftieth day after the departure from Egypt. There is no trace, however, of this meaning in the Scriptures. According to the usually-accepted chronology the day of Pentecost, on which the Spirit was poured out, fell on the first day of the week. *All with one accord.* We are not here told who were present, but the "all" would seem to indicate that all the disciples, the same included in the enumeration of chap. 1: 13, were also present at this time. There may have been even a greater number at this meeting, as the feast of Pentecost would no doubt draw to Jerusalem other of Christ's disciples from different parts of Palestine, and they may also have been present. *In one place.* The place is not named, but it was most likely the same upper room mentioned in chap. 1: 13.

2 *Suddenly.* There was no warning given. The appearance burst unexpectedly upon the company as they waited, no doubt, in prayer. They were looking for something and waiting for it (chap. 1: 4, 8), but they did not know what it would be, or in what form it would come. *A sound from heaven.* It is described as like the noise produced by the rushing of a mighty wind, a storm, a blast. Notice that the sound came down from heaven, probably growing louder, as if drawing nearer, until it filled all the house. It is not said that there *was* a wind, but a noise like as of a wind.

3 *There appeared . . . cloven tongues.* Revised Version, "Tongues parting asunder." [Margin, *parting* or *distributing among them.*] It was not actual fire which they saw, but only having the appearance of fire. It probably appeared first in one sheet, as of flame, and then parted asunder, a tongue-shaped portion resting on each person in the house—not on the apostles only, but on all the disciples present, both men and women. The appearance was miraculous, and was the external emblem of the Holy Spirit, who now descended from heaven in fulfillment of the Saviour's parting promise. Chap. 1: 5. The form of tongues which the manifestation assumed was an emblem of the gift of tongues which was likewise bestowed. "The visible flames were an emblem of that holy ardor and of those glowing emotions which, when enkindled from heaven, would break forth like flames from the heart. The form of tongues signified that the tongue, the word, or speech, thoroughly pervaded and controlled by the Holy Spirit of God, should communicate and reveal all that is heavenly and holy."

4 *They were all filled with the Holy Ghost.* This was what had been promised by Christ. The Holy Spirit had been in the world before: there are repeated allusions in the Old Testament to his work in men's lives. Then the apostles had themselves received some measure of the Holy Spirit. See John 20: 22. But this outpouring evidently marked a new era in the history of the Spirit's operations. Before he was given only to certain persons, transiently, for peculiar duties. Now he was poured out upon *all*, and the gift was permanent, and for all of life. *Other tongues.* They began at once to speak in languages or dialects that they had not known before. It was a miraculous gift of speech, as the words "as the Spirit gave them utterance" clearly indicates.

5 *There were dwelling . . . out of every nation.* The Jews had already been dispersed over all the world. These devout or circumspect men had come up to Jerusalem and were dwelling there either permanently or temporarily.

6 *When this was noised abroad.* Revised Version, "When this sound was heard." This refers either to the noise like the rushing wind described in v. 2, or to the rumor of the whole strange occurrence spreading abroad. The former accords best with the Greek; the latter is the meaning which would be apt to occur to the ordinary reader. *The multitude came together.* From all parts of the city. *Were confounded.* At the strange phenomenon. *Every man heard.* Not that all the disciples spoke all the different dialects, but that one spoke in one

and another in another, so that all the people heard some one whom they could understand. This assembly must have been outside the house, in an open court, or in a public square.

7, 8 *All . . . Galilæans?* The apostles and leaders at least were Galilæans. *In our own tongue.* This decides the character of the gift of tongues, that they actually spoke intelligibly in other languages or dialects.

9–11 There were Jews residing in these different countries. For location of these places see Bible maps. *The wonderful works of God.* Referring to the words they had heard in these different tongues. Taught by the Spirit the speakers had declared the great mercy and love of God, as shown in Christ's death and resurrection.

12, 13 *What meaneth this?* They were full of amazement and perplexity. *Others mocking.* The first were of the devout class; these were hostile critics. They only scoffed at the manifestations, imputing them to intoxication.

14 *Peter standing up.* He became the spokesman for the apostles to answer this amazement on the one hand, and this slanderous aspersion on the other. He stands *with* the eleven, not apart from them. They all stood up with him while he spoke for them all. There is no claim of superiority here on Peter's part. *Lifted up his voice.* Spoke aloud so that the vast multitude would hear. *Preached.* Implying solemn, formal and authoritative address.

15 *These are not drunken.* First he answers the sneer of the undevout. *But the third hour.* From eight to nine o'clock in the morning, the hour of morning prayer. By devout usage the Jews did not partake of either food or drink before this hour; nor was it supposable that men would be drunk with the light grape wines of the country at that early date. Hence the charge of drunkenness was absurd. Notice Peter's quiet, modest and kindly manner, without bitterness, though meeting so unjust a charge.

16 *This is that.* Here he proceeds to explain the remarkable manifestations, showing that they were precisely what the prophets had foretold.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

They were all, with one accord, in one place. There are several things to notice about this meeting which received such a blessing. They were *all* present—the apostles, the other disciples, the women. There were no absentees. That was one good thing about it. We ought to make a point of this. This was now the tenth day of the prayer-meeting, and yet no one had grown weary. What a loss to the person it would have been if any one had stayed at home that day. A colored brother in Kentucky was seen one very stormy Sunday morning trudging on foot toward a church, seven miles from his home. The gentleman who met him expressed surprise at his going on such a day. "Oh massa', I couldn't miss one meetin'. We'se been prayin' for de Holy Ghost, and he might come to-day!" People who stay away from *one* meeting do not know what blessing may come that day which they will miss. Thomas was absent from a meeting one evening and we all know what he missed. Jesus came that night. If any one had been absent on this morning of Pentecost, he would have missed a great blessing. You will notice, too, that these people all came *promptly*. A long while after the meeting began Peter said it was only nine o'clock. They must therefore have met at daybreak, at the latest, and yet they were *all* there. That is another good point—promptness and punctuality. They were also all there *with one accord* (though the Revised Version leaves out the words the thought is in the text). They were all of one mind. There was no discord among them. They had one purpose. Their hearts made music and God heard the music in heaven. There is another thing about their praying—it was *importunate*. They had been ten days engaged in offering the same petitions, but had not wearied; and here their importunity was abundantly rewarded. All these points we should treasure up, so that we may pray in the same way.

4 *They were all filled with the Holy Ghost.* This was the fulfillment of the great promise. This was the coming of the Comforter whom Christ said he would send if he went away, that he might abide with his disciples for ever. There are several things to notice in these words. They were *all* filled, not the apostles only, but the other disciples and friends of Christ, the men and the women, all who were present. The Holy Spirit is not for ministers and teachers only, but for every one who believes on Christ. They were *filled;* not a little measure of the great divine blessing was granted, but all they could receive. God will give us all we have room for of his grace and love. The reason some have more blessing than others is because they make more room in their hearts than others. The boy that has his pockets full of old nails and marbles and bits of string, when his aunt tells him to take all the cakes his pockets will hold, does not get many cakes.

Older people whose hearts are full of this world get but a small measure of the Spirit when he is poured out. It was the *Holy Ghost* that was given to these disciples so richly, not mere good feeling, not a warm emotion, not fresh enthusiasm, not a good influence, but *the Holy Ghost*. The Holy Ghost is God; hence it was himself that God gave them. He came down to live in them, not *with* them only, but *in* them. So this was the most wonderful blessing that was ever given to men. The best of it is that we may have the same blessing if we will only ask for it. Read Luke 11: 13, and see that this is true. We all like to have visits from pleasant friends. Here is a Friend, the most pleasant, the most tender, the most helpful Friend in this world. He will come to visit us if we only ask him, if we really want him. He will come, not to make a short stay of an hour or a day, but to remain always as our guest; not merely in our house, but in our heart. This is a great subject and we ought to think about it very much to-day, and all of us should try to be filled with the Holy Spirit before our lesson is through.

4 *They . . . began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.* They began to speak in languages they had not known before. The Holy Spirit gave them this new power. Now the Spirit does not give this same power to Christians in these days. You will not be able, without any study, to speak German, or Spanish, or French, the moment you are converted. But there is a way in which the Spirit gives every new convert a new tongue. The tongue that spoke profane words before, that cursed and swore, speaks afterward only reverently. The tongue that spoke lies speaks truth now. The tongue that spoke angry and bitter words, utters now only kind and loving words. So we do get new tongues when we are converted. If a boy or a man swears and lies and speaks bad words, or gets cross and utters angry words, we know that he still has his old tongue and has not yet gotten a new one.

6 *Every man heard them speak in his own language.* This was prophetic. These people were gathered from all nations, and they all heard the gospel that day in the language of their own country. This was a sign or pledge that the gospel should be preached in that language. In a certain sense this was fulfilled in the apostles' days, for the Christian preachers went everywhere with the word. But it is now fulfilled in a far more glorious sense, for the Bible has been actually translated into nearly every important language in the earth, and is sent to nearly every nation, so that the people of almost all lands may literally hear the gospel and the wonderful works of God in their own tongue.

7 *They were all amazed and marvelled.* It was enough to amaze them. The most wonderful thing in the history of this world is what God has done for men's salvation. We are told that even the angels bend in devout wonder and eager interest over the mystery of redemption. They are amazed to see that God would give his own well-beloved Son to die for a world of sinners. They are amazed to see the Son of God leave his glory and come down to suffer and die on a cross to save guilty men. They cannot understand such things. Why should God make such a sacrifice for such rebels? How amazing it is when we think of it! Then here is another marvel—God sending his Spirit into this world to live in men's hearts! No wonder the people were amazed. Everything about the glorious gospel is marvelous. Yet there are many people who find more to interest them in bits of shells or of stones or of minerals, or in birds or ants or beetles than in the gospel. They think the subject of redemption a matter suited only to Sunday-school scholars and ignorant people and sick folks, while they find subjects suited to *their* great minds in the fields of the sciences and philosophies. How little earth's wise people know of the wonderful treasures of wisdom hidden in the gospel!

13 *Others mocking, said, These men are full of new wine.* There are always some people who will scoff and ridicule every extraordinary manifestation of God's grace. When Jesus performed great miracles they said he was in league with Beelzebub and wrought his great works through his power. Festus pronounced Paul mad when he saw his great zeal and earnestness in Christ's service. These scoffing beholders accounted for the wonderful things they saw the disciples doing by saying that they were drunk. The same kinds of scoffings are heard in modern days when a great work of grace is going on anywhere.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Those who pray for blessing should pray importunately, patiently, with one accord, and in one place. v. 1.

2. When church members *all* meet together for prayer, blessing will be sure to come. v. 1.

3. It is not safe to miss *one* meeting, for that may be the one at which the answer will be given. v. 1.

4. God's Spirit is one and yet when he comes down upon a church every member receives a personal baptism. v. 3.

5. God gives his Spirit to *all* believers, even the humblest. v. 4.

6. God *fills* his people with his Spirit; gives to each the full measure he will receive. v. 4.

7. One of the first manifestations of the Spirit's indwelling is a new tongue—praise to God, loving, gentle speech, words for Christ. v. 4.

8. The gospel is yet to be spoken in the language of every nation under heaven. vs. 6–8.

9. Different effects are produced on different people by the wonders of grace: some wonder; some mock. vs. 12, 13.

10. God fulfills his promises though ages elapse. vs. 14–16.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

ONE WAY TO BEGIN this lesson is by asking a few questions concerning "the ascending Lord." What was Jesus' last command? Acts 1: 4. How was it obeyed? Let us go into that ten days' prayer meeting. Where was it held? Who were its leaders? (The eleven.) What women were in it? Chap. 1: 14. What other two men were there? (Matthias and Joseph Barsabas. By bringing out these names you make the meeting more *real.*) How many in all were there? What feelings filled all this assembly? Luke 24: 52; Acts 1: 14. What were the chief exercises of this meeting? Luke 24: 53; Acts 1: 14. What election took place? Acts 1: 15–26. What is it to wait on the Lord? How long did the disciples wait? How had Jesus prepared his disciples for this Pentecost? (All his teachings and miracles, his death, his resurrection, last command and ascension.) How had these ten days of waiting prepared them?

Group the lesson under two general topics: I. THE SPIRIT'S COMING. II. THE EFFECTS.

I. THE SPIRIT'S COMING.—Bring out every particular of the wonderful occurrence—it's suddenness, the sound, the appearance of the tongues. See *Explanatory* and *Illustrative Notes.* Have the scholars give their reports on the subjects assigned them, viz., "Design and manner of celebrating Pentecost." (Here ask for the fitness of the Holy Spirit coming on Pentecost;) "proofs that the Holy Ghost is a person;" "proofs that he is God." Your method should draw the scholars to take part in answering and asking questions. Carefully obey the great rule "*Never tell a scholar what you can lead that scholar to tell you.*"

II. THE EFFECTS; or results of the coming of the Spirit. Let these be given by the scholars. Call for reports on "the gift of tongues," "countries mentioned in the lesson," "Old Testament prophecies concerning the Spirit."

1. *Special suggestions to teachers of intermediate classes.* Select that point in the lesson which can be made most practical for your scholars, and make that prominent by questions, references, illustrations. Perhaps it is the truth, in these words, "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost." Illustrate what this means by the experience of Peter. Contrast his denials of Christ with his courage at Pentecost. What wrought this change? (Being filled with the Spirit.) So of all the apostles and others at Pentecost; so of Stephen (Acts 6: 5), of Paul. 9: 17. Why should we regard this as the greatest blessing? How can it be secured?

Illustrate the condition of a church without the Spirit by the condition of Adam before God had breathed into his nostrils the breath of life (Gen. 2.); the condition of a church quickened by the Spirit, by a garden in summer time. Then, to each scholar, comes the question, "Am I moved and led by the Spirit of God?"

2. *Suggestions to teachers of adult classes.* Have ready for use, in time of flagging interest, such questions as (1) What is the relation of the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus to the Pentecostal baptism? John 7: 39; Acts 2: 33; John 14: 26. (2) In what respects do revivals of our time differ from that of Pentecost? (3) Prove that we are now to expect the baptism of the Spirit as churches and as individuals. (4) What are the means to be used to secure such a blessing? Encourage great freedom in answering, and allow varied answers to be given to bring out varied sides of the truth.

Points in the next lesson to be assigned to scholars:

1. In what sense was Peter leader of the apostles?

2. Prove that God's promise extends to the children of believers.

3. What is the meaning of the words "the breaking of bread?"

4. The community of goods mentioned in the closing verses of this chapter.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

A square for a room, with marks for the people. They are waiting and praying. To impress the fact of the long waiting, make straight marks to stand for the days, putting a "w" at the top of each, imagining meantime the conversation that may have passed between those who were waiting. At the top of the tenth mark print, "He Has Come."

Story Illustration.—Show a ring. Tell the story of the child whose father was to send for her, and the messenger who came was to bring to her a ring which her father had taken away with him. This was to show that the messenger came from her father. The flame of fire resting on each disciple's head was not the Holy Spirit, but the heavenly Father's token that he had come. Guard against the common error that the third person of the Trinity is an influence, a thing, a flame of fire, a mighty wind, something to be spoken of as "it," instead of a person. Let the description of the outward manifestation be vivid, so that the class will seem to hear the sound and *see* the wonderful sight. Explain briefly the special *power* which his coming gave to the disciples. Recall last lesson, impressing the fact that Jesus kept his promise.

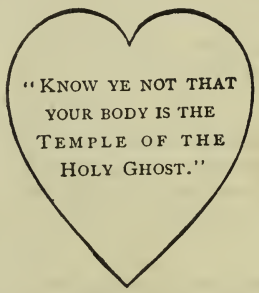
PRACTICAL APPLICATION.—The same Holy Spirit is here to-day, ready to abide in the heart of each little child. The recitation found on *Westminster Primary Leaf*, commencing "Jesus hath said it," will impress this thought.

We can neither see nor hear him now. There is no rushing wind nor tongue of flame, but his temple is the heart. Outline a heart, and print in it the verse: "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?"

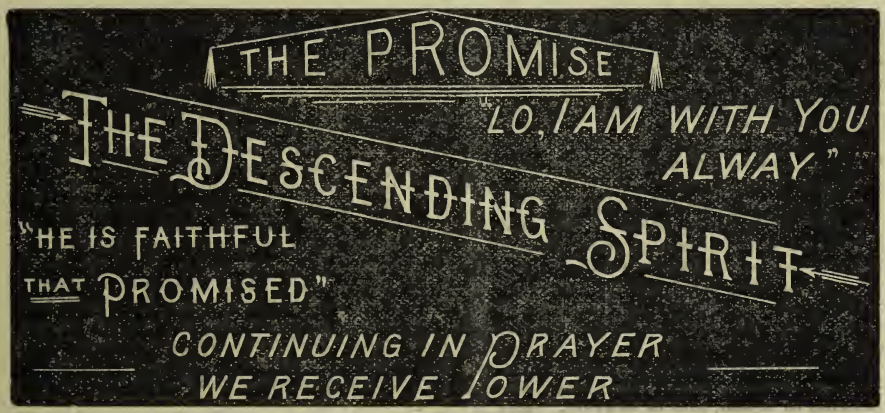
FINAL THOUGHT.—Ways in which children who are obeying the voice of the Holy Spirit may show to others that their hearts belong to him, will make a fitting close to this lesson.

It will be remembered that the most I attempt to do in these hints *is to suggest certain lines of thought*, from which the teacher is to select.

Some teachers may desire to hold closely to the thought taught in lesson hymn, viz.: Seeing to it that the heart is a fit dwelling place for such a Guest.



HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



The Purpose of the Lesson.—To show the fulfillment of Christ's promise, made while in the flesh (John 14: 16–18; 16: 7–14), and after his resurrection. Matt. 28: 20; Acts 1: 4, 5, 8. "He is faithful that promised"—he does not leave his people comfortless, or without power to witness for him. We receive power in prayer. Have we felt the Spirit's power? If we are faithful, this new year may be a season of pentecostal blessings, yea, this very day may witness the manifestation of the Spirit's power if we *desire it*. Oh, that it may come, and we be able to speak with new tongues. "He who speaks of heavenly things, speaks with new tongues." The following may be used on reverse side of the blackboard:

DAY OF PENTECOST
PROPHECY
POWER.

Hints in coloring.—"The Descending Spirit," green shaded with yellow; "Lo, I am with You Alway," white, shaded lightly with pearl; "He is Faithful that Promised," yellow, shaded lightly with red; "The Promise," orange, with brown; "Continuing in Prayer," etc., upper line, light blue; lower line, white.

Lesson III. **THE BELIEVING PEOPLE.** *Jan. 21st, 1883.*

Acts 2: 37-47. Memorize vs. 38-41.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized."— Acts 2: 41.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 2: 37-47.....*The Believing People.*
T. Zech. 12: 6-14.....*The Spirit of Grace.*
W. Luke 3: 1-14.....*Repentance and Baptism.*
Th. John 3: 1-17.....*Baptism and the Holy Ghost.*
F. Acts 16: 19-34.....*Faith and Baptism.*
S. Rom. 5: 1-21.....*Gifts of the Spirit.*
S. 1 Cor. 11: 23-34....*The Breaking of Bread.*

TOPIC:

Belief in Christ Gives Joy.

LESSON PLAN.

1. Anxious Inquirers. 2. Earnest Confessors. 3. Faithful Disciples.

Time.—A. D. 30. The day of Pentecost and the time onward. **Place.**—Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 3. *What do the Scriptures principally teach?* A. The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 32: "All hail the power of Jesus name." Other hymns, 290, 301, 483, 948.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—Peter had just shown his hearers that the wonders of Pentecost were the fulfillment of prophecy; that Jesus, the despised Nazarene whom they had murdered, was their own Messiah; that God had raised him from the dead and exalted him to the heavens. Our lesson to-day tells us the effect of this sermon.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

37 Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Pe'ter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do? [Zech. 12: 10; Acts 9: 6; 16: 30.]

38 Then Pe'ter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Je'sus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. [Luke 24: 47; Acts 3: 19.]

39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call. [Joel 2: 28; Acts 3: 25; 10: 45; Eph. 2: 13-17.]

40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

41 ¶ Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls.

42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. [Rom. 12: 12; Eph. 6: 18; Heb. 10: 25.]

43 And fear came upon every soul; and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. [Acts 4: 33; 5: 12.]

44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common; [Acts 4: 32-34.]

45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all *men*, as every man had need. [Isa. 58: 7.]

46 And they continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, [Acts 1: 14; Luke 24: 53; Acts 20: 7.]

47 Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. [Acts 5: 14; 11: 24; Rom. 14: 18.]

REVISED TEXT.

37 Now when they heard *this*, they were
pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter
and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what
38 shall we do? And Peter *said* unto them,
Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you
in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remis-
sion of your sins; and ye shall receive the
39 gift of the Holy Ghost. For to you is the
promise, and to your children, and to all
that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our
40 God shall call unto him. And with many
other words he testified, and exhorted them,
saying, Save yourselves from this crooked
41 generation. They then that received his
word were baptized: and there were added
unto them in that day about three thousand
42 souls. And they continued stedfastly in the
apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the
breaking of bread and the prayers.
43 And fear came upon every soul: and many
wonders and signs were done by the apostles.
44 And all that believed were together, and had
45 all things common; and they sold their pos-
sessions and goods, and parted them to all,
46 according as any man had need. And day
by day, continuing stedfastly with one accord
in the temple, and breaking bread at home,
they did take their food with gladness and
47 singleness of heart, praising God, and having
favor with all the people. And the Lord
added to them day by day those that were
being saved.

37 *When they heard this.* That is, Peter's address, contained in the previous verses (14-36). This sermon made a deep impression.

Its design was to prove that Jesus was the Messiah, and to produce in the hearers a personal sense of sin, particularly of the sin of rejecting and putting to death their own Messiah and the Saviour of men. The effect of this sermon is here stated. *They were pricked in their heart.* Not all, but very many of them, certainly three thousand. v. 41. *Pricked* — pierced, deeply troubled. The Spirit was working in their hearts. They saw now what they had done; that the Jesus of Nazareth whom they had crucified was indeed their long-expected Messiah, and that they had not only rejected him but killed him. They saw their sin, and pain and anguish seized them. *What shall we do?* In their remorse of conscience, and in their perplexity they turned to the apostles and surrendered themselves for guidance. They could not undo their past rejection and their crime; what could they do instead?

38 *Repent and be baptized.* Peter gladly answers, and tells them what they can do. There is mercy for them yet, though they have rejected and crucified their Messiah. *To repent* is to experience such a change of mind as effects a permanent amendment of life. It is more than sorrow for wrong-doing. In this case it implied an entire change of mind with regard to Christ. They had considered him an imposter; now they must recognize him as the Messiah, and accord to him the faith, the homage, the obedience and the love due to him as such. *Baptism* was also to be accepted. In this way they publicly recognized Jesus as their Messiah, and took their places among his disciples. *Every one of you.* The repentance and baptism must be personal, individual acts. *In the name of Jesus Christ.* The reference is not to the words of the formula of baptism, but to the fact that they should thus acknowledge Christ as their Messiah, Lord and Saviour. *For the remission of sins.* The *putting away* of sins, which is more than forgiveness, implying the entire removal of the consequences and the effects of sin, and also the breaking of its power over the life. See Isa. 1: 18; Matt. 1: 21; 1 John 1: 9. *Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.* This gift would follow the repentance and baptism. The same blessing which had now fallen upon the apostles and other disciples should fall upon all who would now receive Christ.

39 *The promise is unto you.* That is, the promise belongs to you. Peter refers to the promise of Joel, with which he began his sermon. It was for those whom he addressed on the conditions which he had just named. *And your children.* Your descendants or your children; that is, it is not for this present generation only, but for the next and the next. The words, "you and your children," embrace the whole Jewish nation, to whom the offer of salvation through Christ first came. *And to all that are afar off.* That is, to the Gentiles. Peter did not understand the full meaning of the words he used. He expected the conversion of the Gentiles by their first becoming Jews. *As many as the Lord our God shall call.* The Revised Version adds, "Unto him." That is, by his gospel. The words mean that this glorious promise of salvation and of the gift of the Holy Ghost is for all, Jews and Gentiles, who hear the invitation and will accept it.

40 *With many other words.* This is but the substance of Peter's sermon. He said much more, no doubt explaining very fully and clearly the way of salvation. *Testify and exhort.* He told them much more about Christ, instructing them fully, and then exhorting and entreating them to accept of Christ and be saved. *Save yourselves.* Literally, "Be saved." He pressed them to accept the way of salvation which he had pointed out to them. *From this untoward generation.* Revised Version, "Crooked generation." Referring to the perverse unbelief of the Jewish nation, as shown in their persistent rejection of Christ. He exhorted them to tear themselves away from the evil influence of their own people and boldly come out as Christ's disciples. See Matt. 12: 39; 16: 4; Mark 8: 38.

41 *They that gladly received his word.* All who believed what he said and accepted his advice. *Were baptized.* They settled the question at once, and were immediately baptized. See Matt. 28: 19. Canon Cook, in the "Speaker's Commentary," says: "This can hardly have been by immersion, even if the Twelve took part, each of them administering to two hundred and fifty. The supply of water within the walls of Jerusalem was extremely scanty, and access to the reservoirs, most precious to the population of a large city, would not have been allowed to such a multitude." *Three thousand souls.* This number during the day were added; that is, truly accepted Christ and publicly confessed him. They were received at once on their own simple confession, and instructed afterward.

42 The verses which follow to the close of this chapter describe the condition of the Church after this great addition to its numbers, telling us of their fellowship and church life. We cannot tell how long a time is covered, but it was probably brief, for persecution soon arose and dispersed the believers. *They continued steadfastly.* That is, the new converts. They did not fall away, but were faithful. *The apostles' doctrine.* Revised Version, "Teach-

ing." They remained under the instruction of the apostles, and they also followed out their counsels. They were good learners and faithful followers. *Fellowship.* They formed a close unity of life among themselves, dwelling together in love. Perhaps it is the same thought that is further expanded in v. 45. *In breaking of bread.* Referring most likely to the Lord's Supper, which they frequently observed. *In prayers.* Perhaps in meetings for prayer.

43 *Fear came upon every soul.* A feeling of awe and reverence. The words probably describe a deep religious emotion, such as always pervades a community in times of great spiritual awakening. *Wonders and signs.* Many miracles were wrought by the apostles. Some of these are subsequently described in detail.

44, 45 *All that believed were together.* It is not to be understood that they all lived in one company or in one house. This would have been impossible. But they formed one society, were knit together in heart and soul. *Had all things common.* Compare Acts 4: 32–34; 5: 1–4. There seems to have been in this first church at Jerusalem a real community of goods, the possessors disposing of their property, and devoting the proceeds to the relief of the wants of their fellow-Christians. This was done, however, in no place but in Jerusalem, so far as we know, and there probably only in the enthusiasm which attended the beginning of the Church. It was not something required or commanded, but was entirely voluntary. This we learn from chaps. 5: 4; 12: 12. *Parted them to all.* That is, to all fellow-Christians, not to all men. This system of relief extended only to the members of the church. *As every man had need.* This was not such an arrangement as modern communists desire. There was no community of goods in the sense that all became equal owners of the property of all; property was sold by the owners themselves, at their own volition, and the proceeds used only *for the relief of those who were poor and in need.*

46 *Continuing daily with one accord in the temple.* Meyer thus paraphrases this verse: "In the daily visiting of the temple, at which they attended with one accord, and amidst daily observance of the love-feast at home, they wanted not sustenance, of which they partook in gladness and singleness of heart." The Christian Jews still attended the temple services. *Breaking bread from house to house.* Revised Version: "At home." These house or home meetings were probably smaller gatherings for social worship, in addition to the great gatherings in the temple. "Breaking bread" *may* refer here to the Lord's Supper, as above in v. 42; but probably it refers here to ordinary meals in the way of hospitality. *Eat . . . with gladness.* The expression points to great joyousness in these early Christians. *Singleness of heart.* Simplicity and sincerity, with liberal spirit and humility.

47 *Praising God.* Their whole worship was full of praise. *Having favor.* This was before persecution arose. For a while they were saved from persecution that the Church might have time to take root. *The Lord added.* Jesus in glory. *Such as should be saved.* Revised Version: "Those that were being saved." Better, "the saved ones." "Men are said to be saved in reference not only to the final consummation but to the inception of the saving work."—*J. A. Alexander.* Every day those who were in the way of salvation were added. Notice that Christ added them—they did not add themselves, nor were they added by the apostles. These additions were made daily; it was a continually growing church.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

When they heard this they were pricked in their heart. No wonder, we say, when we remember what they had done. They had rejected and crucified their Messiah. They had killed him who had come to them as their Saviour. None of us had any part in the crucifixion of our Lord; yet have we all received him with love and faith as our own Saviour and Friend? Is there no reason why any of us should be pierced in our hearts? This is the first effect of the truth upon those who receive it; it wounds before it heals. The first thing to do with an unsaved person is to cause him to see his need. There is no use to offer salvation to one who does not know that he needs salvation.

What shall we do? Surely that is a most important question. What *should* they do? What *could* they do? They saw now that their Messiah had really come, and that they had killed him. Not only had they rejected him and thus thrust away the blessings he had brought them, but they were guilty of the crime of murdering him. What should they do? They could not undo the deed. They could not get back their Messiah that they might listen now to his words and receive his blessings, and flock to his banner. What could they do? Was there any hope for them? Was there any way of undoing or of receiving pardon? They were in sore perplexity, and they went to Christ's ordained ministers to ask what they could do. Does not

the same question come to the lips of some who study this lesson? You have rejected Christ thus far. You look back and there are offers, invitations, pleadings, beseechings, which you have spurned. You have resisted the Spirit's strivings. You have refused the glorious blessings. To-day your heart is full of bitterness because of your sin and your loss. What can you do? You cannot *undo*. A young man was dying in the hospital. A minister was passing through the ward, and seeing him said to him: "Can I do anything for you?" The young man looked up with despair in his face, and said: "Oh, sir, can you *un*do?" Then followed a sad confession of a wasted life, closing with the same question, "Can you *un*do this for me?" But no; there is no undoing. You cannot get back the sweet childhood again, or the tender youth, or the early years of manhood or womanhood, to live them over and live them better. "Some things God gives often; some he gives only once. The seasons return again and again, and the flowers change with the months, but youth comes twice to none." You cannot undo; you cannot live over the wasted years. What *can* you do?

Repent. That is the first step toward life. What is repentance? The Catechism answer is excellent. It is not enough to drop a few tears over a wrong life. The wrong must be given up, turned away from, forsaken. There must be a change of mind, and that change of mind must show itself in the conduct. A little way out of Dayton, Ohio, a young man met an older gentleman and asked him, "How far is it to Dayton?" "Twenty-five thousand miles," was the answer, "if you keep on as you are going now; a quarter of a mile if you turn square about." If an impenitent sinner asks how far it is to heaven the answer is, "Millions and millions of miles if you go on this way; just two steps if you turn right around." Sin must be given up. We can never be saved in the world if we keep our sins. Repentance implies sorrow for sin, but that is not all.

For the remission of sins. Remission is more than mere forgiveness. It is the *putting away* of sins. The *guilt* is put away utterly and for ever. God removes our transgressions from us as far as the east is from the west. There is *no* condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. When God forgives the sin is put behind his back, buried in the sea, remembered no more. These words all show the fulness and completeness of the pardon God bestows. When he justifies us he makes it as though we had never sinned. But he does more than forgive. He cleanses the heart, taking away the effects of the sin. Then he breaks the power of sin in us, regenerates and sanctifies us, and in the end delivers us altogether from sin and lifts us up to perfect holiness in heaven. One summer day the sun found a quantity of foul stagnant water in the gutter of a street. It lifted it up and carried it away, and the winds bore it on their wings through the air, and on a mountain top it came down again to earth, no more foul and stagnant, but pure snow, white as an angel's robes. So Christ takes souls stained and defiled by sin, lifts them up out of the foul corruption of earth, carries them through this world, and brings them at last to the mountains of glory whiter than snow. See Isa. 1: 18 and Ps. 51: 7.

The promise is to you and to your children. Peter meant primarily the children of the Jews to whom he was speaking, but the promise is also to the children of God's covenant people everywhere. So it is for the children who are studying this lesson to-day. God never leaves out the children. He never forgets them. He always has a warm place for them in his heart, and makes a warm place for them in his Church. The children may have all these blessings that he has prepared at such infinite cost. Christian parents should look with full faith upon their children as the heirs of the promise.

To all that are afar off. So the circle widens out, as when a stone is dropped in the centre of a lake the little waves roll in circles wider and wider till they plash on all the shores, even out on farthest bays and creeks. This promise was given first to the company that stood there and heard Peter, and then it reached out till it came to those who were afar off, the farthest off; the farthest off in space, the ends of the earth; the farthest off in time, down to the end of the world; the farthest off in character, the worst and guiltiest. So it comes to us to-day, no matter who we are or where.

They continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine. Young converts may learn some lessons from these new converts. One is that they need instruction and ought to continue to learn. If they want to become strong and earnest Christians they must grow in knowledge. It is the end of a young Christian's prosperity in the Christian life and in spiritual growth when he thinks that he does not need to learn anything more. It is to be marked also that it was in the *apostles'* teaching that they continued. Young Christians will never grow if they feed on poor trashy novels and flashy story papers. They must get strong, pure food, God's word. Another suggestion here is that it is not enough to begin, to repent and be baptized and join the

church. After that young Christians must continue stedfastly, persistently, faithfully, never faltering till they reach the end. These words, "continued stedfastly," are grand words to be written of any one.

And fellowship and in breaking of bread and in prayers. They continued in fellowship. They were bound together as a church in close and strong union, with mutual sympathies and affections. The church ought to be a great help to its members through its fellowship. Young Christians should seek their friends, too, in the church. Another good thing in the life of this church was the constancy of its members in their attendance upon the ordinances. They faithfully observed the Lord's Supper at the prayer-meetings. Every young Christian should imitate this example. Those who are careless or indifferent in their attendance at communions and church-services, never grow into strong, earnest, or very useful Christians.

Sold their possessions . . . and parted them to all as every man had need. That is, they were large-hearted and charitable. They felt that they were all one family, and the rich made sacrifices to help the poor. We need not try any experiments in communism, but we should remember always that we are brethren. In a church and Sabbath-school the members should help one another. If one is poor and suffering, the others should share with him some of their plenty. If one is sick or in trouble, the others should give sympathy and comfort.

The Lord added to the church daily. That is, the way a church should grow. The *Lord* added those who were added. Only he can. Men's converts do not amount to anything if that is all they are. There is no use for us to persuade people to join the church unless the Lord converts them first. We might as well tie a lot of green branches to a bare pole and think we have made a flourishing green tree. How long would the branches remain green? Those who are induced by teachers and friends to join the church, but who have not been truly converted, will not long remain faithful. They are not really united to Christ, and have no divine life flowing into their souls. But when the Lord adds souls to his church he grafts them into himself as real branches, and they grow and are faithful and fruitful.

LESSON POINTS.

1. The first thing in trying to save the impenitent is to show them their guilt. v. 37.
2. The way to produce conviction is to show sinners who Christ is and what they are doing in rejecting him. (See Peter's sermon.)
3. There cannot but be anguish in the heart when a sinner sees what he is doing. v. 37.
4. There is a way of salvation, even for those who have sinned the most terribly. v. 38.
5. The only way of salvation is by repentance, faith in Christ and confession of him. v. 38.
6. The promise of mercy reaches to all. v. 39.
7. Those who believe should at once step out on Christ's side and confess him. v. 41.
8. True converts continue stedfastly in the way of Christ. v. 42.
9. Christians should dwell together in fellowship, as members of the same family. vs. 44, 45.
10. Christian life should be characterized by simplicity, joyfulness and praise. vs. 46, 47.
11. When a church is faithful, and its life warm and earnest, the Lord adds others to it. v. 47.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

Dear teacher, this is a lesson which clearly points out the way of salvation. To teach it aright you need precisely what Peter had, the baptism of the Spirit. Anew your heart must be filled with Christ's love, shed abroad by that Spirit. In teaching it aim at and look for the immediate salvation of every unsaved scholar in your class. Pray for all such scholars in secret and by name. It will avail little to have them know all the facts concerning the "anxious inquirers" of the day of Pentecost, and of the "faithful disciples" which they became, if that is all. But it will be of infinite moment for you, by God's Spirit and word, to make such scholars all anxious inquirers and faithful disciples. That same Spirit who came at Pentecost is now and here ready to convince and convert souls, and here is the same divine truth for you to wield.

How to Begin.—A look backward at the last lesson, thus: What was the birthday of the Christian Church? How did the Spirit come at Pentecost? On whom did he come? How had they been prepared for him? What were the effects of his coming? This present lesson is so closely interwoven with Peter's sermon that you had better have your scholars read verses 17–36 quietly in concert, or two verses apiece. Then ask one scholar to read over again verse 36. That is the point Peter is trying to prove. "*That same Jesus whom ye crucified is both Lord and Christ.*" What passages from the Old Testament does Peter quote? What had the Jews done to their Messiah? What had God done for him? In what respects was this a model sermon? (1. All about Jesus. 2. Full of Scripture. 3. Pointed with warnings. 4. Full of comfort for believers, etc.)

I. Anxious Inquirers. vs. 37–41.

Your aim is to produce the same conviction of sin in your scholars as these inquirers had. Perhaps the greatest defect in our present type of religious experience is the lack of this conviction of sin. It is a truth as old as Pentecost that *a view of the crucified Jesus slain by our sins* is the truth used by the Holy Spirit to produce this deep sense of the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the true grief and hatred of it. Here, then, is your opportunity to bring home this truth. Proceed in some such way as this: What was the effect of Peter's sermon? What truth specially pierced their hearts? In what way had these men been guilty of crucifying Jesus? (They had not bound him, nor laid him on the cross, nor driven the nails, nor thrust the spear into his side.) How were all unbelieving Jews guilty of crucifying Christ? What caused Jesus' agony and death according to Isa. 53: 4–7? According to Heb. 9: 23? According to 1 Pet. 2: 24? *Our sins crucified Jesus.* What feelings should fill our hearts when we know this? Such feelings as are well expressed in the old hymn—

"Oh how I hate those lusts of mine
That crucified my God;
Those sins that pierced and nailed his flesh
Fast to the fatal wood.

"Yes, my Redeemer, they shall die,
My heart has so decreed;
Nor will I spare the guilty things
That made my Saviour bleed."

Then proceed to consider, by questions, Peter's answer to the cry, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Take up the several points in the answer to the question, What is repentance unto life? Bring out the true meaning and relation of baptism, constantly applying it practically to your scholars. Let the entire lesson be a thrust of the sword of the Spirit.

II. Faithful Disciples. vs. 42–47.

Here you have the further opportunity of bringing out the place in the Christian life of the Lord's Supper (breaking of bread), of the word (the apostle's doctrine), of prayer, of Christian fellowship, love and joy.

If your class is one of older scholars assign such topics as the following to individuals to report upon next Sabbath, January 28th. Write each on paper:

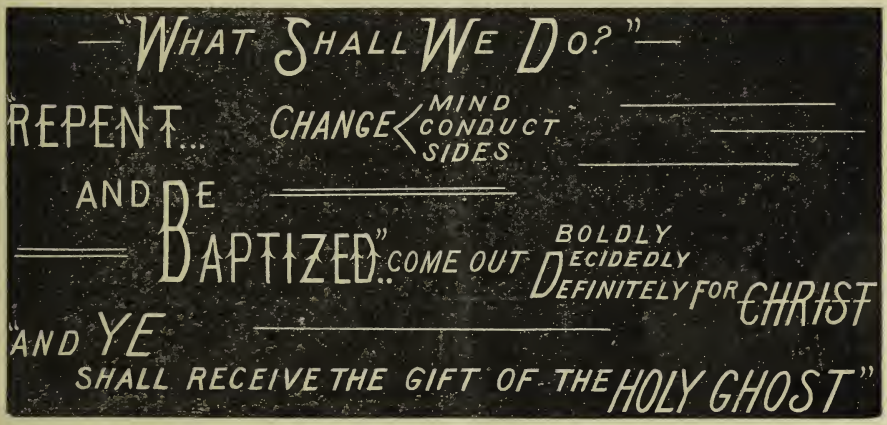
Different opinions as to which was the Gate Beautiful.

The attendance of early Christians on the temple services.

The miracle of Peter and John.

A list of the recorded miracles of the apostles.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



The Purpose of the Lesson.—The awakened sinner cries out, "What shall I do? Is there any help for me?" The answer comes, you are pardoned, because Jesus, whom you rejected and crucified, asked with his dying breath that you be forgiven. "Repent," then, "and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." All you can do is to repent and make confession of Christ, and these you must do before you can receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Notice the necessity of individual repentance, "*Every one of you.*" Rom. 3: 23. There are many ways to present this beautiful lesson to the mind with the use of the blackboard. Take for instance—

THE GOSPEL { WOUNDING. HEALING.

"They were pricked in their heart." It is important that the heart be affected. Sin has

its seat there; there the change must begin. Says Arnot, "To preach a healing gospel when there is no wound on the conscience, is like pressing draughts of cold water on those who experience no thirst. I know of nothing sweeter than water to the thirsty; but I know of nothing more insipid than water to those who are already satisfied." The last two verses of the lesson afford a very appropriate theme for a service of song, which may be made the desk lesson for the entire time allotted to the superintendent, or may be briefly used in closing the session of the school. It will be a change from the usual order, and will be found to be very helpful and interesting to the school. Place upon the board, previous to the school session, the words, "*Daily Praising God*," as in diagram. Introduce lesson by singing an appropriate hymn from the book used in your school. Show that we may praise God daily (1) in *service*, and print "Service," as in diagram, while the school sings an appropriate hymn; (2) in *obedience*; (3) these imply *nearness*, and (4) they all bring *gladness*. Sing after each one, and at the close print "IN" before the word daily. Now show how "The Believing People" spent their time, having the school go over with you each one of these things: "In daily *service*, praising God;" "In daily *obedience*, praising God," etc., and impress that these together make a *daily song* for every believer.

SERVICE
DAILY OBEDIENCE PRAISING
NEARNESS
GLADNESS GOD.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Recall the children's knowledge of Peter. See if they remember his base denial of Jesus. Now they find him boldly speaking in his name, telling the people plain truths. Print the word "REPENT." It is well to be very careful of your explanation of repentance. Too many children think that a carelessly uttered "I'm sorry," forgotten as soon as spoken, is evidence of repentance. But it is not. Many who say this every day continue to do the same things over and over again. True repentance is such a sorrow for sin as makes us turn away from the sin and leave it for ever.

There is something in this lesson about the children. Peter speaks their name in his sermon. Encourage class to tell what he said. Remind them that the great promise of which Peter speaks here is to them—the very children you are now teaching. Show them how great a promise it is.

A blue arch to mark a promise. Print in it, "*To You*," "*To Your Children*." What is the promise? Nothing less than that this same wonderful friend, the Holy Spirit, shall be given to them if they will. Make the steps to be taken, in order to receive this gift, *very* plain.

There is another thought in this lesson very important to explain to children, viz.: Being *called*. Whom has God called? How does he call little children?

Illustration by Story.—Show a sealed letter; break the seal and tell class of a certain school in which were a hundred scholars. One day the teacher received a note like this (read): "Whoever would like to spend a day at my house is invited to come next Thursday on the ten o'clock train." Sign a name that the teacher will explain belongs to a wealthy man who lives in a beautiful home. In that school was one little boy who said he was not invited. "Why?" his teacher said; "Don't you belong to the school?" "Oh yes." "Well, don't you want to go?" Yes, indeed, he did. "Then didn't you hear the invitation, 'Whoever wants to go?'" Yes he heard, yet he persisted in saying that he was not invited. The class will agree that he is a very foolish boy. Open the Bible to the verse: "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely," being careful to explain that Jesus is the water of life. How foolish for one, hearing that verse, to think that he is not invited, or "called" to Jesus!

A little time may be most profitably spent in letting the children tell of ways in which they have been called, the teacher explaining that every Sabbath lesson, every Bible verse, every prayer, every hymn is an invitation to Jesus. How many accepted the call that day? Teach the wonderful fact that three thousand people gave themselves to Jesus!

A pretty gift-card might be arranged by writing a little pledge:

> "DEAR JESUS:—I have received your invitation and mean to come to your beautiful home in heaven. I mean to start today."

A blank left for a name, and the whole enclosed in a tiny envelope for the child to carry home, and sign if he will, after thinking and praying over it, may prove a little seed that shall bear fruit for eternity.

REPENT

TO YOU, TO YOUR CHILDREN.

Lesson IV. **THE HEALING POWER.** *Jan. 28th, 1883.*

Acts 3: 1–11. Memorize vs. 6–8.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing."—Isa. 35: 6.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 3: 1–11.....*The Healing Power.*
T. Isa. 35: 1–10.....*The Joy of those Cured.*
W. Matt. 8: 1–15.....*Miracles of Healing.*
Th. Matt. 10: 1–8.....*Power Given to the Apostles.*
F. Matt. 12: 1–13.....*Withered Hand Restored.*
S. Luke 17: 11–19.....*Ten Lepers Cleansed.*
S. John 5: 1–9.....*Impotent Man Cured.*

TOPIC.

Christ the Great Healer.

LESSON PLAN.

1 The Helpless Cripple. 2. The Mighty Name. 3. The Wondering Witnesses.

Time.—A. D. 30, not long after the last lesson. **Place.**—The temple in Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 4. *What is God?* A. God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 943: "Come let us sing of Jesus." Other hymns, 14, 25, 33, 36.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—The closing scenes of our last lesson represent the condition of things in the early church at Jerusalem at least for days, perhaps for weeks or longer. Our lesson to-day is an account of *one* of the "many wonders and signs done by the apostles" (Acts 2: 43) in those days. It is recorded because it was the occasion of a sermon by Peter which was followed by the first attack made upon the infant church.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

1 Now Pe'ter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, *being* the ninth *hour*. [Acts 2: 46; Ps. 55: 17.]

2 And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; [Acts 14: 8.]

3 Who seeing Pe'ter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms.

4 And Pe'ter, fastening his eyes on him with John, said, Look on us. [Isa. 45: 22.]

5 And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them.

6 Then Pe'ter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Je'sus Christ of Naz'a-reth rise up and walk. [Acts 4: 10.]

7 And he took him by the right hand, and lifted *him* up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

8 And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.

9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God: [Acts 4: 16–21.]

10 And they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him. [John 9: 8]

11 And as the lame man which was healed held Pe'ter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Sol'o-mon's, greatly wondering. [John 10: 23; Acts 5: 12.]

REVISED TEXT.

1 Now Peter and John were going up into the temple at the hour of prayer, *being* the
2 ninth *hour*. And a certain man that was lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the door of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms
3 of them that entered into the temple; who seeing Peter and John about to go into the
4 temple, asked to receive an alms. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him, with
5 John, said, Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something
6 from them. But Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but what I have, that give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Naza-
7 reth, walk. And he took him by the right hand, and raised him up: and immediately his feet and his ankle-bones received strength.
8 And leaping up, he stood, and began to walk; and he entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising
9 God. And all the people saw him walking
10 and praising God: and they took knowledge of him, that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him.
11 And as he held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.

1 *Now Peter and John went up.* There is no way of determining how long a time elapsed between the day of Pentecost and the incident here narrated, but it was probably very brief. This is the first of the apostolic miracles recorded and may be one of those referred to in chap. 2: 43. Peter and John, who here appear together, had long been friends and companions, having been partners as fishermen before they became disciples. Luke 5: 1–11. For

other incidents of their friendship see Luke 22: 8; John 13: 23, 24; 18: 15, 16; 20: 3–6; 21: 7. *The hour of prayer . . . the ninth.* That is, three P. M., or more strictly midway between noon and sunset. This was the time for the evening sacrifice (Ex. 29: 41), which was also observed as an hour of prayer. The apostles, being Jews, still observed the rites of Jewish worship.

2 *A certain man.* He had been lame from his birth and was now above forty years old. Chap. 4: 22. *Was carried.* Was in the act of being carried as the apostles were entering the temple. *They laid daily.* His friends were in the habit of bringing him every day to this position as it was favorable for receiving alms. *The gate . . . Beautiful.* It is not possible to identify this gate with our meagre knowledge of the temple. Neither Josephus nor the Talmud mentions a gate of this name. The gate of Shushan has been suggested. It was eighty-seven feet high, and was covered with lilies in high relief. The gate of Nicanor has also been suggested. It was of Corinthian brass, and surpassed in splendor all the others although they were all decorated with gold and silver plates. *To ask alms.* Such people lived in those days upon alms, and these temple gates and other public places afforded good opportunity for begging. It is just the same to-day in Jerusalem and other Eastern cities; beggars sit at public gates and along frequented thoroughfares.

3, 4 *Seeing Peter and John.* As they entered with the throng. He probably did not know who they were. *Fastening his eyes.* Very intently and earnestly. *Look on us.* He desired to secure the man's attention, and arouse in him something of expectation and faith.

5 *Expecting to receive something.* Probably he expected merely a gift of money. The man had faith in Christ, as we learn from verse 16, but it seems to me likely that this faith did not start up in his soul until the mention of the name of Christ a little later. v. 6. But there was in the lame man a vague hope of receiving *something*, he knew not what, which was a foundation for faith in Christ when help in his name was offered.

6 *Silver and gold have I none.* The apostle had left all to follow Christ (Matt. 19: 27), and he had not accumulated money during his ministry. The common fund referred to in chap. 2: 45 was only for believers. But the meaning of his words here probably is that his way of doing good was not by giving money. *Such as I have give I thee.* He had not money to give, but he would cheerfully help him in another way. *In the name.* By the authority of. Peter was Christ's apostle and wrought only for him, doing nothing on his own account. It should be noticed here that Christ never wrought miracles in this way, in the name of another, but always in his own. *Of Nazareth.* The Nazarene. This name, a name of derision as applied to Christ by his enemies, is here used with triumphant emphasis by Peter to show that he who had been so despised by the Jews now had all power in his exaltation.

7 *He took him by the right hand.* One reason was to strengthen the man's dawning faith, which probably was yet weak. Another was to show the lame man that his healing came through the instrumentality of the Lord's apostles. The act showed also sympathy and a desire to help, which would warm the poor man's heart. Jesus gave his hand to Simon's wife's mother in like manner (Mark 1: 31); also to the daughter of Jairus. Matt. 9: 25. *His feet and ankle-bones.* This statement shows us the nature of his lameness. The words in the original indicate the accuracy of a physician's description. (Luke was a physician.) The cure was instantaneous.

8 *Leaping up.* The acts described in this verse not only indicate the man's joy and gratitude, but also illustrate the completeness of the cure. His walking was almost, if not quite, another miracle in itself, for he had never walked, having been born lame, and yet he was enabled to walk and leap in his gladness without learning to use his feet. *Entered with them.* He joined himself to the apostles and accompanied them into the temple. His walking and leaping in the presence of the throng gave publicity at once to the miracle, for he had been a beggar at the gate so long that many knew him. *Praising God.* Showing his gratitude and also that he was a man of devout spirit.

9, 10 *All the people saw him.* There would be a throng in the temple at this hour. They knew him, as he was a noted mendicant, and recognized the miracle. *Filled with wonder.* Their feelings were of mingled awe and astonishment. *That which had happened.* They had not seen the miracle performed; they saw only the result, and part of their wonder was as to the manner in which he had been healed.

11 *The lame man . . . held Peter and John.* Perhaps fearing that if they left him his lameness might return. But his clinging to them shows especially his gratitude for his cure. He wanted to be with his benefactors. *Porch . . . Solomon's.* This was the place in which the man and the apostles were, and to which the

multitude flocked. This porch was not built by Solomon, but rested on a foundation wall made by him. It was a grand roofed colonnade, six hundred feet in length, and seventy-five in width. Our Lord walked in this colonnade. John 10: 23.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

A certain man lame . . . they laid daily at the gate. This had been his place of begging for years. Jesus himself had often passed through that same gate as he went in and out of the temple, and no doubt this man had been lying there then, yet he had not been healed by him. The reason was that the man had never had faith enough to ask for healing. So, year after year multitudes of lame people lie unblessed and unhealed about the very gates of God's sanctuaries, while Jesus continually passes by them, healing and blessing others. It is a touching thought that ofttimes needy souls wait long, close to the Saviour, and are not helped.

Seeing Peter and John . . . asked an alms. A bit of money was all he asked or expected to receive. He did not know what they were able to give him. Is it not so with us in our praying? We ask only for little things, and for things that perish in a day. We ask for money and for bread, and for worldly power; we do not know that there are any better things, at least we do not really want better things. We do not seem to think what precious things God has it in his power and in his heart to give us. He will give us grace and love and joy; he will give us everlasting life and heaven. Yet we go day after day to the beautiful gate of prayer and hold out our hand and beg for a little paltry money, or a few acres more of ground, or a little more fame. When we get home where we can see things from the other side, and see them as they are, we shall be utterly amazed at our folly in seeking only trifles all our life when such glorious gifts were all the time ready to be given to us, simply for the asking.

Peter fastening his eyes on him said, "Look on us." Peter was not too great or too fine a gentleman to stop and have a little talk with a street beggar. He spoke kindly to him. He did not forget that under those rags there beat a human heart with feelings that could be hurt by rudeness and made glad by gentle kindness. It is certainly worth while for us to learn this one little lesson here in passing. We need not brush by a ragged beggar with disdain if we *are* finely dressed. We do not know who the person is. We *do* know that there is an immortal soul wrapped up in that heap of wretchedness that is capable of shining in glory. Perhaps it is one of God's children that sits there. At least it will do us no harm, some time in passing, to stop and say a kind word. It is not often such words fall on those ears.

Silver and gold have I none: but such as I have give I thee. He had no money with him and he might have heaved a sigh and dropped a tear and passed on to his prayers. But that was not what he did. Because he had no money he did not suppose that he could not do anything for the poor man. He would give what he had. There are a great many who cannot give money to the needy, but money is not the only thing that will help people. Indeed it is usually the poorest alms that can be given. Kind words are better, love and sympathy are better. Christ never gave money to any one, yet there never was such a giver as he. We cannot give the same large measure of help that Jesus gave, or that the apostles gave; but we can give the same *kind* of help. There is not one of us who cannot give things to others which will enrich their lives far more than if we put money into their hands. We can give a cheering word, if nothing else, to some weary one in the way, which will brighten a heart for many a weary mile.

He took him by the right hand and lifted him up. He not only spoke the healing word, but he reached out the helping hand. It is a great thing to "lend a hand" when one is down, to help him rise. There is a familiar picture of one rescued from the waves and clinging with one hand to the cross, while the other is reaching down and laying hold upon another who is struggling in the dark waters. There are many about us who need a helping hand. It is not enough to preach or teach; we must give sympathy and love and help to those who are lying helpless in their sins. Then the sorely tempted need a hand to help them, and those also who have fallen.

He leaping up stood, and walked. These acts proved the reality of his cure. We must prove also the reality of our conversion in acts of spiritual activity. Some people profess to have become Christians, and then just lie where they were, inactive, showing no evidence of spiritual life. They have mouths, but they speak not with them—for Christ; they have hands, but they take up no work for Christ; they have feet, but they walk not for Christ. Conversion, if true, ought to send the life tingling into every member. We ought to walk and leap and praise God.

He entered with them into the temple. No sooner was he healed than he attached himself to the apostles and went on with them. The newly converted Christian should at once join Christ's people, and seek his friendships and companionships among them. This implies open confession—and that is a most important duty. Christ requires it, and it is needful to the completeness and healthiness of the Christian life. It implies also union with the Church, and this also is a duty of great moment.

The people saw him walking and praising God . . . and they were filled with wonder. Just the sight of that man walking about in the temple was as good as a great many sermons. If he had sat still after he was healed, still holding out his hand and asking for alms, his healing might have been a little comfort to himself, but it would not have been worth a straw for testimony. Those who have been healed by Christ ought to manifest it. It will bring deeper joy to themselves; then it will be of great value to the cause of Christ and to other souls. Rise up when Christ has healed you, and let people see in your life what he has done for you.

LESSON POINTS.

1. It is good to observe the ordinances of religion with faithfulness. v. 1.

2. It is a good thing to bring our friends to the beautiful gate of prayer, even if we can do no more for them. They are then in the way of blessing. v. 2.

3. Needy souls ofttimes lie long at the gates, close to blessing, and remain unblessed. v. 2.

4. We all continue at the gate of prayer asking for trifles when God is willing and able to give us gifts of infinite value. v. 3.

5. It is right to pay heed even to a miserable beggar. May be God sent us to him on an errand. If so we had better do it. v. 4.

6. Kind words very soon open the heart of the poor and needy. v. 5.

7. Money is not the only good thing to give. Love and help and sympathy are better. v. 6.

8. Every one can give *something* to needy ones, and "Such as I have" is the measure of duty. v. 6.

9. We ought to lend a hand to every one who is down or is weak. v. 7.

10. Those who are healed by Christ should at once rise up and walk. v. 8.

11. This miracle illustrates the case of the sinner and the Saviour. Note these points:

a. This man had been lame, and utterly helpless, from birth. The sinner is born helpless.

b. He asked only for money, not knowing that he was close to great spiritual blessings—to the Saviour, too.

c. Peter's coming to this helpless man and looking upon him illustrates Christ's compassion when he sees the sinner.

d. This man did not know what he needed, and thought money was all. The sinner does not know his need.

e. Christ heals the helpless sinner, giving him new strength.

f. Christ takes the sinner by the hand to help him rise.

g. The saved sinner gives evidence of his salvation by walking, leaping and praising God.

h. When the world sees an earnest confession and active life, they are impressed by it.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

Dear teacher, might it not be well to settle in your mind precisely what kind of a lesson you have here? It is a narrative, simple in words and picturesque in details. You will have little need to explain terms. You will have no trouble in winning or retaining attention. The lesson itself will take care of that, with its "gate called Beautiful," the lame beggar, Peter and John with their eyes "fastened" on him, the wonderful healing, the leaping man holding the apostles in his arms and praising God, and the surprised crowd.

Your labor will be to enforce the great religious truths embodied in these facts. You know that "a miracle is a parable in action." Success in dealing with any parable depends on getting hold of the great central truth—not making it "go on all fours," but keeping to the great points illustrated.

Your line of approach to this lesson will be by a rapid review of the last three lessons, bringing out only their main points, as a sort of monthly review, and showing that this narrative is one instance of many referred to in Acts 2: 43.

I. MAKE THE WHOLE SCENE REAL AND VIVID.

1. If the class be young have the scholars employ their best powers in picturing out all the facts. See Lesson I. Beware of making this description simply artistic; let the element of reality and instructiveness prevail. Call on them for descriptions of lame persons they have seen, especially of beggars. Let them describe their poverty, weariness, their helplessness and all their sufferings. How should we show our pity for such? How did Christ treat the lame and blind? Why was this man not taken to the poor-house or hospital? Show that all almshouses and hospitals have come from Christ's teaching. Having the case of the lame

beggar once fairly before them, it will be easy to carry them through all the story.

2. If the class is one of older scholars, you might refer to the fact that one of the masterpieces of the greatest of all painters was concerning this miracle—the cartoon of Raphael, of the healing at the gate Beautiful. Here are the words of our lesson which inspired that picture. What facts are given in this narrative which make the healing so real? The place (do not spend too much time in locating the gate Beautiful), the time, the man born lame, his custom of begging. But with such a class hasten over the description and the narrative and come to the point.

II. THE HEALING OF THE LAME BEGGAR—AN ILLUSTRATION OF CONVERSION.

1. In what respects was the lame beggar a fit emblem of the sinner? In what particulars are the sinner's powers lame? What has caused his helplessness or powerlessness to do right? Why is the sinner to blame for his own weakness and spiritual lameness? (His own sins make him lame, *i. e.*, unable to walk by faith, or to go in God's paths, or to do anything good.) In what is the sinner *poor?*

2. What power healed the lame beggar? Whose word brought that power? What is needed by the sinner to enable him to repent and believe? What are the *means* of obtaining the power of Christ? How are we made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ? What doth God require of us that we may escape his wrath and curse due to us for sin? Emphasize the fact that conversion is wrought through the *word.*

3. How does the healed man's walking and praising God illustrate the saved sinner's life? (Christian walk, joyful praise, etc.)

Topics in next lesson to be assigned to scholars for investigation at home:

1. Why did Peter call Christ the Prince of Life?

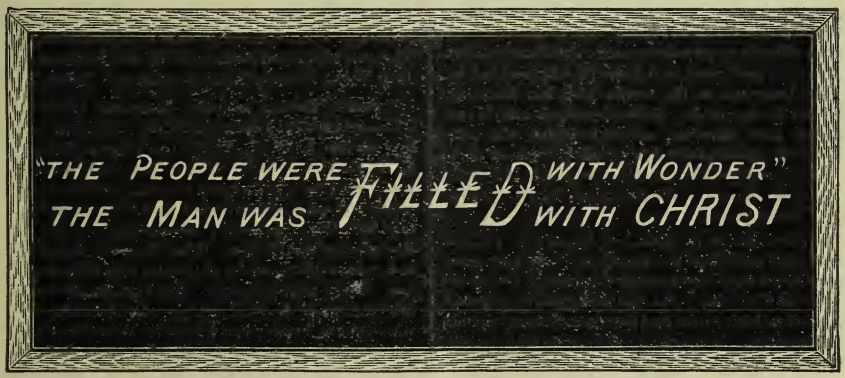
2. What was Solomon's porch? Why so called?

3. Contrast the treatment which the Jews gave Christ with the treatment God gave him.

4. Write out the meaning of vs. 19–21.

5. How is faith in Christ necessary to salvation?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



Directions.—Let the word FILLED only be placed upon the board previous to the desk lesson. An anxiety will be aroused to know what it means. Show first the effect of the cure upon the people, and print as in diagram. Contrast this with the effect upon the man, and print as in diagram; impressing that it is better to be filled with Christ than to be filled with wonder. Many are filled with wonder, few are filled with Christ. Christ is better than silver and gold. Christ is the sinner's need. Or the following may be used:

WE SHOULD ALL HAVE
A HEART TO LOVE
AND A HAND TO LIFT UP THE FALLEN.

Hints as to coloring.—"FILLED," green letters, shaded yellow; the rest, top line, white; lower line, orange.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

I earnestly hope, dear primary teachers, that you have cultivated in your classes the habit of using the *Westminster Primary Leaf* to such purpose that your children will be fully prepared with the story of the lesson, and be eager to give it to you in detail.

Make an outline of the temple, or, what shall represent it, two upright marks for Peter and

John, and a prostrate one for the lame man. The prominent feature of this lesson, is, "THE MIGHTY NAME." Print these words. Recall to the minds of the children the fact that Jesus of Nazareth had been a despised name, mocked at, ridiculed; yet note its power. Erase the mark representing the lame man, and make it upright. "All hail the power of Jesus' name." If the children are familiar with this old hymn, it would be well to sing it just here.

Follow the cured man into the temple. Note the first thing that he does with his new strength: "Walking and leaping and *praising God*." The golden text fits in just here.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION.—How many lame feet are there in your class? Astonish the little people by gradually developing the fact that all the feet are lame—*i. e.*, out of order—unable to do what they were made for.

"These two little feet must be willing, and hasten,
To walk in the narrow way."

They should always go to just the right places, and help in just the right things. But they don't. A great deal of the time they help along Satan's plans. Instance ways, in which the feet go astray, that shall fit the personal experiences of your scholars.

The Remedy.—Jesus can cure them, make them willing and eager to walk in the narrow way. Let class instance ways in which the feet can serve God.

SPECIAL THOUGHT.—The cured man awakened the wonder of the people; they came in crowds to see him, and he had a chance to tell them in whose name he was healed.

A little child whose feet have been straying, if he gives them entirely to Jesus, has a chance to show people how Jesus had made him strong. He will then use his feet and use them for Christ, running errands for him.

The lesson hymn, given on *Primary Leaf*, emphasizes the importance of trusting ever in the name of Jesus.

ABOUT NEW BOOKS.

..DOROTHY DORCHESTER, by Helen B. Williams, is a new book which we can most heartily recommend for family and Sabbath-school libraries. Our older young people will find it both interesting and instructive. It traces the life of two girls from early childhood, shows their school experiences, and how Dorothy was led by a way she knew not to the work which her heavenly Father had for her to do. Sabbath-schools which are purchasing new libraries, or replenishing the old, should by all means place this sprightly book on their list. It is a good book for teachers to give to the older girls in their classes. Presbyterian Board. 16mo, pp. 396. Price, $1.25.

..The Rev. James S. Root, of Adams, N. Y., has prepared and publishes an ingenious PROGRAM AND APPOINTMENTS FOR MISSIONARY CONCERTS, for use in Presbyterian Churches. Its use will greatly promote true interest in both home and foreign missions, and so effort and success. It is a chart, and can be folded so as to go into the pocket or hung up for inspection. Send fifteen cents to Mr. Root and get a copy of it.

..MY PORTFOLIO: A Collection of Essays. By Austin Phelps, D.D. The author's name is pledge of the character and value of the book, as everything Dr. Phelps writes is worth reading. The "Essays" here collected have appeared in various religious newspapers during the last few years. The topics are all of fresh interest, touching many of the great questions of the day. We heartily commend the book. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. Price, $1.50.

..GOD'S LIGHT ON DARK CLOUDS. By Theodore L. Cuyler, D.D. This little volume is dedicated "to the desponding and the bereaved," for which classes it contains many words of sympathy and cheer. The chapters have appeared in the papers as current articles, and are now collected and published in this permanent form. The book is well suited to be given to friends who are in affliction. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. Price, 75 cents.

..FIFTEEN; or, Lydia's Happenings. By Mrs. Nathaniel Conklin (Jennie M. Drinkwater). Readers of this author's previous books will enjoy this new one from her pen. The story takes its name from the age of the heroine when her story opens on her fifteenth birthday. The interest is well sustained throughout. The teachings and tendencies of the book are good. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. Price, $1.50.

..FIFTY YEARS IN THE TURKISH EMPIRE; or, Memoirs of Rev. William Goodell, D.D., late missionary of the A. B. C. F. M., at Constantinople. By E. D. G. Prime, D.D. The subject itself is one of intense interest, whether we consider it as a record of noble and most effective work for Christ, or as the story of a life of singular beauty, illustrating in a rare degree the spirit of the Master. That the story is well told in this volume the name of the writer is sufficient guarantee. Every page is bright. We attempt no resumé of the contents of the book, simply recommending it to all who want to know what has been done for Christ by one devoted man, and to all who want their hearts warmed for better service. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. Price, 8vo, $2.50; 12mo, $1.50.

..THE LIFE OF CHRIST. By Rev. William Hanna, D.D., LL.D. This work needs no commendation, as it is already well known. It is unlike Farrar's or Geike's "Life of Christ," in that it partakes more of the form of sermons or expository lectures. The story is told in its consecutive order, and well told; then, besides, we have the doctrinal, spiritual and practical teachings of the incidents brought out, as well as the historical facts. In the study of this always fresh and sacred theme, Dr. Hanna's clear and vivid chapters will prove of incalculable value. This edition is in one large volume, with clear type, bound in cloth and handsomely illustrated. American Tract Society, New York and Philadelphia. Price, $1.50.

Any of these books may be ordered from the Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1334 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.

THE WESTMINSTER TEACHER.

VOL. XI. FEBRUARY, 1883. NO. 2.

—How it would elevate the tone of our lives if we could learn always to live up to our best moods, to let our best thoughts rule us! The article in this number, by Ruth Ogden, on this subject is suggestive.

—In the matter of anniversary programme the neatest and most attractive that has come to our table is from the Sunday-school of the Third Presbyterian Church, of Elizabeth, New Jersey. The superintendent, R. W. Woodward, is indefatigable in his work and always at the front. When a superintendent carries his school so deep in his heart as does Mr. Woodward, it is sure to be successful.

—Apropos of the article of Rev. P. D. Cowan on the Catechism, it is a significant fact, as shown by the annual sales of the Presbyterian Board, that the demand for the Shorter Catechism is steadily increasing, and, at the same time, that the demand for the Child's Catechism, for very young children, has so advanced that the yearly sales now reach seventy or eighty thousand. This does not look as if the use of the Catechism were dying out very rapidly.

—Mr. Moody tells of a blind beggar sitting by the sidewalk on a dark night with a bright lantern by his side; whereat a passer-by was so puzzled that he had to turn back with: "What in the world do you keep a lantern burning for? You can't see!" "So't folks won't stumble over me," was the reply. Look out teacher! Keep your light burning—yes, burning brightly—that none of those who are committed to your care stumble over you. What you are will tell upon them quite as much as what you say.

—It is not needful that we shake with alarm at infidel attacks upon the Bible. Dr. Austin Phelps well puts this fact in "My Portfolio:" "Early in the autumn, I have heard three or four crickets under the hearthstone serenading each other in voices sharp and shrill, which seemed as if they were a thousand strong. They made the whole house ring. But the solid earth moved on its way, the autumn passed into winter, the crickets died and were no more heard. Such a passing racket are the harpings of a few skeptical minds upon this everlasting claim that our faith is defunct, our theology obsolete, our pulpit dead."

—It may appear to some primary class teachers, at first thought, that the space given in our pages to the help for this department is small, considering the importance of their work. But it must be remembered that the entire series of lesson helps is also for them, the explanatory and illustrative notes, the blackboard and teaching suggestions, and that Mrs. Alden's excellent hints are given in addition to all this. Indeed, primary teachers are the only ones for whom special help is provided, and this is done because of our belief that no other classes are quite so important, and no other teachers need quite so much assistance. However, we may give still more space to this special feature of our help in the future.

—"New England Bygones," by E. H. Arr, three years ago, modestly offered itself to the reading public and immediately made every one ask who was the "E. A. Arr," whose pen drew pictures of such rare gracefulness of style, delicacy of thought and graphic power of expression. The death of Mrs. Ellen H. Rollins, a year since, made known to the public that the author was the gifted wife of the Hon. E. A. Rollins, of Philadelphia. J. B. Lippincott & Co. now produce an enlarged and exquisitely illustrated edition of "New England Bygones," with an introduction by Gail Hamilton, which is as warmly eulogistic of Mrs. Rollins, as it is skillfull in its analysis of her character and vivacious in its story of her life. Admirably cut engravings of designs from our most skilled artists, with corresponding paper and presswork, combine fitly to clothe this uncommon book, and to form a volume of unusual attractions. Price, $5.00.

"HALF-HOURS WITH THE LESSONS OF 1883."—Have you seen it? The book costs but $1.50, and contains a brief, practical sermon on each of the forty-eight lessons of the year. For contents see advertising pages in this number. The time to buy this book is of course this year, and the earlier the better.

SABBATH-SCHOOL ASSEMBLIES.—The Southern States are to have a Southern "Chautauqua." Mont Eagle, Tennessee, has been chosen as the place. The Tennessee Iron and Coal Company has made a grant of a thousand acres

of land for the purpose, and others are aiding, so that it is expected that assembly and institute gatherings may be held there next summer. The Synod of New Jersey, at its last meeting, determined to hold a Sabbath-school Assembly again, in 1883, at Asbury Park, to be conducted, as heretofore, by Mr. Worden, in connection with a committee appointed by the Synod. These Presbyterian assemblies by the seaside have been increasingly useful for the past two years, and will continue to grow in attendance and instructiveness.

SABBATH-SCHOOL HYMN AND TUNE BOOK.—The last General Assembly voiced the desire of very many in the Presbyterian Church when it directed the Board of Publication to prepare a Hymn and Tune Book for use in our Sabbath-schools. In fact, the Board already had the work in hand. Many practical workers in the Sabbath-school, interested in this special department, pastors, superintendents and others, have sent in suggestions as to the character of the book, and lists of hymns and tunes deemed especially valuable. The material is now in the skillful hands of Mr. Theodore F. Seward, as musical editor, and it is hoped that the book will be ready within two months. The idea on which this hymnal is based is that it shall contain, both as to words and music: 1. What the young can sing. 2. What they will sing. 3. What they ought to sing. A judicious selection from the best hymns of the Church, those best in themselves and those most "singable," will form the back-bone of the book; to these will be added a large number of the most approved favorites from the many books published for use in the Sabbath-school and gospel meetings; and, as a third element, original pieces of merit, with choice selections from the modern ecclesiastical music of England and the Continent. It is hoped thus to secure a book at once sound, attractive and available for worship in the school. It will also be well suited for prayer-meeting use.

THERE is a general impression that the Church and Sabbath-school are not retaining their hold upon the young men, that the young men are drifting away from their classes as soon as they pass out of boyhood, and that they are not entering the churches as members in as large a proportion as in former days. It would be interesting to know just what the facts are in relation to this matter; also to know what special efforts are being made in the churches and Sabbath-schools to retain the young men, and with what success these efforts are attended. The subject is one of the deepest importance. Our young men are the hope of the Church and of the country. There are mighty influences at work to alienate them from the Christian faith, and to seduce them from the paths of virtue. There surely ought to be as earnest efforts made by the Church to secure their loyal adherence to Christianity and to throw about them the restraints of holiness. To call fresh attention to this subject, and to gather facts which may be made helpful to the whole Church, we would ask every pastor and superintendent to send us careful answers to the following questions:

1. Are your church and Sabbath-school retaining their hold upon your young men?

2. What in your opinion are the chief influences at work in your community to draw young men away from piety and religion?

3. What special efforts are you making in your church and Sabbath-school to strengthen your influence over young men?

4. With what measure of success are these efforts attended?

It is hoped that this matter will receive the prompt attention of all interested in young men.

THE CHRISTIAN TEACHER'S MISSION.

A Sonnet.

BY MERWIN P. SNELL.

O weary one, to whom it has been given
To store the Saviour's words in infant minds,
To lighten little souls which Satan blinds,
To guide young footsteps on the way to heaven;
Thou'lt ne'er regret that thou hast nobly striven.
In this, the noblest work that mortal finds,
Blesséd is he Christ's easy yoke who binds,
On one from whom the chains of sin are riven.
'Tis sweet to watch the opening flower, but more
To view the budding beauties of a soul;
And 'tis an angel's mission to implore
Blessings from gracious heaven for earthly dole;
Not less divine, an influence to pour
Which shall through countless coming ages roll.

A Personal Letter.

DEAR TEACHER: That you read me with interest is flattering to me; that you find me helpful is gratifying; but I wish to ask of you a favor—it is that you will not take me with you when you go to meet your class in the Sabbath-school. I am delighted to be of use to you in the study of your Bible-lesson at home, but I do not want to be carried to the class. The boys do not care to listen to me. In fact, I heard one of them say that he "wished you would study your lesson and come ready to teach them, instead of boring them with that old WESTMINSTER TEACHER." Just imagine my feelings at being called "that old WESTMINSTER TEACHER," and a "bore." I do not think myself a "bore;" but then I may be

under those circumstances. I do not pretend to fill your place in the class, only aiming to help you in your preparation to fill it yourself. When you begin to read, the boys begin to yawn or to play or to tease each other. I think the superintendent does not like to see you reading me in the class. At least he looks as if he fancied that you had neglected your study of the lesson at home, and were finding it easier to read from my pages than to teach for yourself. You will appreciate the painfulness to me of being so unwelcome, and when you think it over, will, I am sure, determine to relieve me and come to your class ready to teach without me. Anywhere else I shall be most happy to be with you. With every desire to be your co-worker, Sincerely yours,

WESTMINSTER TEACHER.

P. S.—If occasionally you find a paragraph in me that you think it will do the young people good to hear, I shall not object to accompanying you. Only let me suggest that it should be *occasionally*, and that the paragraph be not too long. W. T.

On Trusting Best Moods.

BY RUTH OGDEN.

HOW comparatively tranquil would be the lives of many Christians were it not for this incessant conflict with ever-changing moods! How they tyrannize over us, and how sovereign their sway! Now so hopeful and joyous as to span the whole future with a rainbow of glory and promise; now so gloomy and despairing as seemingly to nullify all endeavor! There are souls here and there, perhaps, whose peaceful lives encounter no such fluctuation; then let those souls look to it that they fathom the depths of gratitude, for theirs is freedom from the most harassing feature of the average Christian warfare. Indeed, such as they may scarce be able to comprehend the meaning of a mood at all. One can imagine that the word might be a literal enigma both to devil and angel, for permanent dispositions are not moods.

One of our own wise philosophers has said: "We cannot write the order of the variable winds. How shall we penetrate the law of our shifting moods and susceptibility?" But since the law itself in truth outwits our penetration, we ought to be able to discover the best method of annulling it.

No one denies the power and efficacy of lofty moods; they are the inspiration of laudable enthusiasm the world over. In their light life's very shadows are recognized as blessings, and we would that they might last. But this variableness of ours is constitutional. The spirit would have it otherwise, but the flesh is weak, and therefore so unreliable. This admitted weakness, however, does not presuppose any physical ailment or disability. Our standard of health may be higher than the average, but a certain inherent and insinuating tendency contrives to keep us in a chronic state of mental vibration. So surely as we find ourselves enjoying the exhilaration of mounting upward, we know the downward motion of the seesaw is inevitable.

One may readily conceive how this *knowing* might lead to despair, so far as any high hope of ultimate Christian attainment is concerned, and to a pessimistic view of life in general, while it ought to produce a directly opposite effect. It is the unsuspected danger that wrecks the ship; seldom the rock on which the light-house stands.

An unlooked-for evil may often overcome us, but defeat in the line of anticipated temptation is most inglorious. You know the rock ahead, look out for it since you may not take away the rock.

But to be more practical: You were happy yesterday under certain conditions; to-day, under the same conditions, you are unhappy. Or grant that to-day actually brings with it a somewhat longer train of anxieties and worries, there is not enough difference between them to account for this disgust and weariness. You know the fault is with yourself; that it is you who are out of time with the harmony of life. It is only through the medium of contented hopeful moods that we view our circumstances fairly, and therefore does this not argue that such moods, and such alone, are in reality trustworthy?

If experience has taught us that these alternations of doubt with trust, of gloom with happiness, are simply unavoidable, the virtue and heroism of character depends solely upon this, whether we are able to make *best* moods governing moods, and live up to them, even in these hours of depression, concealing, meanwhile, the querulous and discontented feeling. It is natural, perhaps, to speak and act it out. It is masterful to control and hide it, and one can do it. We only need to be thoroughly determined, that this thorn in our flesh shall not, even slightly, wound another, to find ourselves so deeply absorbed in the effort as almost to forget why it must be made.

There is wondrous consolation in sharing any honest burden with the friend who counts it but a privilege to aid you. It is quite another thing to make demands upon long-suffering sympathy for shadowy grievances, purely the result of our own conjuring. We are simply verifying, then,

the wretched old truism, "Misery loves company." It is no easy matter to cage these imaginary griefs behind the golden bars of silence, but great achievements of any description are seldom the outcome of easy processes.

Possibly no class of individuals experience all the retarding power of fluctuating moods more than do Sunday-school teachers. It is sorely trying to find yourself before your class, but not at all in the frame of mind you earnestly desire. You long to fill those young souls entrusted to your care with an enthusiastic love for the cause that you are pleading, and you find your own enthusiasm at dead low-tide. What avails it that you have studied your lesson prayerfully and carefully?

Ah, now is the time when you must realize that faith is a principle far, far above emotion, mood and temperament. Teach right on as best you may. Do not for one moment betray your own faint-heartedness, and you will have foiled one at least of the subtlest of temptations.

Froude has somewhere in his writings asserted that "Nobleness of character is nothing else than steady love of good and steady scorn of evil," and no doubt he is in the right. Intrinsic nobleness of character cannot exist without these elements.

What a resolute ring has that Anglo-Saxon word, "Steady," and what an anchor to the soul would be this maintaining of "steady love of good and scorn of evil," no matter what the trend of the vacillating mood.

Why He Failed.

BY KATE CALLA.

THE lesson was the parable of the husbandmen, and Horace Drayton sat in his room, on Saturday evening, preparing it for his class. He had studied it carefully all the week, and nothing remained now to be done except prepare a personal application for each scholar. There was Will. Why, the whole lesson seemed to have been intended for just such as he. He was not a Christian, but he was bringing forth the fruits of a strict morality. He must be reminded that he belonged to the Master of the vineyard. There was Fred, who was letting golden opportunities slip by; he must be impressed with the fact that when the planting is late, or the vines ill-cared for, the harvest would be scanty. George had acknowledged the Master, but now, in spite of many warnings, was letting the weeds and brambles of evil associations choke and dwarf his vines. In like manner was a lesson found for each one.

Sunday came, and at the breakfast table, as usual, Horace found the morning paper. The editorials were keen and stirring, the foreign news absorbing. His neighbor, a man of wide experience and deep thought, began a discussion. Politics at home and abroad involved their business interests, and Horace gained many new ideas and much valuable information. His mind was clear, his conscience at ease. He had, as he believed, prepared himself thoroughly for his Sabbath's work.

A few hours later he sat before his class. What change had come over the lesson that seemed so clear and practical the night before? What had become of his illustrations? He could not remember a single one. Not until the lesson hour was half gone did he get thoroughly warmed up to his subject. Then, alas! it was too late. Grieved and humiliated, he sought the cause of his failure. He had not far to look. The watchman on the tower, instead of thinking first of his vineyard, had neglected it. The morning that should have been given to holy thoughts and holy uses had been yielded to the Sunday morning paper, and that was why he had failed.

A Plea for the Shorter Catechism.

BY THE REV. P. D. COWAN.

WHAT the backbone is to the human frame, doctrine is to the religious life. All right action and all correct feeling must have their basis in correct belief. If we would influence men's lives, therefore, we must secure the leverage of their beliefs.

To no time of life does this principle apply with greater force than to the susceptible period of youth, when character is being moulded and life is being so rapidly shaped. The question is not whether doctrine should be taught our young people, but in what way we can best teach it. And, whether we look at the book itself or at the actual results of its use in the past, we are convinced that the Shorter Catechism is our most valuable aid, and should be restored to the place it once had in the religious instruction of the young.

Its authors, members of the celebrated Westminster Assembly of 1643, were men fitted for such a task. The public estimate of their work is seen in the millions of copies which have been sold; and from the fact that the yearly demand for it, even at the present time, is large and steady. The yearly sales by the Presbyterian Board of Publication are over 60,000 copies.

Its well-known interrogatory form is a noticeable excellence. The question puts the particular point under consideration in a clear and definite shape before the mind, so that confusion

of thought is avoided. Then, clear cut as a jewel, each answer sparkles with many-sided truths. There seems to be nothing redundant, nothing lacking. The memory is not burdened with a multiplicity of words; and thus a large amount of truth can be fixed in the mind with comparatively little effort. In this respect it has a great advantage over catechisms framed in the precise words of Scripture. There must be a certain cumbersomeness and an incompleteness about these, inconsistent with the requirements of a scientific text-book, while this, on the other hand, retains the very spirit of the Bible; and, in every clause, serves as an index to Bible-truth. As an illustration of this concise comprehensiveness, take the first question, "What is the chief end of man?" How much has been written upon it! What schools of ethics have divided just here! Yet how beautifully do we find combined, in the simple answer here given, the ends of highest rectitude and highest good, and the motives of both duty and love! "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever." Take the fourteenth question, "What is sin?" Can anything be added to the brief answer, "Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God." It is an arrow fire-tipped at one end against self-righteousness, as surely as it is at the other end against open wickedness.

To these peculiar excellences must be added the systematic completeness of the Catechism as a whole. It divides at the thirty-eighth question into two parts, the doctrinal and the practical; and each of these exhibits logical arrangement and regular progress, so that almost the entire domain of theological science is succinctly presented. This renders it exceedingly valuable as an aid to Bible study. It guards against partial and fragmentary Bible reading by presenting a comprehensive scheme of truth, to be verified by an examination of the entire word of God. When taught in the Sabbath-school, it ensures to the children a certain amount at least of instruction in all the essential doctrines of the Christian faith, in spite of any ignorance or unskillfulness, or even unfaithfulness in the teacher.

In addition to this, the remarkable influence which the Catechism has ever exerted strongly commends to us a vigorous teaching of it to-day. It has been shown to be an excellent mental gymnastic. It cultivates the memory and reasoning powers. It builds up character. It confirms in the faith. It promotes reverence and consistent living, and aids in securing sound conversion. We could point to Scotland in evidence, where it was long taught in the day-schools as well as in the family and the church. Dr. Dorus Clarke's account of the historical results of "Saying the Catechism," at Westhampton, Mass., seventy-five years ago, is also singularly confirmatory. Judge William Strong, of the Supreme Court, was fed upon the Catechism in childhood, and still carries it in his memory, and gratefully acknowledges his indebtedness to it. Dr. William Goodell, the subject of "Forty Years in the Turkish Empire," was another of those whose character the Catechism helped to mould, and he bears this testimony: "In the days of our fathers and grandfathers, that Catechism was certainly a wonderful institution, and the descendants of those families that were most thoroughly drilled in it are now undeniably the very bone and sinew of New England, whether considered politically, socially or religiously."

A book that does such a work as this certainly needs to be studied to-day as much as ever. And where should it be studied if not in our Sabbath-schools? Earnestly to teach it there need not interfere at all with our present valuable system of Bible-lessons. It only requires five minutes of the lesson-hour in the class for the recitation of the question, hunting up its proof-texts, and for its brief explanation and illustration; then a recitation of the answer in concert by the whole school, in connection with the general review, with illustrations or not, as may seem good to the leader. Todd's stories on the Shorter Catechism, the Presbyterian Board's "Illustrations of the Shorter Catechism," Nevin's "Notes on the Shorter Catechism," and Green's "Lectures" will be found helpful. Then inducements may be held out to individuals for memorizing the entire Catechism; as in many churches a Bible is presented to all who recite it perfectly.

This teaching is especially demanded now in anticipation of the coming tide of rationalism and false doctrine. Poison worse than disease-germs lurks in the air; and there is no more wholesome influence in which we can place our youth for safety than this thoroughly biblical, bracing and invigorating atmosphere that envelopes the Shorter Catechism. If Thomas Carlyle, after all his wanderings from the God of his fathers, is saved, as we hope may be the case, who knows but that the slender thread, which proved of cable's strength to hold him unto God, was the truth of the Assembly's Catechism lodged in his mind in early childhood? How significant are the words of his old age: "As I stand on the brink of eternity, no truth so fully meets my wants or so satisfies my intellect as that stated in the Shorter Catechism: '*The chief end of man is to glorify God!*'" Happy the child to-day which in like manner shall be fast anchored to the faith of its fathers!

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FIRST QUARTER.

1. Jan. 7.—The Ascending Lord. Acts 1 : 1–14.
2. Jan. 14.—The Descending Spirit. Acts 2 : 1–16.
3. Jan. 21.—The Believing People. Acts 2 : 37–47.
4. Jan. 28.—The Healing Power. Acts 3 : 1–11.
5. Feb. 4.—**The Prince of Life.** Acts 3 : 12–21.
6. Feb. 11.—**None Other Name.** Acts 4 : 1–14.
7. Feb. 18.—**Christian Courage.** Acts 4 : 18–31.
8. Feb. 25.—**Ananias and Sapphira.** Acts 5 : 1–11.
9. March 4.—Persecution Renewed. Acts 5 : 17–32.
10. March 11.—The Seven Chosen. Acts 6 : 1–15.
11. March 18.—The First Christian Martyr. Acts 7 : 54–60 and 8 : 1–4.
12. March 25.—Review.

Lesson V. **THE PRINCE OF LIFE.** *Feb. 4th, 1883.*

Acts 3 : 12–21. Memorize vs. 13–16.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"In him was life; and the life was the light of men."—John 1 : 4.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 3 : 12–21.....*The Prince of Life.*
T. John 1 : 1–14.....*The Light of Men.*
W. Luke 23 : 1–24.....*The Holy One Denied.*
Th. Luke 23 : 25–46.....*The Prince of Life Slain.*
F. Mark 10 : 42–52.....*Healing Power of Faith.*
S. Zech. 12 : 6–13.....*Faith and Repentance.*
S. Rom. 10 : 1–11.....*Faith and Salvation.*

TOPIC:

Light and Life in Christ.

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Rejected Messiah. 2. The Name of Power. 3. The Hope of Salvation.

Time.—A. D. 30, immediately after the last lesson. **Place.**—The temple in Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 5. *Are there more Gods than one?* A. There is but one only, the living and true God.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 952: "Glory and praise and honor." Other hymns, 26, 32, 36, 730.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—This lesson is connected immediately with the last. At the gate of the temple that is called Beautiful a lame man was healed by the word of Peter, and appeared in one of the colonnades of the temple amid the throngs, walking and leaping, and praising God. The man was well known to the people, having long been a beggar at the gate, and his presence, healed, created great excitement and astonishment in the crowd. They were awestruck by what they saw. In this lesson we have part of Peter's address in explanation of the miracle. He claims no honor or power for himself or John, but gives all the glory to Christ, whom he preaches to the people with great earnestness.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

12 ¶ And when Pe'ter saw *it*, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Is'ra-el, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? [Acts 14 : 15.]

13 The God of A'bra-ham, and of I'saac, and of Ja'cob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Je'sus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pi'late, when he was determined to let *him* go. [Acts 5 : 30; John 17 : 1; Matt. 27 : 20.]

14 But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; [Ps. 16 : 10; Mark 1 : 24; Acts 4 : 27.]

15 And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. [Acts 2 : 32; Luke 24 : 48; John 15 : 27.]

16 And his name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all. [Matt. 9 : 22; Mark 10 : 52; Luke 17 : 19.]

17 And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did *it*, as *did* also your rulers. [John 16 : 3; Acts 13 : 27; 1 Cor. 2 : 8.]

18 But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. [Isa. 53 : 5; Dan. 9 : 26; Luke 24 : 44; Acts 26 : 22.]

19 ¶ Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; [Ezek. 18 : 30; Isa. 43 : 25.]

20 And he shall send Je'sus Christ, which before was preached unto you: [Heb. 9 : 28.]

21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. [Matt. 17 : 11; Luke 1 : 70; 2 Peter 3 : 12.]

REVISED TEXT.

12 And when Peter saw it, he answered unto
the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye
at this man? or why fasten ye your eyes on
us, as though by our own power or godliness
13 we had made him to walk? The God of
Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the
God of our fathers, hath glorified his Servant
Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied
before the face of Pilate, when he had de-
14 termined to release him. But ye denied the
Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a
15 murderer to be granted unto you, and killed
the Prince of life; whom God raised from
16 the dead; whereof we are witnesses. And
by faith in his name hath his name made
this man strong, whom ye behold and
know: yea, the faith which is through him
hath given him this perfect soundness in the
17 presence of you all. And now, brethren, I
wot that in ignorance ye did it, as did also
18 your rulers. But the things which God fore-
shewed by the mouth of all the prophets, that
his Christ should suffer, he thus fulfilled.
19 Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that
your sins may be blotted out, that so there
may come seasons of refreshing from the
20 presence of the Lord; and that he may send
the Christ who hath been appointed for you,
21 *even* Jesus: whom the heaven must receive
until the times of restoration of all things,
whereof God spake by the mouth of his holy
prophets which have been since the world
began.

12 *When Peter saw it.* Saw the throng of people and their amazement at the miracle. *He answered.* No question had been asked him, but he replied to the astonishment which he saw on every face. *Ye men of Israel.* Speaking to the nation of the Jews. *Why marvel ye at this?* Revised Version: "This *man;*" margin, "this thing," that is, this miracle. *Why look ye so earnestly on us?* Every eye was turned to the apostles as the authors of the miracle. The emphasis is on *us.* Peter hastens to turn the thoughts of the people away from himself and John to Christ, the real author of the healing. *By our own power.* He claims no unusual power in themselves. *Holiness.* Revised Version: "Godliness." Humility appears in the course of the apostles here. They might have received high honor from the people, but they would not accept it because it was not rightly theirs.

13 *The God of Abraham . . . of our fathers.* Very wisely he links this miracle with the covenant name of the Lord, sacred to every Jew. Thus he declared to them that it was no new religion which he preached, but that it was their own God who had wrought this strange work. He puts himself, too, among the Jews, speaking of "*our* fathers. *Hath glorified.* He had glorified him during his life—at his baptism, at his transfiguration and in his miracles; after his death—in his resurrection, ascension and exaltation to the throne of glory, and now in the miracles which, from his seat in heaven, he wrought. *Son.* Revised Version: "Servant," referring to his mediatorial office. *Ye delivered up.* The rulers did this, but represented the whole nation. *Denied him.* Not merely denied that he was their Messiah, but utterly rejected his authority and right as Lord and Saviour, and refused to receive him. *In the presence of Pilate.* Pilate wanted at his trial to release him, and only sent him to be crucified because the people so clamored for it.

14 *The Holy One and the Just.* The first name refers to the purity and innocence of his character in heart, the latter to the righteousness of his external life. *A murderer.* Barabbas, whom they had chosen to be released rather than Jesus.

15 *Prince of life.* The author of life; the one who had life in himself. He often called himself "the life." He came to give life to the world, and they had killed him. There is a contrast between the "murderer," the destroyer of life, whom they chose for release, and the "*Prince* of life," whom they killed. *Whom God hath raised.* This was *God's* treatment of him whom they had rejected and slain. *Whereof we are witnesses.* The apostles were witnesses not only of Christ's resurrection, but of all his life. The Revised Version retains *whereof*, but has in the margin *of whom*, which is preferable, as the reference is to Christ himself in his person and life, as well as to his resurrection.

16 See Revised Version. He proceeds now to tell by what power the miracle of healing had been wrought. *His name.* That is, the name of Christ, whom they had rejected and killed. The use of the words *his name* implies that the apostles had simply acted for him and that the power was delegated. *Through faith.* This was the human part. Christ himself wrought the cure, but it was faith in the apostles and also in the man healed that procured the working of the miracle. *Faith which is by him.* The faith itself by which the cure was performed was wrought by Christ. That is, not only was it his power that healed the man, but the faith through which he was healed was also Christ's gift.

17 *Brethren.* This kindly address indicates the warm affection of Peter for his own people. While he spared them not in declaring to them their guilt, he yet yearned to win them to repentance and faith in Christ. *I wot.* I know. *Through ignorance.* See Christ's prayer for his murderers. Luke 23: 34. There was a certain measure of ignorance on the part of all perhaps, excepting Judas, who participated in the con-

demnation and crucifixion of Christ. There were different degrees of ignorance among the Jews, but none of them really believed that Jesus was the promised Messiah. This ignorance was a palliation of their sin, but not an excuse. They were still guilty. Chap. 2: 23. See Catechism Q. 83.

18 *Which God before had showed . . . he hath fulfilled.* God's foreknowledge stands in striking contrast with men's ignorance. In their dark crimes they had simply done the things that God had said beforehand should be done. There were many such prophecies, Isa. 53 for instance. Peter here bears testimony incidentally to the inspiration of the Old Testament Scriptures. He also emphatically proclaims the doctrine concerning a suffering Christ, against which he had formerly so earnestly protested. See Matt. 16: 22. He himself had been enlightened by the Spirit, and besides, it is easier to understand the meaning of prophecies after their fulfillment.

19 *Repent ye therefore, and be converted.* Revised Version: "And *turn again.*" See Notes on chap. 2: 38. (Lesson III.) *Blotted out.* The figure implies the actual erasure of the things written down. The writing was on wax tablets and with the blunt end of the pen or stylus, the letters which had been traced with the sharp end were obliterated. See Ps. 51: 9; 109: 14; Isa. 43: 25; Col. 2: 14. Sins are not blotted out until they are repented of and turned away from. *When the times.* Revised Version: "That so there may come seasons of refreshing." Compare chap. 2: 38. "Repent . . . and *ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*" One interpretation regards these times of refreshing as the blessings which come upon individuals and upon churches after repentance and forgiveness. Another interpretation is that the "times" here promised are to follow Christ's second coming. For discussion see the larger commentaries.

20, 21 *He shall send Jesus Christ.* Revised Version: "That he may send." This sending of Jesus is dependent on repentance. Some (as in v. 19) understand the reference to be to Christ's second coming, but if this be correct this return is made to depend upon the repentance of men, which is nowhere else affirmed in Scripture. The other view is that it is the spiritual sending of Christ to the individual soul which repents that is here meant. *Preached unto you.* See Revised Version, where the thought is not that Christ was *preached*, but that he was *appointed*, *i. e.*, before the foundation of the world. 1 Pet. 1: 20; Rev. 13: 8. *Whom the heaven must receive.* The reference is to Christ's glorified body which passed into heaven at his ascension. *Until the times of restitution.* Revised Version: *Restoration.* The thought here is the same as in Matt. 19: 28, where our Lord speaks of *the regeneration.* It is the time "when the creature shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God (Rom. 8: 19–21) by the bringing back, in the new heavens and new earth (2 Pet. 3: 13; Rev. 21: 1–5), of all things, out of the confusion caused by sin, into the harmony of creation before the fall."—Canon Cook. *Which God hath spoken . . . since the world began.* From the very beginning the promise of restoration was given. See Gen. 3: 15. For other prophecies see Isa. 2: 2–5; 11: 6–9; Dan. 2: 35, 44; 7: 14; Micah 4: 3, 4; Hag. 2: 7–9; Zech. chap. 14.

[For additional help on these lessons see "Half Hours with the Lessons of 1883," published by the Presbyterian Board of Publication. $1.50.]

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

Why marvel ye at this? If we remembered who it is that works in providence and in grace, nothing that he does would seem strange to us. In Christ's working the supernatural is the most natural. We think certain things cannot be done because *we* could not do them ourselves; we forget that to the Lord nothing is hard. We talk about "established order" and the "laws of nature," and forget that these are parts of God's ways, and that they are far more marvelous than any special miracles. Luther said one day that he had seen a miracle. It was the vault of heaven overarching the earth, not supported by pillars nor held up by chains, yet not falling. Every morning sunrise is a wonderful miracle. The birth of every child is a marvel. Every moment's life is a wonder. If we would only remember who the author is nothing in providence or grace would seem strange to us.

Why look ye . . . on us, as though . . . we had made this man to walk? At once he turned all eyes away from himself to Christ. There is an important lesson here. We are not to take the credit to ourselves of work that Christ does through us. "It is said that when Leonardo da Vinci had finished his celebrated picture of the Last Supper, which still stands on the wall of a convent in the city of Milan, he introduced a friend to inspect the work privately and give his judgment regarding it. 'Exquisite!' exclaimed his friend; 'that wine cup seems to stand out from the table as solid, glittering sil-

ver.' Thereupon the artist quietly took a brush and blotted out the cup, saying: 'I meant that the figure of Christ should first and mainly attract the observer's eye, and whatever diverts attention from him must be blotted out.'" In all our work for Christ let us be sure that we make him the centre of attraction.

Ye denied the Holy One and the Just . . . and killed the Prince of life. That was plain preaching. There could be no doubt about its meaning. Peter went straight to his point. He did not discuss the *doctrine* of sin, but told his hearers that *they* were sinners. He did not charge them in a general way with guilt, but named the very sin of which they were guilty. He did not apologize for them, or try to soften the force of his words by any qualifying or excusing clauses, but let the sword of the Spirit strike, all naked and glittering, to their hearts. The lesson to be learned is that we should deal frankly and honestly with the souls which come under our influence. A business man, who had grown worldly, lay dying. He sent for his pastor, and said to him in tones almost of despair: "Why did you never tell me that I was letting my business ruin my soul? Why were you not faithful in warning me?" He is the truest friend, not who refrains from warning men of their guilt and peril, but who utters the warning word in time. The kindest surgeon is not he who withholds the knife when the knife only can save.

His name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong. The mere pronouncing of the name of Jesus over the lame man was not what healed him. It was through faith that the cure was wrought, and Christ himself was the author of it. Merely going through a service or a ceremony or repeating a formula of words has no power to do good of any kind. The "name" of Christ has power to heal or bless or save only when there is faith in Christ himself.

The things which God foreshewed . . . that Christ should suffer, he thus fulfilled. There is something very wonderful in this. We are all unconsciously carrying out in our lives the plans that God made ages ago. We are free agents all the time, and responsible for everything we do; therefore we are guilty when we do wrong. Yet even men's worst sins God uses to advance his glory by bringing to pass the results he had planned. Joseph's brothers had no good intention in their cruel usage of him. They meant only to get him out of their way, because they were envious of him. Their first intention was even to kill him, and their selling him as a slave was but a little softening of this guilty thought. Yet see what came of it all? God used their great wickedness not only for Joseph's own promotion, but for the working out of a plan of great blessing for his brothers, the authors of the crime against him. Joseph, by a series of providences, became the second ruler of Egypt. He was the means of saving his brethren from famine. He procured for them a home and a rich land in Egypt, and by his own power lifted them up to influence and honor. Not one of these things was in their thought when they sold him to the passing caravan. Nor was it by any accident of circumstances that results so different from what they had intended came out of their cruel wickedness. They meant it for evil, but God overruled it for good. The case of the Jews and Christ was precisely parallel. They meant to destroy him, but out of their deed of great guilt God brought redemption for the world. The same history is being always repeated.

Repent . . . and turn . . . that your sins may be blotted out. Sins never will be blotted out until the sinner repents and turns from them. It is not enough to be sorry for sin; we must give it up and forsake it. It is not enough to give up the sin; we must also turn again to God's ways. Negative repentance is insufficient. "Cease to do evil and *learn to do well*," and *then*, "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." The doing well in this case implied the acceptance of Christ as their Messiah and their submission to him as loyal subjects. It always implies the same. Repentance and turning again are illustrated in the parable of the Prodigal Son. The son saw his error and was sorry for it, but that was not all. He arose and left his far land and "turned," going all the way back to his father, confessing to him, and seeking forgiveness and restoration. *Then* he found pardon. So must every sinner if he would be forgiven.

Repent . . . that your sins may be blotted out. The very blood that they had shed is now offered to blot out the guilt of the shedding. "His blood be upon us," the Jewish rulers had said, when they were demanding the death of Jesus. It was an awful thing to say. The blood of Christ upon men in this way was a fearful weight of guilt. But now Peter points to that same blood as able to sweep away all sin. In one of these two ways the blood of Christ is upon every soul that hears the gospel. It is well for us to know surely in which way it is upon us; whether as a load of guilt or as a cleansing stream.

LESSON POINTS.

1. The conversion of even the worst and most hardened sinners ought not to astonish us when

we remember that Jesus is the author of the conversion. v. 12.

2. We ought not to take to ourselves the credit of what Christ does through us, but should turn all the honor and praise to him. v. 12.

3. God is the same in all ages. Men pass away; generations come and go, but he abides for ever. v. 13.

4. Men cannot defeat God's plans. They may deliver his Son to death and shame, but he exalts and glorifies him. v. 13.

5. All who hear the gospel make choice between the "Holy One" and "a murderer," for the devil is a murderer of souls. v. 14.

6. Men may kill the Prince of life, but they cannot destroy him. They may kill Christ's servants, but neither can they destroy them, for God who raised the Head will raise the members, too. v. 15.

7. Christ who was nailed on the cross is the Author of all healing and blessing. v. 16.

8. It is faith that procures blessing from Christ, and this faith is also his work. v. 16.

9. Ignorance lessens the guilt but does not excuse the sin. v. 17.

10. Even wicked men help, though unintentionally and unconsciously, to carry out God's eternal plans. v. 18.

11. The very blood of Christ, shed by guilty hands, has become a fountain for washing away guilt. v. 19.

12. Jesus is coming again. We know not the time, but we are sure of the fact. v. 20.

13. Every promise God has made shall be fulfilled. v. 21.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

BY THE REV. JAMES A. WORDEN.

Fellow Teacher: Your difficulty in this lesson will be the embarrassment of riches. The lesson is made up of a speech of Peter to the Jews, or rather a very condensed report of that speech. Look at the points: The God of Abraham is the Father of Jesus; Christ is divine; the Son of God was without sin or fault—is the source of life; his rejection by Jews, who demanded his death, while the heathen Pilate desired to acquit him; the Jews preferred a murderer to the Author of life; the Jews killed him; God raised him from the dead; the power of Jesus' name; his sufferings the fulfillment of prophecy; the duty of repentance and conversion, and their connection with forgiveness of sins and the joys of salvation; Christ's second coming and the final restoration.

To state, explain, illustrate and apply all these truths would take volumes. What are you going to do with your riches? How are you going to teach these things in thirty-five minutes so that they will feed the lambs?

This lesson requires no other introduction than a simple review of the last lesson.

I. EXPLAIN. While we often underrate our scholars' power to take in deep truths, we more often overrate their understanding of words and phrases. We think because these words are familiar to us, that of course our scholars must know their meaning. But *try* them and you will be surprised at the mistaken notions some of them have. Especially is it necessary to explain words and expressions in this lesson. For while it abounds in fresh and beautiful terms and phrases, yet many of these convey no distinct meaning to our scholars. For instance: "The God of Abraham," "His Son (or Servant) Jesus," "The Holy One and the Just," "The Prince (or Author) of life," "His name," "Faith in his name," "The faith which is by him," "Those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets," "Repent," "Be converted," "Sins blotted out," "Times of refreshing," "He shall send Jesus," "Whom the heavens must receive," "Times of restitution of all things." Go through the whole lesson verse by verse, rapidly, for the time is short; thoroughly, for you are *spelling out* the words of God and of eternal life.

But *how* are you to do this? A little boy came home from Sabbath-school and said: "My teacher asked me this question, 'Charlie, what is your *idea* of this verse?' Mamma, I don't know what '*idea*' is." That is the way *not* to do it.

First, get for yourself a *perfectly clear* understanding of every word. Study the Critical and Explanatory and Illustrative Notes until all is plain. Second, question in some such way as this: "Is there any word in v. 12 you do not understand? Which one? Then ask the class to explain it. So several verses. Then turn and ask—What do the words "The Prince of life" mean? The words, "Faith in his name?" Draw as much from the class as you can, and then if they fall short of the full explanation give it briefly and clearly.

II. APPLY. There are two great points to be brought home. The sin of the Jews, which Peter charges upon them (vs. 13–18), was *their killing of Jesus*. Bring out that sin in all its awful colors. Then the question is—How are you treating Jesus? What is the sin now of

denying Jesus? Of delivering him up? Of preferring a murderer to him? Who are committing this sin? What is faith *in Jesus' name?* How can we obtain it? etc.

The Jews would be saved if they repented and were converted. Question, explain and illustrate this. Concentrate all your power on inducing your scholars to "change their minds," to turn from denying Jesus, to trusting, loving and obeying him.

Special hints to teachers of adult classes:

1. Be sure and call for reports on the points assigned last week.

2. Teach the lesson as above indicated. But in addition, as appropriate to scholars of advanced intelligence, bring out—

a. This speech of Peter illustrates his mission of preaching the gospel particularly to the Jews. He was the apostle of the circumcision. Gal. 2: 1–11.

b. This speech contains all the doctrines which are known as Petrine—what Peter held and taught, as distinguished from what James, John and Paul held and taught—those truths common to all, yet delivered to Peter especially as their exponent. These are—

1. That Christ is the Messiah promised in the Old Testament. Acts 2: 3, 18; 4: 11; 10: 43; 1 Peter 1: 10, 20, 25, etc.

2. Christianity is the Old Testament religion fulfilled and developed. vs. 13, 18 of this lesson; 1 Peter 2: 5–9.

3. Christ is coming again. v. 21; 1 Peter 1: 3–5; 2 Peter 1: 11; 3: 8–14.

Points in next Sabbath's lesson to be assigned:

1. The temple guard and its captain.
2. The Sadducees.
3. The Jewish Sanhedrim.
4. Why did the apostles at first dwell so much on Christ's resurrection?
5. The number of the disciples at this time.
6. Proofs that Christ is the only Saviour.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

BY MRS. G. R. ALDEN—"PANSY."

Seek to make the scholars very familiar with their lesson in *Westminster Primary Lesson Leaf.* Call attention to the picture on it—the crowd of astonished people. Arouse curiosity as to what topic they are so earnestly discussing. Recall the children's knowledge of Peter, his recent cowardice in denying Christ. See how bold he is now. Outline a square for a temple, and call from class some of the plain words of Peter's sermon—the solemn truths he told them: "*Ye* denied Christ; wanted a murderer instead of him." "Killed him." "The Prince of life." In this, and in all other lessons, seek to have the scholars give as much as possible of the story in their own language.

APPLICATION.—What shall we do to make this lesson personal? I find my thoughts running back to the solemn Bible statement about those who "crucify the Lord afresh." "*Ye* did it," said Peter, and the child is indignant as he recalls the story of the Saviour's treatment. Let me, as a teacher, labor to impress even the *little* child with the personality of this matter. To this end suppose I outline an open book, printing over it the words, "MY STORY."

Have I ever denied Jesus? Explain very simply how those who use wrong words, or stand amused listeners to the wrong words of others, or stand silent when they ought to speak, are denying Christ. Whom do they prefer to him? Sometimes a playfellow who coaxes them to do what he would not have them do.

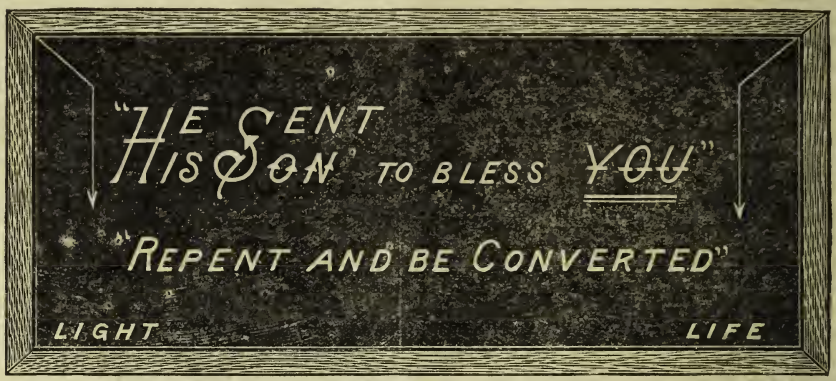
Try to make the children feel that all forms of sin in the life, or in the heart, are denials of Christ's power and willingness to save. Remind them that Jesus is the *Prince of life;* only through him can any hope to live in heaven. Yet this open book is, by their own account, made full of dots and marks (in the sin-color), representing sin in my life, each life.

What then? What did Peter say? "Repent!" What is it to repent? (See to it that each child has a clear knowledge of the meaning of the word.) Why repent? "That your sins may be blotted out." It seems that, even though we have denied him and rejected him, if we repent he will blot out our sins.

Cover the sin-marks in the book with red crayon, and write in white letters over it, "*The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from ALL sin.*" Make the word "ALL" very prominent. It may be that you have used a similar illustration several times before. Do not be afraid of the repetition. If you have done so, make this time a review, recalling all the blessedness of the truths taught before. Remember that these are facts which you need to keep before the minds of your children. We, as well as the people to whom Peter spoke, have denied Christ. He is still the Prince of life. He still promises to blot out the sins of those who repent, and *of those only.* Wonderful Saviour! Ready and willing to forgive; and we, even though so young, have already so many sins to be forgiven. Shall we not go to him now and ask him to blot them out?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

BY J. HOWARD SEAL.



SUGGESTIONS.—The board may be prepared before the school opens, or left until the lesson is taught from the desk, pointing as you present it. The latter is always more effective when it can be done, as it excites interest and secures closer attention. Reviewing the lesson briefly, impress the thought, "He sent his Son." (Printing as in diagram.) Refer to Gal. 4: 4-6; John 3: 17; 1 John 4: 9, 10; Acts 3: 26, and print, "to bless you." He is the "*light*" of the world and the "*life*" of the world. (Print as in diagram, "light," "life.") Repenting of sin our eyes are opened to the light, and conversion secures the life that is in Jesus. "Because I live ye shall live also." Refer to Isa. 1: 16-20; Joel 2: 13; John 3: 16. It is therefore important to "Repent and be converted." (Print as in diagram.)

Directions for coloring.—"He sent his Son," green shaded with yellow; "To bless you," white shaded with red; "Repent and be converted," brown shaded with orange; "Light," "Life," white.

Lesson VI. **NONE OTHER NAME.** *Feb. 11th, 1883.*

Acts 4: 1-14. Memorize vs. 10-13.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."—Acts 4: 12.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 4: 1-14.....*"None Other Name."*
T. Isa. 9: 1-7.....*The Wonderful Name.*
W Jer. 23: 1-8.....*The Lord our Rig teousness.*
Th. Isa. 45: 18-25....*The Only Saviour.*
F. Ps. 118: 19-29...*The Headstone of the Corner.*
S. 1 Pet 2: 1-8.....*"Chosen of God, Precious."*
S. Phil. 2: 1-12.....*"A Name Above Every Name."*

TOPIC.

Christ the Only Saviour.

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Arrest of the Apostles. 2. Their Arraignment by the Council. 3. Their Noble Answer.

Time.—A. D. 30, immediately after the last lesson. **Place.**—Jerusalem, at the meeting of the Sanhedrim.

Catechism.—Q 6. *How many persons are there in the Godhead?* A. There are three persons in the Godhead: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 940: "There is no name so sweet." Other hymns, 197, 200, 305.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—This lesson links itself closely to the last. After the healing of the lame man, while the people stood in amazement at the miracle, Peter spoke to them, charging upon them the rejection and murder of their Messiah, and declaring that it was he who had wrought the cure which had astonished them so greatly. He then proceeded to call them to repentance, proclaiming

to them the offer of life through the gospel. Peter's words aroused the indignation of the Jewish rulers, and while he was speaking they came and arrested both him and John. The time at which this lesson begins is the evening of the same day on which the lame man was healed; the trial was the following day.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

1 And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sad'du-cees, came upon them, [Luke 22: 4; Acts 5: 24.]

2 Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. [Matt. 22: 23; Acts 23: 8; Neh. 2: 10; John 11: 47, 48; Rom. 8: 11.]

3 And they laid hands on them, and put *them* in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide.

4 Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand. [2 Cor. 2: 14-17; 2 Tim. 2: 9, 10; John 12: 24.]

5 ¶ And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, [Micah 2: 1; Matt. 27: 1, 2.]

6 And An'nas the high priest, and Cai'aphas, and John, and Al-ex-an'der, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Je-ru'sa-lem. [Luke 3: 2; John 11: 49; 18: 13.]

7 And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this? [Ex. 2: 14; Matt. 21: 23; Acts 7: 27.]

8 Then Pe'ter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Is'ra-el, [Luke 12: 11, 12.]

9 If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; [John 10: 32; 1 Pet. 3: 15-17.]

10 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Is'ra-el, that by the name of Je'sus Christ of Naz'a-reth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, *even* by him doth this man stand here before you whole. [Acts 3: 6-16; 2: 24.]

11 This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. [Ps. 118: 22; Isa. 28: 16.]

12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. [Matt. 1: 21; Acts 10: 43; 1 Tim. 2: 5, 6.]

13 ¶ Now when they saw the boldness of Pe'ter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Je'sus. [Matt. 11: 25; 1 Cor. 1: 27.]

14 And beholding the man which was healed standing with them they could say nothing against it. [Acts 3: 11.]

REVISED TEXT.

1 And as they spake unto the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the
2 Sadducees came upon them, being sore troubled because they taught the people, and proclaimed in Jesus the resurrection from the
3 dead. And they laid hands on them, and put them in ward unto the morrow: for it
4 was now eventide. But many of them that heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.
5 And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers and elders and scribes were
6 gathered together in Jerusalem; and Annas the high priest *was there*, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were
7 of the kindred of the high priest. And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, By what power, or in what name,
8 have ye done this? Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers
9 of the people, and elders, if we this day are examined concerning a good deed done to an impotent man, by what means
10 this man is made whole; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, *even* in him doth this
11 man stand here before you whole. He is the stone which was set at nought of you the builders, which was made the head of the
12 corner. And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved.
13 Now when they beheld the boldness of Peter and John, and had perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them,
14 that they had been with Jesus. And seeing the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it.

1, 2 *As they spake.* They were interrupted in the midst of their speaking. "They" may imply that both Peter and John were addressing the people at different points. *The priests and the captain of the temple.* The priests were engaged in their duties about the temple. They were jealous of their influence and authority, and were offended at the apostles for even presuming to instruct the people. They incited the assault. The captain of the temple was the officer in charge of the temple guard, a Levitical force for the preservation of order. He was a Jewish, not a Roman officer. *The Sadducees.* They did not believe in a future life, and were angry because the apostles preached the doctrine of the resurrection. v. 2. *Came upon them.* Suddenly, surprising them. *Grieved.* Revised Version: *Sore troubled. Taught . . . preached.* The former word probably refers to the cause of the priests' grief or indignation, that laymen taught the people; and the latter to that of the Sadducees, that the hated doctrine of resurrection was preached. *Through Jesus.* Rather,

In Jesus. They had proclaimed that Jesus was raised up (chap. 3: 13, 15), and this embraced the doctrine of the general resurrection.

3 *Laid hands on them.* The words imply violence and force. They rudely seized them. *In hold.* In a guard-house for safe-keeping over night, as it was now evening, probably after dark.

4 *Many . . . believed.* Many of those who had heard Peter's words. *The number of the men.* That is, of male converts. This does not imply that no women believed, but that they were not counted in this enumeration. See Matt. 14: 21. The estimate put upon women in those days was low. Now the number of women who follow Christ is fully double that of men, and their influence in the Church is very great. *Was.* Revised Version: *Came to be.* It is probable that the number five thousand includes the aggregate of male converts up to this time, although some suppose it represents the number who believed at this time.

5 *Rulers, and elders, and scribes.* The three classes constituting the Sanhedrim, the great council of seventy, the supreme court of the Jewish nation. The *elders* were laymen, political leaders. The *scribes* were the teachers and expounders of the law.

6 *Annas.* He had been high priest, but had been deposed by the Roman governor. He was still recognized, however, by the Jews as high priest, and retained great power. See also John 18: 13, 14. *John and Alexander.* Nothing is known with certainty of either of these. They must have been important characters in the nation at the time, but they now owe the only preserved memory of their existence to their share in this trial of the apostles. *As many as were of the kindred.* The meeting was packed with the friends of the high priest.

7 *In the midst.* It is said the members of the council sat in a semi-circle. The apostles were placed in the centre. *By what power?* The apostles had already declared in the temple that the miracle was wrought by the power and in the name of Jesus, but this question was asked here, either to make them convict themselves of blasphemy in ascribing divine honor to Jesus, or in the hope of alarming them into a retraction or a contradiction of their former assertion. *Done this.* They did not attempt to deny that the cure had been wrought.

8 *Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost.* The words mean that he was now freshly filled for this occasion. This was in accordance with the Saviour's promise. Matt. 10: 19, 20; Mark 13: 11; Luke 12: 11, 12. His reply is very bold. Contrast his courage here in the presence of the council with his denial of Christ, when *he* was on his trial. *Rulers . . . elders.* He addresses them with respect, though he does not hesitate to charge them with the murder of their Messiah. See 1 Pet. 2: 17.

9 *If we this day be examined.* That is, put upon our trial. *The good deed done.* No evil deed was alleged against them. No one could doubt that the healing of a lame man was a good deed. Thus Peter's first sentence laid bare the injustice of the charge. *Made whole.* Literally, *saved* (the same word as in v. 12).

10 *Be it known unto you all.* There is nothing to conceal. Peter's boldness here is very striking. He is addressing the very men who had condemned Christ. *Whom ye crucified.* The prisoner at the bar arraigns the court that is trying him and convicts them of the most awful crime. *Whom God raised.* It must be noticed that the rulers did not dare to deny that Jesus had been raised. *Even by him.* He whom you crucified, who was the Messiah and the Saviour, and who now lives again, is the author of this miracle. *Stand here before you.* The man was present with the apostles in the court (v. 14), either as a prisoner, or as a witness, or still clinging to his friends in gratitude.

11. *This is the stone.* Ps. 118: 22. Christ applied the prophecy to himself. Matt. 21: 42. *You builders.* The rulers by their official character were the responsible builders of God's temple in this world. The accusation is very severe. They had despised Christ as not being fit to be their Messiah. *The head of the corner.* The corner-stone. Though they had thought Christ unfit to build upon and had rejected him, yet God had made him the corner-stone of the temple of grace and glory. See 1 Cor. 3: 11; Eph. 2: 20–22; 1 Peter 2: 6, 7.

12 *Neither is there salvation.* Peter probably referred primarily to the great hope of the Jewish nation, cherished through all their misfortunes and calamities, of blessing through the Messiah. When this hope was ready to be fulfilled they had crucified him who brought it. Even yet, however (his words imply), this hope may be realized, but *only in this one name.* If the Jewish people were ever to be saved it must be through him whom they had put to death. The same is true for every individual. The Christ the sinner has rejected for years is the only one who can ever save him. *None other name under heaven.* In all the earth. *Given.* Christ is God's gift to men. John 3: 16; 2 Cor. 9: 25. *Among men.* Not the Jews only. *Whereby we must be saved.* Peter puts himself among those who need salvation. All are sinners, and all must be saved by Christ or perish. Notice the word *must;* salvation is not a mere optional

matter, but a necessity, if we would ever reach blessedness and glory.

13 *When they saw the boldness.* Their freedom from all timidity and hesitation in speech, as in men unskilled in the art of public speaking. *Unlearned and ignorant.* That is, destitute of the learning and training of the schools. The members of the council were astonished that men without special professional training should speak with such ease, skill and power before their tribunal. *They took knowledge of them.* They recognized them as men who had been companions of Jesus during his ministry. They had not remembered this fact till now. But while they witnessed their boldness and listened to their words they recalled the fact that they had seen these men before, and at once associated them with Christ.

14 *Could say nothing.* The presence of the man, healed, standing there, shut their mouths. The evidence of a miraculous work and a *good* work was uncontrovertible.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

As they spake unto the people, the priests . . . came upon them. What were they speaking of that so offended the rulers? Were they proclaiming heresy? Were they talking against the temple or the priests or the scribes? Were they uttering words that would corrupt the people? No, they were speaking of Jesus and of the great blessings which the Father had sent to men through him. It has ever been so with the spirit of persecution. Instead of expending its zeal against sin and evil, it pours out its wrath upon the world's best benefactors. Instead of fighting darkness it tries to put out the light. Instead of seeking to check the ravages of crime, it gathers all its forces against the ministers of blessing.

They laid hands on them . . . howbeit many . . . believed. They had arrested the speakers and thrust them into prison, but they could not stop the effect of the truth they had spoken. They had bound two apostles and locked them up in a cell, but they could not bind the gospel or the Holy Ghost. It looks as if there were at least two thousand new converts added to the Church at that time. It is idle to attempt to check the progress of the gospel. Such efforts only help to spread it. The storm that is intended to put out the flames only fans them into intenser violence. This truth ought to give great confidence to those who are persecuted and opposed in their efforts to do good in Christ's name.

Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said. Here we find the secret of Peter's courage and power. He is a different man from the old Peter of the gospel days, especially the Peter of the night of Christ's betrayal, when he lacked courage to confess his Lord, and quailed before the taunting face and words of a maid. Now he stands before the highest tribunal of the nation, before the same men who a little while ago had sent Jesus to his cross, and exhibits a courage and power which make them quail. It was because for the hour of need the Spirit of God freshly filled him. It was not he that spoke, but the Holy Ghost in him. The gift of the Spirit is for us just as truly as it was for the apostles. See Luke 11: 13 for proof of this. God is ready to fill us with the Holy Ghost whenever we have any work to do, or any testimony to offer, or any trial to endure. If we only believed this, and sought for the divine help in the presence of temptation or hard duty, we should not fail so often. But how can we get this heavenly power? First, by living at all times in communion with God; second, when any special need or danger or burden is upon us, by looking up to heaven in prayer for special strength.

10 *Be it known unto you all and to all the people of Israel.* Christianity has nothing to hide. It has no secret arts by which it accomplishes its great works. It uses no incantations, it practices no tricks, it does nothing in the dark. It wants the whole world to know just what is the secret of its power. It has nothing to fear from the closest and most critical inspection of its methods. This is not the case with the world's religions. They make everything mysterious. They dare not throw open to the gaze of all men the arts and practices and methods by which they claim to work. One of the proofs of the genuineness of Christianity is that it challenges the inspection of the world; its secret of power is an open secret; it has nothing to keep back; it is never afraid to submit to the fullest examination and to the severest tests.

10 *By the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised.* Why did he add these last words? Why did he not prudently stop with the word Nazareth? He knew that the other words would stir up fresh rage, for he was talking now to the very judges who had condemned Christ, and to Sadducees who were maddened by every reference to the resurrection. Why did he not then refrain from using these offensive words? Ah! that would not have been true courage. That would have been trimming the truth down to make it less offensive, cutting off the very parts that his judges disliked. It would not have been telling what was untrue, but it would have been keep-

ing back part of the truth. It would not have been faithful witnessing, for it would not have told his hearers of their sin, nor would it have proclaimed the power of God in raising Jesus from the dead. Let us learn a lesson here against all sorts of compromising. In our efforts to be politic and "wise as serpents," and to avoid giving offence, let us be sure that we never keep back any part of the truth.

He is the stone which was set at nought of you the builders, which was made the head of the corner. Who is on trial here? Who is judge and who is accused? Verily the tables are turned. The prisoner is trying his judges and pronouncing the sentence of condemnation upon them. He holds up their act in the divine light, and shows them what a terrible mistake they had made. They had rejected Jesus as unfit to be their Messiah, but God had taken him and made him the Saviour of the world. Just in the same way do the human and divine estimates differ perpetually. The things men admire God sees no beauty in, and in the things men despise God beholds the rarest loveliness. He took for the foundation of his heavenly temple a stone which the human builders thought unfit to be used anywhere in the wall; and he is building the whole temple with things that men despise, for the saints of the Lord are not those that this world honors. Lord Macaulay tells of a window in a cathedral, made by an apprentice of pieces of glass which the architect had thrown away as unfit for use, and this window surpasses all the others in beauty. God is gathering into his Church the souls that earth sets aside, and its glory in the end will outshine all the splendor of this world.

In none other is there salvation. Even for the men who had crucified Christ there was no possible salvation in any other. If they ever reached heaven it would be by the way of the cross which they themselves had set up. If their sins were ever blotted out it would be in the very blood which they themselves had shed on Calvary. To the rejecter who studies this lesson the same is true; if he is ever saved it must be by the same Christ whom he is now contemning. If ever he goes to heaven it must be by the same way of the cross which he now despises. There is no other Saviour. There was but one ark when the deluge came, and to reject the safety it offered was to reject safety altogether. There was but one way to escape from the stroke of the death-angel in Egypt—by the blood of the lamb on the door-post. So there is but one Saviour, and to refuse him is to choose death rather than life, eternal destruction rather than salvation.

They took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. There was something in their bearing that recalled the bearing of Jesus that morning when he was on his trial, and then it flashed on these judges that they had seen these very men with Jesus at that time. It is a great thing when we make people think of Christ by the way we carry ourselves. It ought always to be so; it *will* always be so if we really live with Christ. Companionship transforms. Then his life is in all who believe on him, and the features of his spirit re-appear in his followers. It will be a good thing for us to ask ourselves whether people see Christ's features in us, whether we exhibit his peace, his joy, his meekness, his unselfishness, his holiness in our lives.

Seeing the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. The most unanswerable argument for Christianity is its fruit. There was a man who said that he had been able to refute every proof offered for the Christian religion save one, and that was his mother's life. There is no argument, in proof of the power of the gospel, equal to what the gospel itself has wrought in the lands into which it has gone. Regenerated men and women are unanswerable proofs of the regenerating power of Christ. [See "Half Hours with the Lessons."]

LESSON POINTS.

1. Speaking of Jesus excites the wrath of enemies and unbelievers. v. 1.

2. Jesus himself is the gospel; all the doctrines of salvation are embraced in him; to receive him is to receive all. v. 2.

3. Men may hush the gospel preacher's voice, but they cannot call back his words, nor check their effect. v. 4.

4. The secret of power in the Christian life is the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. v. 8.

5. Whatever charges are made against Christianity are made against "good" deeds, for only such does it perform. v. 9.

6. Christianity has nothing to hide; it uses no secret methods. v. 10.

7. Christian courage does not stop with parts of truths; it does not trim to suit its hearers. v. 10.

8. The living Christ is the power that works in the Church on earth. v. 10.

9. God is building his heavenly temple of stones rejected by human builders. v. 11.

10. Rejecters of Christ, if ever saved, must be saved by him whom they now despise. v. 12.

11. It is a great thing to live so as by our lives to make men think of Jesus. v. 12.

12. The good works of Christianity are its best argument. v. 13.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

This lesson is a plain narrative, ending with a ringing reply. A few terms in it require explanation, *e. g.*, "Captain of the temple," "Sadducees," "Preached through Jesus the resurrection of the dead," "Put them in hold," "The number of the men was about five thousand," "The kindred of the high priest," "Salvation," "None other name." But the main points are: "The arrest of the apostles," "Their arraignment by the council," "Their noble answer." You will find as you study the lesson, that there are in it elements of intense interest. What is so exciting to boys and girls as the sight of *an arrest?* Who has not seen their eyes enlarge, their nerves tremble, their bosoms heave, as, for the first time, they were confronted by the sight? There is a morbid and wicked curiosity often mingled with such feelings, and this is to be discouraged. But I remember that as a boy I followed an arrested man till he was safely in prison; was in the court-room on his arraignment, and followed the trial with the keenest interest. Perhaps every boy has the same feelings. You can use these elements in the narrative to draw out the sympathy of your scholars for the apostles in their arrest and trial. From this first persecution of the Christian Church you can stir them up to study the story of other persecutions and of the martyrs. This sympathy must be aroused only that it may now be used to draw them to the saving truth in Peter's reply—the great fact that JESUS CHRIST OF NAZARETH IS THE ONLY SAVIOUR.

I. IMPRESS THE FACTS. Disdain not to begin with such questions as, Who of you has ever seen an arrest? Where did you see it? Whom did you see arrested? Who arrested him? For what crime was he arrested? Where did the officer take him? Before what court was he tried? To what was he sentenced? Where did this arrest spoken of in the lesson take place? Who arrested these men? What were the names of the arrested men? Who wanted them to be arrested? Who were the priests? Who was the captain of the temple? Who were the Sadducees? Why did they want Peter and John arrested? Where did the officers take them? Bring out the encouraging facts, the growth of the Church to "five thousand men." Call for reports on the points assigned last Sabbath. Dwell a moment on the description of the Jewish Sanhedrim, and the scene and incidents of the arraignment, especially Peter's reply. Have class turn and read Mark 13: 9. Ask, How does the lesson illustrate this verse?

II. APPLY. 1. Bring out for the comfort of all those who are misunderstood, ridiculed or opposed in following Christ, that Jesus and his greatest apostles met opposition and suffered persecution. Dwell on the fact that such sufferings borne for Christ advance his cause. 2. How did Peter's reply illustrate Gal. 6: 10? How can we imitate him? 3. What is the meaning of the word *salvation?* What blessings are included in salvation? In what names are men now trusting for salvation? (In "the Church," in their own "goodness," in "God's mercy," etc.) What is the "only name" to be so trusted? Why is Jesus Christ the only Saviour? Tell the story of the blind street preacher in London, who, having lost his place in reading with his fingers, kept repeating the words last read: "None other name," "none other name." These words, heard by a passer-by who was in distress of soul, resulted in his conversion.

Special hints to teachers of adult classes:

Sometimes, if practicable, I would use the blackboard in class-teaching. I would do so sometimes for the sake of varying my method. If you choose to use the board or pad or pencil and slate or paper, you could analyze the lesson, and drawing each point from the class make the following outline, to be copied by each scholar:

- NONE OTHER NAME
  - *So Opposed* vs. 1–7.
    - By every man's sin.
    - By Jewish rulers.
    - By heathen mobs.
    - By heathen philosophy.
    - By heathen governments.
    - By infidel doubts.
    - By unfaithful followers.
  - *So Triumphant* vs. 8–14.
    - Over
      - Sin.
      - Death.
      - Persecution.
      - All enemies.
    - Through
      - His divine person.
      - His sinlessness.
      - His perfect sacrifice.
      - His Holy Spirit.
      - His blessed word.
      - His infinite grace.

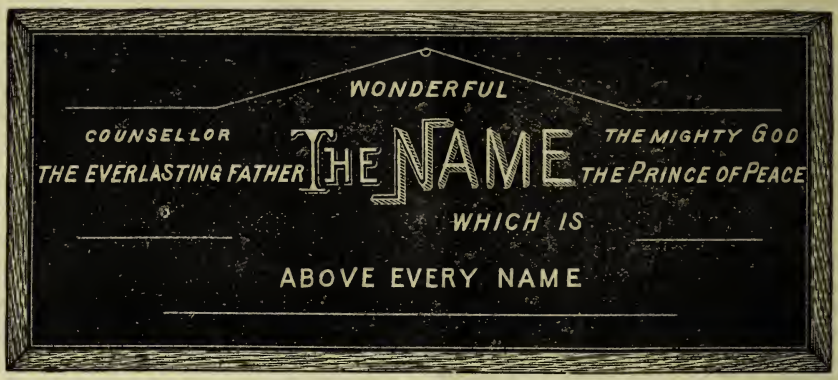
Points in next Sabbath's lesson to be assigned:

1. When ought Christians to disobey civil rulers?

2. Characteristics of the prayer. vs. 24–30.

3. What are the predictions concerning Christ in the second psalm?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



SUGGESTIONS.—This lesson affords a good opportunity for a Bible reading on "His name." Referring to the blackboard, have the school read Isa. 9: 6. Let a class of boys read Phil. 2: 9, 10. As to the power of his name let a class of girls read John 16: 23, 24. Have a single voice read Ps. 8: 1, and another Neh. 9: 5, last clause. Let the entire school read Ps. 72: 19; superintendent read Neh. 1: 11, followed by a moment of silent prayer, a teacher breaking the silence by reading Ps. 34: 3, and the school singing the hymn, "All hail the power of Jesus' name." The pastor, if present, reads Ps. 72: 17, followed by superintendent reading Ps. 111: 9; the school reading Ps. 148: 13 and singing an appropriate hymn. It will add to the interest to notify some teacher or scholar to select the hymn and announce it from the class. Close the service by reading in concert Luke 24: 47, the pastor or superintendent reading Rev. 22: 4. With proper preparation on the part of the superintendent, and promptness in those who participate, this may be made a very interesting and instructive desk lesson, and certainly is in keeping with the beautiful lesson before us.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

A reference to the picture on the children's *Westminster Primary Leaf*, with a discussion as to what was going on, will introduce the lesson. An outline that shall help to represent a prison will aid the memories. Remember that such outlines are not difficult even for unskilled workers. You have only to make a square that shall stand for a building, then, in the crayon used to represent sin, make crossed lines that shall suggest grated windows, while you ask the children if they have ever seen windows and doors so guarded, and why it was done, and you have given them the key to your outline. Two marks for Peter and John. Brave soldiers for Jesus; not afraid of prison walls now.

But why were they put in prison? Let those who have studied the lesson answer you and give other details, until you reach what I consider the central thought—

THE GREAT NAME.

Print these words in large letters.

The Lesson Illustrated by Story.—Frank once brought home from school a copy of a letter that the teacher had read. This was it: "To every scholar who will have a perfect mark in his spelling class each day this quarter, I will give a ten-dollar gold piece on examination day."

His brother Charlie, who was not in school that day, asked eagerly whose name was signed, but on hearing that it was "Robert Smith," said: "Pooh! That is only a *play* letter. Robert Smith hasn't any ten-dollar gold pieces to give to anybody."

But when Fannie, the older sister, came home she had the same message, only she said that Frank did not get the *name* right; it was "Robert Smith Perkins," little Robert's rich uncle, who had plenty of gold pieces. The *name* signed made the great difference. This, or a similar story with the promise written out on paper and read to the class, as the little boy copied it, will help to impress the importance of the "NAME above every name."

Talk about different names of power. The President's name signed to a pardon for a condemned man can be used effectively in illustration.

What can Jesus do besides healing the body? The answer is found in the golden text, and should be given by the class. Imagine a child praying, asking for help and care because he is good; or because mamma is good, or because papa is rich. No, it must always be "for Jesus' sake." That great name must be in every prayer.

It would be well at this point to sing a verse of the lesson hymn as given on the *Primary Leaf*. It will be found to repeat the truths you have been trying to impress.

Blackboard Illustration of Jesus' Name in Prayer.—The red line extending upward which represents prayer, beginning at the base in the words: "For Jesus' Sake," and closing at the top in those same words. The little child on earth uses the great name, and it is heard in heaven before the King's throne.

SPECIAL THOUGHT.—*To be used at the teacher's discretion.* There was a wonderful witness in this lesson. The healed man stood by. All could see that he was healed. Are there little children in your class who have had their sins forgiven "for Jesus' sake," and who show it in their lives, so that people looking at them are sure that Jesus can give new hearts?

CAUTION.—I hope no teacher will attempt to use *all* of the illustrations suggested. Select from them, if you will, those best fitted to your needs.

Lesson VII. **CHRISTIAN COURAGE.** *Feb. 18th, 1883.*

Acts 4: 18–31. Memorize vs. 29–31.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"If God be for us, who can be against us?"—Rom. 8: 31.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 4: 18–31.....*The Example of Courage.*
T. Rom. 8: 31–39.....*The Power of Courage.*
W. Luke 12: 1–12.....*The Command of Courage.*
Th. Ps. 46: 1–11.....*The Refuge of Courage.*
F. 1 Pet. 3: 13–22.....*The Answer of Courage.*
S. Eph. 6: 10–19.....*The Conflict of Courage.*
S. Rev. 7: 9–17.....*The Reward of Courage.*

TOPIC.

The Grandeur of Christian Courage.

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Answer of Courage. 2. The Refuge of Courage. 3. The Prayer of Courage.

Time.—A. D. 30, in immediate connection with the last lesson. **Place.**—Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 7. *What are the decrees of God?* A. The decrees of God are, his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his will, whereby, for his own glory, he hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 951: "Stand up, stand up for Jesus." Other hymns, 277, 515, 518.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—The members of the Sanhedrim were sorely perplexed. They could not deny the fact of the miracle. The man was too well known, and the evidences of his cure were too striking, and the occurrence had been witnessed by too many to admit of any question as to fact. This the council confessed when they had excluded the apostles to confer secretly among themselves. All they could hope to do was to suppress the matter, to hush up the talk about it, that it might not spread any further. This they attempted to do by forbidding the apostles to speak any more or do any further works in the name of Jesus. They thought thus by stern threatening to intimidate them and thus prevent any future stir about the Nazarene. Our lesson tells how the apostles received and regarded this charge.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

18 And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Je'sus. [Acts 5: 40.]

19 But Pe'ter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. [Acts 5: 29.]

20 For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. [Luke 24: 48; Acts 2: 32; 1 John 1: 1–3.]

21 So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people: for all *men* glorified God for that which was done. [Matt. 21: 26; Luke 20: 6–19; Acts 5: 26.]

22 For the man was above forty years old, on whom this miracle of healing was shewed. [Luke 13: 11; John 5: 5; 9: 1.]

23 ¶ And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief

priests and elders had said unto them. [Acts 12 : 12; Prov. 13 : 20.]

24 And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou *art* God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: [2 Kings 19 : 15; Jer. 10 : 10.]

25 Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? [Ps. 2 : 1.]

26 The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. [Ps. 2 : 2; 83 : 2–5.]

27 For of a truth against thy holy child Je sus, whom thou hast anointed, both Her'od, and Pon'ti-us Pi'late, with the Gen'tiles, and the people of Is'ra-el, were gathered together, [Luke 4 : 18; 22 : 2; 23 : 1–8.]

28 For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. [Acts 2 : 23; 3 : 18.]

29 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, [Acts 14 : 3; Eph. 6 : 19.]

30 By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Je'sus. [Acts 5 : 12; 3 : 6–16.]

31 ¶ And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness. [Acts 16 : 26.]

REVISED TEXT.

18 And they called them, and charged them
not to speak at all nor teach in the name of
19 Jesus. But Peter and John answered and
said unto them, Whether it be right in the
sight of God to hearken unto you rather than
20 unto God, judge ye: for we cannot but speak
21 the things which we saw and heard. And
they, when they had further threatened them,
let them go, finding nothing how they might
punish them, because of the people; for all
men glorified God for that which was done.
22 For the man was more than forty years old,
on whom this miracle of healing was wrought.
23 And being let go, they came to their own
company, and reported all that the chief
priests and the elders had said unto them.
24 And they, when they heard it, lifted up their
voice to God with one accord, and said, O
Lord, thou that didst make the heaven and
the earth and the sea, and all that in them
25 is: who by the Holy Ghost, *by* the mouth of
our father David thy servant, didst say,
Why did the Gentiles rage,
And the peoples imagine vain things?
26 The kings of the earth set themselves in
array,
And the rulers were gathered together,
Against the Lord and against his Anointed:
27 for of a truth in this city against thy holy
Servant Jesus, whom thou didst anoint, both
Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles
and the peoples of Israel, were gathered to-
28 gether, to do whatsoever thy hand and thy
29 counsel foreordained to come to pass. And
now, Lord, look upon their threatenings:
and grant unto thy servants to speak thy
30 word with all boldness, while thou stretchest
forth thy hand to heal; and that signs and
wonders may be done through the name of
31 thy holy Servant Jesus. And when they had
prayed, the place was shaken wherein they
were gathered together: and they were all
filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake
the word of God with boldness.

18 After the fearless answer of the apostles before the council they were sent out of the court-room that the members might confer among themselves as to what should be done. They were greatly perplexed. If the miracle had not been so well known they could have denied it; as it was this was impossible. So they resolved to try intimidation. *Not to speak at all nor teach.* They were not to teach at all, as they were not authorized instructors, and they were not even to talk about Christ in conversation.

19 *Peter and John answered.* This was the reply of both, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, though probably one of them uttered it for both. *Right in the sight of God.* The place to settle all questions of duty is in the sight of God. *To hearken unto you more than unto God.* Christ's command had been to speak of him and his gospel everywhere. The highest court of the land now enjoined silence on these themes. The question was, Which of these commands should the apostles obey—that of their divine Master, or that of the Sanhedrim? It did not take them a moment to decide. *Judge ye.* They put the question to the members of the court, whether in this conflict of authority they should obey God or man. Or the words may mean, "Settle this question for yourselves; think as you will about it; but as for us we cannot but obey God."

20 *For we cannot.* The "we" is emphatic. Whatever the court might judge they could not but speak. *Seen and heard.* They were actual witnesses of Christ. They had seen his miracles, his life, his sufferings, death and resurrection; they had heard his words of precept, doctrine and prophecy. And they were under such solemn command to testify of these things that no authority of earth, enforced by whatever sanctions or by whatever threatenings, could compel their silence.

20 *When they had further threatened them.* They repeated the command of v. 18. *They let them go.* Released them from custody. *Finding nothing.* They could obtain no evidence against them, and the popular feeling was such that they did not dare to punish them without some plausible pretext. *For all men glori-*

fied God. The people recognized the divine hand in the cure that had been wrought.

22 *Above forty years old.* And as he had never walked (chap. 3 : 2) his age showed the inveterate and incurable nature of his lameness. It also made him more widely known, and thus gave additional publicity to the cure. The "for" introducing this verse indicates that this was one reason for the impression made on the people.

23 *Their own company.* To the other apostles, and perhaps other believers who seem to have been gathered together, perhaps praying for Peter and John. See chap. 12 : 12. They then narrated to their brethren all that had occurred.

24 *They lifted up their voice.* In their perplexity they turned to God in prayer. *With one accord.* Not necessarily all repeating the words, but all agreeing and uniting in heart in the petition. *Lord, thou art God.* See Revised Version. *Lord* here is not *Jehovah*, and the prayer is not addressed to Jesus, but to the Father. *Which hast made.* The appeal is made to God as creator. See Neh. 9 : 6; Jer. 32 : 17. The significance of this invocation is that God, having made earth and heaven and all things, is able to do what is asked.

25 *By the mouth.* See Revised Version. The reading of the Greek is uncertain. The quotation is from the second Psalm. David's inspiration is here clearly asserted. *Rage.* Literally, To fume as untamed horses against control, refusing the restraints of authority. *Vain things.* Empty things, things which come to nothing; such are all plans made in opposition to God.

26 *The kings . . . the ruters.* Primarily the reference was to Herod and the rulers of the Jews who combined against Christ himself. *Against the Lord.* God the Father.

27 See Revised Version. *Child.* Servant. See chap. 3 : 13. *Whom thou hast anointed.* Anointing was the symbol of consecration. Thus at the baptism of Jesus he was anointed by the Holy Spirit. His anointing was as king and priest. *Herod and Pontius Pilate.* He is here showing that the prediction quoted in v. 26 had been fulfilled.

28 *Whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel.* This was not the intention of these rulers, but this was what they really did. The *hand* of God stands for his power, and the *counsel* of God is his wisdom. *Determined before.* Revised Version: *Foreordained.* The reference is to the sufferings and death of Christ. Chap. 2 : 23. "It is not said that God decreed that they should do what they did, but, at most, that they did what God had decreed to be done. *To do* and *to be done* are discriminated in the original."—Canon Cook. Says Prof. J. A. Alexander: "The *guilt* of those who put our Lord to death is brought into the closest juxtaposition with the *divine purpose*—another proof of the compatibility between God's sovereignty and man's accountability." See also Acts 2 : 23, where the guilt of those who killed Christ is charged in connection with the statement that he was delivered by the counsel of God. God is sovereign and man is free. God's purposes are fulfilled, and man uses his freedom in fulfilling them. We may not be able fully to see how these two truths are made to agree, but neither can be denied. "However evil may be in the world, evil does not rule the world. Even man's wrath is made to work out God's will and the remainder he will restrain. God's use of men's acts, whether they be good or bad, in no wise destroys man's free choice or his responsibility. But God governs in this world. He is taken by no surprises. He will carry out his plans by man's good acts, if he will do good; but by his bad acts, if he persists in being bad. Here is the hope and comfort of the Christian."—Peloubet's Notes.

29, 30 *Now, Lord, behold . . . and grant unto thy servants.* They do not ask for vengeance on their persecutors, nor do they ask to be spared from further suffering and persecution; what they ask is for strength to be true and courageous and to be enabled to do their whole duty. *By stretching forth thine hand.* They could not themselves heal, and they ask God to continue to do these great things through them, for the establishment of Christ's kingdom among men. Miracles were essential in the first days of Christianity as evidences of its being divine; now they are no longer necessary.

31 *When they had prayed.* At the conclusion of the prayer just given here. *The place was shaken.* Compare the signs at the first giving of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2. This time it was an earthquake or some similar phenomenon. Its significance was that God, who could shake the earth, held in his hands all the powers of the earth. *They were all filled with the Holy Ghost.* We are not told who were present, whether only the apostles or the hundred and twenty original disciples or more. This filling with the Holy Ghost was a new and fresh pouring out in answer to their prayer. vs. 29, 30. *They spake.* This was the result of the pouring out of the Spirit, and the answer to the prayer of v. 29.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

They called them, and charged them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. That is just what Satan tries to do in a great many cases—shut the mouths of God's servants. If he can only get them to keep quiet and not talk about the things of grace and righteousness he will be content. He will promise to let them alone if they will only hush up. Many Christians are strongly tempted in these days to keep silent on the great questions of truth and reform, such as temperance or the Sabbath question. The devil hates agitation. Above all things he hates "fanatics," those people that can't be taught to keep cool and to do good decorously.

Whether it be right . . . to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye. Rulers are to be obeyed in all things until their requirements come in conflict with God's requirements; but whenever a choice must be made between obedience to God and obedience to man, there is only one thing to do. The question is not susceptible of any discussion. When God commands anything no law of earth can set his command aside. No matter what the threatened penalties may be we are to disregard the bidding of men when the bidding of God requires it.

We cannot but speak the things which we saw and heard. There are a great many things which we see and hear that we are not required to tell again. It will not do to quote this in defence of chattering gossip. We see and hear many things that should never pass our lips again. But there are things that we see and hear which we are bound, on peril of great guilt, to tell to others. Every one who is saved is under the strongest obligation to tell others of the mercy he has found. Every one who knows the truth of God is bound to proclaim it. Especially when the truth is assailed it is a great sin to be silent. When a country is in peril it is treason for a citizen to hide his loyalty. It is treason to Christ and his cause for a Christian in these days to allow his mouth to be shut concerning the great questions of reform, such as temperance, polygamy, the Sabbath, the wrongs of the Indians and political corruption. Every true follower of Christ ought to have intense convictions on every great moral question, so intense that he *could not but* speak.

Being let go they came to their own company. That is always the way. When all restraints are removed, every one naturally turns to his own company, to people of his own kind. "Birds of a feather flock together," is one statement of this truth. "A man is known by the company he keeps," is another. A Christian may be kept in his secular work during all the week in the company of worldly men, but if his heart is right, when he is released from these duties he seeks companionship among other Christians. A Christian boy or girl will want for associates those who are also Christians. An impenitent man does not naturally like the fellowship of Christian people, and when he has been thrown in such association for a time is glad to escape, when he hastens away to his own company. Judas was held to Christ for a time, but was not happy, and broke away at last and went to his own place. Demas was attached to Paul for a while, but having loved this present world, forsook him at length and went back to his own company. So the company to which one naturally turns when all restraint has been removed is the test of one's real character. If you love the society of worldly people, with worldly pleasures and engagements, better than the fellowship of Christians and the exercises of devotion and service, what is the inference? So it comes that heaven is only for those who are of heaven's company. Only regenerated hearts and sanctified lives could find enjoyment there. Only those will go to heaven, when "let go" from earth, whose affections, tastes, desires and longings draw them there. Every one at last goes to "his own place."

They, when they heard it, lifted up their voice to God with one accord. We have another test of character in what men do and where they go in trouble. The thirsty hart pants after the water brooks. The chased soldier flies to the fortification. The pursued manslayer in the olden days ran with all speed toward the city of refuge. When danger or sorrow comes to a man, whither does he turn for solace or comfort? Some turn to human friends. Some rush to strong drink. These disciples in their perplexity carried the matter to God and laid it before him. That is the only true thing to do.

Now, Lord . . . grant unto thy servants to speak thy word with all boldness. This prayer is worthy of close study as a model. These disciples were in great peril, but there is not a word of request for the removal of the danger; if God so willed it they would endure the persecution. They were sorely wronged, but there is no prayer for the punishment of their enemies. The only request is that *they themselves may not fail in their duty*, that with all boldness they may speak the word given them to utter. The lesson is very plain, yet very important. Our chief desire should not be to escape from trial,

from cross-bearing, or from danger, but to be kept ourselves from sinning or from failing in duty while under the stress of trial or exposed to peril. It will not harm us in the end to suffer or sacrifice for Christ's sake, but it will harm us most sorely if to avoid loss or suffering we fail in any degree to be faithful. If we are sick there is no harm in praying to be made well again, but it is a great deal more important for us to pray to be kept patient and submissive and gentle in our sickness. So in all trials.

When they had prayed the place was shaken. Prayer has shaken a great many places since that day. Christians have prayed and kingdoms have been made to tremble and thrones to totter. The Church has prayed and old established iniquities have been shaken into fragments. There is no power like that of prayer. Nothing can withstand it. We need to learn anew the mighty secret. We try to batter down the walls of Satan's kingdom with our own feeble hands; we had better go more to our knees and call more earnestly upon God, and he will shake the stony places of evil till they fall.

They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness. The very thing they asked for they got—boldness to speak in the face of the danger. But mark how the answer came—they were newly filled with the Holy Ghost. That is the way God gives "boldness;" he comes himself into our hearts and then nothing can hinder us in our duty. We all need boldness. We have no persecutions to endure, but there are dangers in our lives just as great and requiring just as much courage. Are we timid and cowardly? Are we afraid that we may yield and fail in faithfulness? Let us look up to God for boldness and courage. He will give us what we seek, just as he did here, and in the same way. What we want is to be filled afresh with the divine Spirit. Then we shall not fail in courage, in tenderness, or in any other duty.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Satan tries in every way to silence God's servants. v. 18.
2. We should settle every question of duty as "in the sight of God," for he is our Judge. v. 19.
3. Duty is not in any case what men say, but always what God says. v. 19.
4. When God gives us a message we dare not hide it undelivered in our heart, but must utter it. v. 20.
5. The company to which we naturally turn is a test of our character. v. 23.
6. When we are in perplexity or trouble the only true refuge is prayer. v. 24.
7. God is able to take care of his own cause, for he created all things. v. 24.
8. In trouble our prayer should not be so much for deliverance as for grace to be faithful. v. 29.
9. Boldness is needed to enable us to speak when and what we ought to speak. v. 29.
10. Prayer is heard in heaven and answered on the earth. v. 31.
11. The way God gives boldness is by filling us with his own Spirit. v. 31.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

My dear friend, I assume that you have conscientiously studied the matter of this lesson; that you have read it early in the week, and read it over and over again, as it lies in the inspired word; that you have prayed for the illuminating power of God's Spirit; that you have searched the references to other parts of the Bible; that you have *thought* with long attention and patience over the lesson. I assume that you have exhausted all your own power in studying the passage, and only then have turned to commentaries and lesson helps; that by all these means you have fairly mastered the details of all the facts in these verses; that you have patiently thought out the meaning of all the novel and fresh expressions here found, such as, "To speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus" (v. 18); "Right in the sight of God" (v. 19); "For we cannot but speak" (v. 20); "Glorified God" (v. 21); "They went to their own company" (v. 23); "By the mouth of thy servant David" (v. 25); "Thy hand and thy counsel determined before" (v. 28); "That with all boldness they may speak thy word" (v. 29); "Thy Holy Child Jesus" (v. 30); "All filled with the Holy Ghost." v. 31. In short, I assume that for next Sabbath you know *what* to teach. The questions you come to ask me are simply these: *How* shall I teach this lesson? How open it up? How set the facts and teachings so that they will interest, instruct and aid in saving my scholars? How shall I so weld all the detached truths of this lesson that they may become a sword to pierce mind, heart and conscience? It is easy to collect things which ought to be taught; just *how to teach* them is another matter.

I will answer your questions by asking one of you. *What is the precise impression you desire to make by this lesson?* In every lesson you should have a distinct, clearly marked purpose to impress, and apply one great truth or duty. What

particular truth or duty are you going to stamp on your scholars' minds by means of this passage? Shall I tell you what I should select? "CHRISTIAN COURAGE," the precise duty implied in the title. It is the great lesson of the passage, and is precisely the duty which our youth need to learn. Hold it firmly, and keep it before you all the time.

How shall I impress the duty of Christian Courage.

1. By faithfully spelling out the words of the Holy Spirit in this passage. I mean, that I would have the class strive to bring out the exact meaning of each sentence. For instance, take it up verse by verse, and ask, How would you express in your own words the meaning of *this* verse? etc. You will thus bring their minds in direct contact with the mind of God in his word. Of course, as your time is limited, you must go over this with promptness and rapidity.

2. When you reach the end of a paragraph, as at the end of v. 22, deal with the portion passed over as a whole. For example ask, How does Peter's boldness here appear by the side of his cowardice in his denials of Jesus? (See Lessons for Nov. 5th, 1882. Mark 14: 66–72.) Whence this change in Peter? What is courage? What is *Christian* courage? When do we most need it? Illustrate the need of Christian courage in the school-room, in the office, in the street, in the store, in society, in working for Christ.

3. Make much of vs. 23–31, as the *refuge and refreshment and recruiting of Christian courage.* Deal with that grand prayer reverently and practically. Especially bring out what those persecuted Christians prayed for—all boldness to speak God's word, and power to heal and to work signs and wonders through Jesus.

Points to be assigned for next Sabbath, Feb. 25th:

1. The community of goods described. Acts 4: 32–37.
2. Proofs that the Holy Ghost is a person.
3. What was the specially aggravated character of the sin of Ananias and Sapphira?
4. What are the benefits of discipline in the Church?
5. Why were Ananias and Sapphira so terribly punished?

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

It seems to me that it would be well, in commencing this lesson, to dwell for a little on the picture of bad hearts exhibited by the people in making all this uproar because a man has been cured of his life-long lameness. Notice the command given to the apostles by the rulers not to speak at all in the name of Jesus. Shall they obey? Recall the last command of Jesus: "Go preach!"

A simple object-lesson can be made by using two strips of paper. On one, printed in large letters, the words: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." On the other, the words: "Speak not at all, nor teach in the name of Jesus." Cross the papers to illustrate the contradiction of the two commands—the impossibility of obeying both.

Teach the verse, "We ought to obey God rather than man," and then call for the brave answer made by his two witnesses.

Make a red line to stand for the prayer that followed, while you lead class to notice how promptly they went to Jesus with their trouble, and how all the friends of Jesus prayed with them. They pray for courage, they pray that God will work wonders, and while they speak he answers. The place is shaken with the power of the Holy Spirit. In this connection it would be well to teach the sentence: "While they are yet speaking, I will hear." Let the prayer line close in the letter "A," made in white crayon: *Answered prayer.*

To impress the truth presented in the golden text, divide the board by a line through the centre, printing the names, "Peter," "John," on the one side, and marks for men in authority on the other side. Use purple and red crayon marks to represent the rulers, priests, etc. All these *against* them, and they poor and weak. How could they have such courage? Draw around their names a circle, and print on it the word "GOD." Then ask class for golden text.

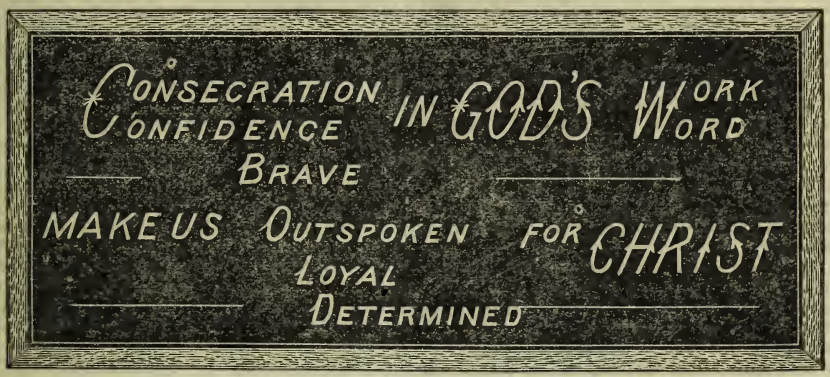
Illustration by Story.—Tommy, one day, in Sabbath-school, learned the verse, "We ought to obey God rather than man." A few days afterwards a rich man, in making change on the street, dropped a twenty-five cent piece and did not know it. Tommy picked it up and stood waiting a chance to give it to him. A young man, who knew that Tommy was very poor, said to him: "Scamper off with it, little chap; he is rich and will never miss it, and you can have a good dinner for once in your life." Little Tommy, only seven years old, said: "We ought to obey God rather than man, and God said, Thou shalt not steal."

It will be noticed that I have done with this lesson what I often do, viz., suggested several lines of thought and several illustrations. No teacher will be likely to use them all.

Perhaps the personal application which all our children most need is some thought that will give them courage to say a brave, bold "NO" when they are being coaxed to do

wrong; or courage to turn and walk away from the naughty boy who swears, or courage to bear being laughed at and called "goody-goody!" So many little ones, who ought to be witnesses to the power of Jesus' name, fail just in these things for want of Christian courage. To all such the golden text should be made to speak powerfully. Also, the teacher should try to impress on their hearts the fact that Peter and John *prayed* for courage.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



SUGGESTIONS.—"Consecration in God's work" and "Confidence in God's word" to be placed upon the board and exposed during class studies. In desk lesson draw attention to the bold reply of Peter and John in vs. 19, 20. Then notice the simple prayer with which the lesson closes, "boldness to testify for Christ, and the answer, "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." These were consecrated disciples, and they had confidence in God's word. Show what these two do for every disciple. They make us (1) "Brave for Christ;" (2) "Outspoken for Christ;" (3) "Loyal for Christ;" (4) "Determined for Christ," and they "Make us bold for Christ." This is needed at the present time as much as in those early days of the Church. Only consecration in the work and confidence in the word will give the boldness we need. "The servants of the Lord should be as bold for their Master as the devil's servants are for theirs."

Directions for coloring.—"Consecration," "Confidence," "Work," "Words," pink and green; "In God's," yellow shaded with red; "For Christ," blue shaded with white; the rest in white, initial letters in the acrostic heavy.

Lesson VIII. **ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA.** *Feb. 25th, 1883.*

Acts 5: 1-11. Memorize vs. 9-11.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord."—Prov. 12: 22.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 4: 32-37.....*Christian Liberality.*
T. Acts 5: 1-11.....*Hypocrisy and Deceit.*
W. Prov. 12: 17-23 ...*Lying Lips.*
Th. Josh. 7: 1-26.....*"The Accursed Thing."*
F. 2 Kings 5: 20-27...*Gehazi's Sin and Punishment.*
S. Eccles. 5: 1-7.... *Paying Vows.*
S. Eph. 4: 20-32.....*"Putting Away All Lying."*

TOPIC.

Lying unto God.

LESSON PLAN.

1. A Fearful Sin. 2. A Terrible Judgment. 3. A Mighty Effect.

Time.—A. D. 30-34, some time after the last lesson. It is impossible to determine the exact date. **Place.**—Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 8. *How doth God execute his decrees?* A. God executeth his decrees in the works of creation and providence.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 304: "Rock of Ages, cleft for me." Other hymns, 294, 333, 335, 339.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—Just at what time this incident occurred cannot be determined. The closing verses of the previous chapter show that the persecution of the apostles, and the stern, threatening charge given to them in the passage studied in our last lesson, while intended to check the progress

of the Church, had no such effect. On the other hand, the followers of Christ were stirred to still greater earnestness and activity. There was great grace upon them all, and the apostles witnessed with great power. The liberality spoken of in the earlier records still showed itself. None of the poor were allowed to lack, for those who had property consecrated it to the Lord for benevolent use. One particular case—that of Barnabas—is given to introduce the account of the fraudulent gift of Ananias and Sapphira.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

1 But a certain man named An-a-ni'as, with Sap-phi'ra his wife, sold a possession, [Lev. 10: 1-3; Josh. 7: 1; 2 Tim. 2: 20.]

2 And kept back *part* of the price, his wife also being privy *to it*, and brought a certain part, and laid *it* at the apostles' feet. [Josh. 7: 11, 12; Mal. 3: 8, 9; 1 Tim. 6: 10.]

3 But Pe'ter said, An-a-ni'as, why hath Sa'tan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back *part* of the price of the land? [1 Kings 22: 21, 22.]

4 Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. [Num. 30: 2; Deut. 23: 21-23.]

5 And An-a-ni'as hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things. [Vs. 10, 11.]

6 And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried *him* out, and buried *him*. [John 19: 40.]

7 And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in.

8 And Pe'ter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much.

9 Then Pe'ter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband *are* at the door, and shall carry thee out. [Matt. 4: 7.]

10 Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying *her* forth, buried *her* by her husband. [V. 5.]

11 And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things. [Acts 2: 43; 19: 17.]

REVISED TEXT.

1 But a certain man named Ananias, with
2 Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, and
kept back *part* of the price, his wife also
being privy to it, and brought a certain part,
3 and laid it at the apostles' feet. But Peter
said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thy
heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep
4 back *part* of the price of the land? Whiles
it remained, did it not remain thine own?
and after it was sold, was it not in thy power?
How is it that thou hast conceived this thing
in thy heart? thou has not lied unto men,
5 but unto God. And Ananias hearing these
words fell down and gave up the ghost: and
6 great fear came upon all that heard it. And
the young men arose and wrapped him
round, and they carried him out and buried
him.
7 And it was about the space of three hours
after, when his wife, not knowing what was
8 done, came in. And Peter answered unto
her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so
much. And she said, Yea, for so much.
9 But Peter *said* unto her, How is it that ye
have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of
the Lord? behold, the feet of them which
have buried thy husband are at the door, and
10 they shall carry thee out. And she fell down
immediately at his feet, and gave up the
ghost: and the young men came in and
found her dead, and they carried her out
11 and buried her by her husband. And great
fear came upon the whole church, and upon
all that heard these things.

1 *But.* This word indicates a contrast. Mention had just been made of one notable example of true consecration, in the case of Barnabas; then this instance follows in immediate connection. Note here the faithfulness of the Scripture record, which never covers up blemishes nor remains silent concerning sins, even in the Church. *Ananias, with Sapphira his wife.* Ananias denotes the favor of Jehovah, or, Jehovah is gracious, and Sapphira beautiful. Bengel remarks: "Their names were favorable or beautiful; their principles bad." *A possession.* From v. 3 we learn that it was land.

2 *Kept back part of the price.* They professed to give all the proceeds of the sale, just as Barnabas had done, and then secretly retained a portion for themselves. Their sin grew out of the struggle of two conflicting passions—desire for applause and covetousness. They wanted the reputation of being generous and self-sacrificing, and yet they loved their money too well to give it all up. They resolved, therefore, on this fraudulent arrangement by which they could still keep a portion of their money and yet have the credit of giving it all. *His wife also.* It was the result of deliberate conspiracy between the two. *Laid it at the apostles' feet.* This was probably done in a formal way, during a public service, and as an act of worship. The record indicates all through that the lie was acted in the presence of the apostles and the assembled Church. The object sought—praise of men, could not have been gained by a private offering. These two came with others who brought all, and laying down their "certain part," offered it as the whole.

3 *Why hath Satan filled thy heart?* Peter spoke under the direction and inspiration of the Holy Ghost, who revealed to him the fraud. See the case of Gehazi, 2 Kings 5: 26. It was Satan's work, yet Ananias was no less guilty on this account. The sin was conceived in the heart of Ananias (v. 4), and it was *he* who lied. Satan's suggestion might have been resisted. Compare Luke 22: 3; John 13: 2, 27. *To lie to the Holy Ghost.* It was probably an *acted* not a *spoken* lie, yet it was none the less sinful. The lie was to the Holy Ghost, not only because it was to the apostles and the Church, but because the offering was made to God, and was an act of pretended worship.

4 *Whiles it remained.* He was not compelled to sell it; it was his own, to keep if he wished. This devotion of property was entirely a voluntary matter with each owner. Or he might have sold it and then have brought any part of the proceeds, keeping the remainder, but offering the part only as a part. The sin was in bringing a part as all. *In thine heart.* Satan made the suggestion, but Ananias let it enter his heart. *Thou hast not lied unto men.* Not merely to men, although it was also to men with the intention of deceiving them, but the chief guilt lay in the fact that it was a lie to God. Comparing vs. 3, 4, we have a distinct proof of the deity of the Holy Ghost. In v. 3 Ananias is said to have lied to the *Holy Ghost;* in v. 4 he is as distinctly said to have lied *unto God;* therefore, the Holy Ghost is God.

5 *Ananias hearing . . . fell down.* His death was clearly and solely a divine act. Peter pronounced no sentence, uttered no imprecation. We have no hint that he even knew beforehand that Ananias was thus to die. It was purely an infliction of God. *Great fear came.* The effect was a feeling of awe on all who heard of it in and out of the Church.

6 *The young men arose.* Probably not any church officers, but simply the younger men who were present at the service. The worship went on after this sad interruption, while a few young men took the dead body away and buried it. *Wound him up.* Wrapped his own garments about him. No coffins were used in that country, and the body was buried in the garments worn in life. *Buried him.* The body was not taken to his own house, or his wife would have known of his death. v. 7. In the East the burial took place in all cases soon after death, usually the same day. The circumstances of the death of Ananias may have hastened his burial, and there seem to have been none of the usual marks of respect shown, such as washing and anointing the body. The burial places were outside the city walls, and some time would necessarily elapse before the young men could complete their sad work and return. v. 9.

7 *Three hours after . . . his wife . . . came in.* The words seem to imply that it was into the same meeting, still in progress, that she came. The awe at the terrible occurrence may have kept the worshipers still before God. Sapphira had not heard of her husband's death. She came in, probably, expecting praise for her generous gift.

8 *Peter answered unto her.* It is not said that she asked any question, and the "answer" must have been to her salutation, or perhaps to her glance around to find her husband in the assemblage. It has been suggested that Peter thus addressed her to give her an opportunity for repentance. *Yea, for so much.* She repeats in words the lie which her husband had only acted.

9 *How is it that ye have agreed together?* Another proof of a deliberate and concerted conspiracy. *To tempt the Spirit.* To tempt is to try, to put to the test. They had acted as if the Spirit could be deceived. There is the further thought here of daring God, trying his patience. *The feet . . . are at the door.* The young men were just returning from the burial of Ananias. This was an announcement that she also would die for the sin, but Peter did not sentence her to die nor in any sense procure her death.

10, 11 *Buried her by her husband.* Probably in a rock cave, prepared for a family tomb. *Great fear came.* See v. 13. The fearful consequences of hypocrisy, as exhibited in this case, filled all hearts with a solemn feeling of awe. Believers saw the peril of dishonesty in professing godliness. *As many as heard.* The effect was felt also outside the Church, and so powerfully that no investigation was made by the Sanhedrim into the circumstances of the deaths.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

A certain man . . . sold a possession and kept back part of the price. Ananias and his wife were not compelled to sell the land; there was no law or rule requiring it. They might have kept their property and still have remained consistent members of the Church. Then after they had sold it they were not required to bring the money to the apostles; they might have put it in bank and have lived off the income of it. Or they might have brought part of it and kept part

of it for themselves, just as they did. What was wrong then in their conduct? The sin lay in the fact that they professed to have brought the *full* price of the land, all they had received for it, when in reality they had gotten more than they said they had, and were secretly retaining a portion for their own use. It was an *acted* lie.

Why hath Satan filled thine heart? Some one may say, "If Satan put it into his heart, why was Ananias punished for it?" But Peter's question, "*Why* hath Satan?" shows that it was the fault of Ananias that Satan was permitted to do this. He could have resisted him. Luther somewhere says that a man cannot keep the birds from flying around his head, but he can keep them from building their nests in his hair. He means by the illustration that we cannot keep Satan's temptations from flying about us and seeking admittance, but it is our fault if they build their nests in our hearts. Satan tempted Ananias, but he had no power to force his way into his heart. The sin of Ananias was in *opening* to Satan, in listening to his evil suggestion. But mark that when Satan was admitted he *filled* the man's heart; that is, he took entire possession. It is a terrible thing to open the heart to Satan. He that does so knows not what the end will be, to what fearful sins he may be driven.

To lie to the Holy Ghost. All lying is terrible, but lying to the Holy Ghost is a sin of most awful guilt. It looks here as if it were unpardonable, for there is no exhortation to repentance, as there was afterward in the case of Simon Magus, and no hope of forgiveness held out in case of repentance and confession. There is something very startling in this, for lying to the Holy Ghost is not an impossible sin in these days. This man and his wife were church members, in full communion, and yet they sinned this terrible sin, and met this swift and awful punishment.

How is it that thou hast conceived this thing in thy heart? This presents the *human* side of his guilt. A little back Satan was said to have filled his heart; now Ananias himself is said to have conceived the sin in his heart. However Satan may suggest evil thoughts, we make them our own when we accept them. He does not work them out; we do that. We cannot then throw off the responsibility for our sins. They are our own when we commit them, no matter who tempted us. We are not responsible for temptations, for suggestions to evil—Christ was tempted, and suggestions of evil were made to him—but we are responsible if we accept the suggestions and put them into our heart. We must resist every temptation, for no matter how fiercely the tempter plies us, if we yield the guilt and the penalty will be ours. Satan will not help us bear the consequences.

Thou hast not lied unto men but unto God. Is there no such lying in our days? Have we never come near repeating the sin of Ananias? When we unite with the Church, we profess both in act and in words to dedicate to God all that we are and all that we have. Do we keep back no part? When contributions are asked for the work of Christ we give what we say, by our act, is all that we ought to give to that cause; but do we tell the truth? Ought we to give no more? We sing hymns, not to men but to God, and yet we frequently come upon lines that declare our love or our devotion to Christ, or that promise the most unbounded service. Do we really mean all we say? Do we not sometimes profess in praying what we fail to make good in living? Are not these things of the nature of "lying unto God?" Do we think enough about the heinousness of this lying which is not to men but to God? Men boast of their character for veracity, that their word is never questioned by their fellow-men. Are they as careful to keep their word and to speak only the absolute truth to God? It is a great sin to lie to men; it is a far greater sin to lie to God.

Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost. His death was not Peter's act but God's. It was not merely summary punishment for his presumptuous and daring sin, but being visited thus at the beginning of the history of the Christian Church it became a beacon, marking a fearful peril and sending its warning down along the after ages. Thus God showed his terrible detestation of hypocrisy in his Church. The lesson should be heeded by us to-day. Such penalty may not now be visited upon those who lie to the Holy Ghost as Ananias did; they may live on and die in quiet; but the guilt is none the less because judgment tarries. There is a day coming when it shall tarry no longer.

How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? It was one of the sorest aggravations of the guilt of this deed that two persons had deliberately agreed together to commit it, and two persons, too, so closely and sacredly united as husband and wife. This fact showed that it was not a hasty sin, wrought under sudden and powerful temptation, but a sin thought about beforehand and calmly planned and boldly executed. It showed also that it was a sin which two persons had together decided to commit. Many people will do things secretly which they would never do if they were first to put their thought and purpose into words

for any ear to hear. If men who commit evil deeds were first always to talk to their wives about them, fewer crimes would stain their hands. Hearts are very hard when two persons plan together to do any wicked thing.

Great fear came upon all the church and upon as many as heard these things. Such examples of divine judgment should deter others from like sin. Though God may not punish hypocrisy now by instant death, yet the penalty will be no less terrible. We should all be afraid to sin. We should be afraid also of every approach to sin, for the evil that seems small at first grows at last into a power that binds the soul fast for ever. One day when the tide was out, a man went to gather sea plants on the rocks, and in stepping from ledge to ledge his leg slipped down and became jammed in a crevice. He attempted to pull it out, but could not. He cried aloud, he shrieked, he prayed, but all in vain. Soon the tide came rolling in, and rose up and up, until it flowed over him and drowned his last gurgling cry in its remorseless waters. So it is that sin clutches men. Even one sin, one secret sin, one evil habit, may hold the soul that indulges it until the floods of judgment come and roll over it, engulphing it in eternal destruction. It was so with Ananias and Sapphira. They indulged the sins of covetousness and love of approbation until their souls were caught and overwhelmed. It is always perilous to commit even one sin—that may be the one that will bring judgment.

One of the great lessons of this incident is that we cannot deceive God. We talk about secret sins, but is that really secret which is as open as day to the eyes of God? Exposure will come some time. Dr. Wm. M. Taylor gives this illustration: "When one king had been vanquished in war by another, the conqueror offered terms which were satisfactory to the conquered in every respect save this—that they required him to do public homage to his victor. That, however, was at length so far modified that he was to be permitted to render his obeisance in the tent of his rival. But when the hour came, and he was in the very act of doing homage, his enemy, by some machinery which he had prepared, stripped off the canvas covering and revealed him to the gaze of both armies on his knees before his conqueror. So if we allow a sinful ambition or an evil appetite to overmaster us, and think we can save ourselves from humiliation by doing our homage to it under the secrecy of some curtained tent, we may be sure that when we are in the very act of owning our allegiance to it the Lord will throw down the covering and unveil our degradation before the eyes of men and angels."

In "Half-hours with the Lessons," the following practical points are marked:

1. The divine abhorrence of prevarication. To lie to a fellow-creature is a grave offence, but to lie to the Holy Ghost is pre-eminently criminal and foolish—criminal, because committed against him who is the Spirit of *truth;* the height of folly, because he who searches all things cannot be deceived.

2. The certainty of the exposure of hypocrisy. God will unmask the hypocrite. He may bear long with him, but sooner or later the exposure must come. The fable of ancient lapidaries touching the Chelydonian stone was, that it retained its brilliancy and lustre just so long as it was enclosed with gold, and no longer. Let the prosperity and safety in which the hypocrite is set be removed, and his affected piety is gone. "Be sure your sin will find you out." It may be covered never so deeply and concealed never so adroitly; God has a hundred ways of bringing it up and blazing it abroad.

3. Religious enthusiasm without grace is dangerous. People run fearful risks when they profess more than their spiritual strength can carry. In times of great religious excitement the temptation is that men pledge themselves to what they cannot fulfill. In such cases there will ensue regret, then the wish to be well out of it, and finally the determination to extricate one's self at all costs. Or a different process: remarkable experiences are claimed; the most extravagant promises for the future are made. Then trials are encountered, and failure succeeds. Pride forbids the acknowledgment of failure; dissemblance is practiced; the appearance of earnestness and zeal is maintained; professions are as loud as ever; expressions of delight in religion, of conscious communion with the living God, are freely indulged. And for all this there is no basis in fact—it is a mere mask to hide the true state of the heart. How much safer and nobler is the honest confession of a break-down than such loud and hollow protestations!

LESSON POINTS.

1. Even in the Church, while in this world, there is evil as well as good. v. 1; chap. 4: 36.

2. The Scriptures are faithful, not hiding the blemishes in the Church.

3. We are constantly in danger of keeping back part in serving God. v. 2.

4. Though Satan is the tempter, the guilt of our own sins is our own. v. 3.

5. Satan can fill our heart only if we yield to him. v. 3.

6. All offerings to God must be free, voluntary, hearty. v. 4.

7. Lying is a terrible sin, but lying unto God, by hypocritical pretension in holy things, is the blackest of all sins. v. 4.

8. The Holy Ghost is God. v. 4, with v. 3.

9. God smites sometimes swiftly to show men the reality of the judgment that must come upon all transgressors. v. 5.

10. We should be afraid to sin. v. 11.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

The sooner you dismiss from your minds the thought that there may be some royal road to good teaching, some patent method, some labor-saving machine, the better. *There is none.* The only true way is the old way—as old as Socrates—as old as the greater Teacher than Socrates, JESUS—the way of patient study, careful thought, meditation and prayer. God will take poor preparation and poor teaching from those who cannot do better; but he will bless you when only you give him the best you have.

Shall I tell you precisely how I would prepare to teach this lesson? After thorough study of these eleven verses, without and with helps, I would take my pen and a single sheet of paper. I would put aside all helps, and keep looking up to the only Helper. I would place before me the Bible, held open at the fifth chapter of Acts. I would try and gather all my thoughts for a determined effort, and then slowly and deliberately *write out my own questions.* I would begin with perfectly easy questions, as—Title of last lesson? Golden text of last lesson? What great duty did that lesson teach? Title of this lesson? Golden text? How did the early Christians feel toward each other? How did they show their brotherly love? Who is particularly mentioned as an example of this? Acts 4: 37, 38. What do you know of Ananias and Sapphira? (Jews, had property, were ambitious to be thought liberal, loved money, hypocrites.) Thus I would go step by step by questions, sometimes jotting down the outlines of an answer, with short hints as to points and illustrative applications. I would not skip over facts, and be obliged to go back and gather up the missing links. That confuses the class. I would write out my questions in the order of the points as the lesson presents them, taking short steps, and one at a time, that the scholar may see how one thought grows out of another. I would question on meaning of words, "Satan," "Holy Ghost," "Lying unto the Holy Ghost," "Agreed together." Write questions of application. For instance, How do we now keep back part that belongs to God? How do we try to seem better than we are? How did Ananias *lie to the Holy Ghost?* (See Explanatory and Illustrative Notes.) How may *we* lie to the Holy Ghost? In the same way unveil the love of money in Ananias and Sapphira, then unveil the love of money as a root of all evil in our hearts. Do not wait till toward the end before you apply. Strike heart and conscience with the arrows of God just as they come.

Write out questions of recapitulation and review. Many other kinds of questions will suggest themselves. Do not fail to show how the love of money lay back of Ananias and Sapphira's awful sin, and how desire to be thought very good and liberal, mixed with avarice, led to hypocrisy and lying to the Holy Ghost.

Boys and girls are in great danger of lying. Show the awfulness of the sin, and all its windings. *In adult classes,* in addition to the above, discuss briefly the true nature of the community of goods in the primitive Church, the personality of Satan, the critical danger of the rise of hypocrisy in the early Church, the personality and divinity of the Holy Ghost, and the *first case of discipline in the Christian Church:* The subjects of it—Ananias and Sapphira, the persons empowered to administer it—the apostles, the design of the discipline—the honor of God, the cleansing of the Church, quickening the conscience of all, and producing saving fear in all. v. 11.

Points to be assigned in the lesson for March 4:

1. Persecutions of Christians.
2. The Sadducees.
3. The ministry of angels. Acts 1: 14.
4. Jesus as the Author and Giver of repentance.
5. The witness of the Holy Ghost to the gospel.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Marks in the sin-color for two people. Their sad and solemn story will doubtless be familiar to the children. In allowing class to give the details in answer to questions, try to hold them to a sense of the awfulness of the sin and of the swift and terrible punishment. Why did God so promptly and fearfully punish these people? One answer is suggested by the golden text. To prove what an abomination to the Lord are lying lips.

A Special Point to be Impressed.—"Thou hast not lied unto men, *but unto God.*" These two people thought that they were telling this lie to men, but Peter made them remember that God hears all we say, and that lying is a sin against him.

Explain that there was no law obliging these two sinners to give *all* the price of their land. They had a right to do with their money as they pleased.

The Beginning of the Sin.—Help the children to analyze their conduct. What tempted them? Could it have been love for the poor? Could it have been a desire to honor God? No, for they knew that he saw the heart. Imagine the two talking together, one saying: "I wish we could give as much as such a person," or "I wish we could give more than anybody else." What is the name of the feeling that leads persons to wish to do, or to seem to do, or to be more than others? Skillfully questioned, the children will readily give you the word—

"PRIDE,"

which print on the board, being careful to use the sin-color. But before they could have had this talk together, what must have taken place? Draw out the fact that this sin was in their hearts before it came out in words and acts. Outline a heart around the word "PRIDE." All sin starts here. Suppose these people, when first this thought came, had taken it to God and asked him to cast it out and blot it out, then we should never have had the sad record of their disgrace and punishment.

The Lesson Illustrated by Story.—There was once a little girl who was guilty of this same sin. She had a bright five-cent piece which she carried to Sunday-school. During the singing and prayer she played with it; held it up that others could see it; whispered, "I've got five cents to give, and you have only brought a penny!" Then, when the box was passed, she held her doubled up little hand over it for a moment, but she dropped nothing in; she only pretended to do so. Sabbath after Sabbath she brought the same five-cent piece, and made believe drop it in the box, and gave nothing. Why did not God punish her? This point needs to be carefully explained. He does not punish all sin *at once.* He gives us a chance to repent and be forgiven. The class will readily see that the child's temptation to sin lay in her pride; so that really she was guilty of more than one sin. This important lesson should be carefully studied by each teacher with a view to learning what are the special temptations of her own children, and helping them.

In some, timidity leads to falsehood; in some, a desire to appear obliging, etc. They should be taught not only that God hates the sin of lying, but that the first temptations to this sin should be carefully guarded against.

Notice the recitations given on *Westminster Primary Leaf.* They will be found helpful in resting the children, and at the same time impressing the truths taught.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

SUGGESTIONS.—God knows when we tell a lie. See Heb. 4: 13. Read it in concert and impress it. Compare it with Prov. 15: 11. Contrast the act of the disciples in vs. 32–37 of chap. 4 with this act of Ananias and Sapphira, and notice the swift judgment that accompanies the latter. For the doom of the liar, see Rev. 21: 8, 27, and earnestly warn all to avoid this terrible sin. This lying was unto God, and therefore far worse a sin than lying unto men. Have the school read from the blackboard, and show how Ananias and Sapphira lost both money and soul. It is lying unto God to profess to be what we are not. Remember, "God is not mocked."

Directions for coloring.—"A lying tongue," brown shaded with red; "Is but for a moment," orange shaded lightly with pearl; "Money," "Soul," white and red; "Both lost," yellow shaded with light blue.

ABOUT NEW BOOKS.

..Tangles and Corners is a fresh book from the well-trained pen of Miss Kate W. Hamilton. Its heroine, Kezzie Driscoll, is a young girl with half-formed purposes of good and subjected to unfavorable home influences. She meets many "tangles" and enters many "corners" not unknown to other young people, but is led, amid sorrows and joys, out of questionings as to duty and the unrest of a partial service of God into the rest and peace of a trusting devotion and obedience. Presbyterian Board. Price, $1.50.

..Constitutional History and Political Development of the United States. By Simon Sterne, of the New York Bar. The design of this new work can best be stated in the author's own words—"A sketch of the Constitution of the United States as it stands in text, and as it is interpreted by the Supreme Court, accompanied by a history of the political controversies which resulted in the formation and changes in that instrument." To every student of our political history the volume will have genuine interest. New York: Cassell, Petter, Galpin & Co. Price, $1.25.

..The Early Days of Christianity. By F. W. Farrar, D.D., F. R. S. This is a companion to Dr. Farrar's two former great works, his "Life of Christ," and "Life of St. Paul." His object has been, as he says, to furnish English readers with a companion, partly historic and partly expository, to the whole of the New Testament. The first of the three volumes dealt with the Gospels, the second with the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of St. Paul. This last volume sets forth in their distinct characteristics the work and the writings of Peter, James, Jude, John, and the author of the Epistle of the Hebrews (Apollos, as Dr. Farrar thinks). The book is one of great value, gathering into its pages an immense amount of historical matter which will throw much light upon these men and their writings. New York: Cassell, Petter, Galpin & Co. Price, $2.00.

..The Suffering Saviour; or, Meditations on the Last Days of Christ. By Fred. N. Krummacher, D.D. The scenes and incidents of the last week in our Lord's life are here taken up one by one and lingered upon in that devout manner which was the author's wont in all his discussion of sacred themes. The "meditations" are suggestive, and the book is peculiarly fitted for devotional reading. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. 12mo, pp. 474. Price, $1.00.

..Dorothy Cope. By Maria Louisa Charlesworth. This volume contains two interesting stories—"The Old Looking-glass," and "The Broken Looking-glass." Dorothy is an old servant of seventy years, who tries to make her long life a looking-glass to the young, to show them how she failed and how she learned. She says: "If you will look in my old looking-glass and see what I saw, which I have now written down, it may be for your good." The book is very readable and instructive. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. Price, $1.50.

..Moses and the Prophets. By William Henry Green, D.D. This book is mainly a reprint from the *Presbyterian Review* and the *Princeton Review* of articles on "The Old Testament in the Jewish Church," and on "The Prophets of Israel," by Prof. W. Robertson Smith, and on "The Prophets and Prophecy in Israel," by Dr. A. Kuenen. It is sufficient to say that Prof. Green's work has been ably done, and his book should be widely read. It will serve to relieve the minds of any who have been perplexed by recent critical speculations. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. Price, $1.50.

..Sunsets on the Hebrew Mountains. By the Rev. J. R. Macduff, D.D. This volume is not new, but is freshly presented. The author is well known, and by many his books are highly prized as devotional helps. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. Price, $1.00.

..Among the very best devotional helps are those books which contain portions for daily readings in the closet. Of this class none are better than Spurgeon's Morning by Morning: and Evening by Evening. The first volume contains a reading for every morning of the year, each consisting of a text of Scripture and one page of meditations on the same; the other volume furnishes a similar page for every evening of the year. The books are well known, and we have here a new edition. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. Price, $1.00 each.

..Robert Carter & Brothers have issued a new and cheap edition of Dr. Arnot's Church in the House; or, Lessons on the Acts, which will prove of great help in the study of the International Lessons in the Acts.

..Standing in Others' Way. By Marion West. It is Christians standing in the way of the conversion of others, by their actions and lives hindering efforts for the salvation of sinners and retarding the cause of Christ, that the author seeks to represent. The book ought to do good by awakening careless professors to a sense of the wrong they do in thus standing in others' way. Boston: Howard Gannett. Price, $1.50.

..Snow and Sunshine: A Story for Boys and Girls. By Mrs. Martha J. Lamb. The young readers are introduced to a family of live and lovable children, well-bred, full of fun and frolic. The spirit of the book is excellent. There is no moralizing, and yet the pictures painted of home life, the touches of character shown, the bearing and disposition of the various persons, cannot but be suggestive of many a good lesson, and cannot fail to make moral beauty more attractive. The book is illustrated and beautifully bound. New York: White & Stokes. Price, $2.00.

..Wayside Flowers. A collection of poems on wayside flowers, original and selected, arranged by Ellen E. Dickinson, with illustrations by Julia C. Emmet, printed on loose sheets and tied together with a ribbon. The poems are all good, and the illustrations are exquisite—a delightful souvenir. New York: White & Stokes. Price, $1.75.

..The same firm sends us The Christmas Basket, though too late for notice in our December number. It is a collection of Christmas poems, original and selected, by Mrs. Martha J. Lamb, printed on loose sheets, thick paper, cut in the form of a basket and tied together; with ornamental covers by Mrs. Julia C. Emmet. Price, plain, 50 cents; fringed, $1.00.

..Of The Sociable, the Entertainment and the Bazar, many good words are being spoken. Ex-President Mark Hopkins says of it: "We need more men who are quick to see the point where things indifferent, or even good in themselves, pass over into what is mischievous, and I am much pleased at the discrimination and good judgment with which you have done so in this case. It is a work worthy of a watchman on

the walls." Bishop F. D. Huntingdon writes: "Every word in the treatise seems to me vital and needed truth." Presbyterian Board. Price, 10 cents.

..The third volume of Dr. Schaff's International Revision Commentary covers THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE, and is by Prof. M. B. Riddle. There is no falling off in quality. There is no better commentary for popular use. The notes are brief yet clear. There is no rubbish. The style is simple yet scholarly. The form is convenient. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. Price, $1.25.

..ROBERT RAIKES LIBRARIES. The first of the three sets of these libraries has been received. It contains ten volumes, aggregating nearly two thousand pages. The volumes have heavy paper covers. The design is to furnish good books in very cheap form. How long such books will last in the average Sunday-school library is a question. Philadelphia: Sunday-school Union. Price, $1.00 per set.

..TEMPTED TO UNBELIEF. By Rev. E. F. Burr, D.D. The author has given much attention to the various phases of modern unbelief, and in this volume seeks to present the antidotes which the Scripture provides. The book is designed, as its title indicates, for those who are "*tempted* to unbelief," rather than for those who have gone over. It is for those who are asking questions and listening for answers on either side, rather than for those who have accepted the answers of skepticism. There is a large class who would be profited by the reading of this book. Philadelphia: American Tract Society. Price, $1.25.

..Here is an extract from one letter, referring to WEEK-DAY RELIGION: "It is with no ordinary feeling of gratitude, first to God and then to you, that I have read the book, entitled "Week-day Religion," which I purchased from the Board a short time ago. The cheerful, hopeful, pure and elevating tone which pervades the book, is of such a refreshing and encouraging nature that I would not take a hundred times the price of the book to have the impression wiped off my mind and heart." Presbyterian Board. Price, $1.00.

..LITTLE BULLETS FROM BATALA, AND SEVEN PERILS PASSED. By A. L. O. E. The little tales in this book were written for the Hindus for use in mission work, but they will be read also with interest by American readers. The author's name is assurance enough for the character of the book. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. Price, $1.00.

..THE PROGRESS OF DOCTRINE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. By Thomas Dehany Bernard, M.A. This book contains the Bampton Lectures, before the University of Oxford, on the subject indicated in the title. A new and cheap edition. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. Price, $1.25.

..REX AND REGINA; or, The Song of the River. By Emma Marshall. The story presents many pictures of child-life which cannot but prove inspiring to the young who look upon them. A good book for home and library. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. pp. 344; illustrated. Price, $1.50.

..THE ROSEBUD MISSION BAND. By Mrs. S. E. Dawes. This small volume is intended to awaken missionary interest among the younger children. The little people will enjoy it and will be helped by it. Boston: Howard Gannett. Price, 75 cents.

..WORKERS TOGETHER. By Mrs. Ada C. Chaplin. A good book that will find more than one application in the parishes of the country. Many a pastor will seem to read chapters of his own biography in its pages. Boston: Howard Gannett.

..The fifth volume of the International Revision Commentary on the New Testament covers THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, and is out in time for use in connection with the lessons of the first half of this year. The explanations of the text are by Dean Howson and Canon Spence. The handy form of this commentary and its low price will make it very popular with Sunday-school teachers, as was the volume on Mark. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. Price, $1.25.

..THROUGH THE DESERT ($1.00); GATHERED IN ($1.00). Here we have the completion of the "Letting Down the Bars" Series, by Mrs. A. K. Dunning. The five volumes give a complete history of the Hosmer family. In the first we see them in the home while young, but with a tendency even then to "let down the bars" that separated the Christian household from the world. In the second we see them "scattered," when death has taken away the head. In the third we find the children "in the enemy's country," exposed to danger, and some of them straying from the true paths. In the fourth they are passing "through the desert" of trial. In the last they are all "gathered in," proving the faithfulness of the divine promise. The five volumes in a box, $5.00. Presbyterian Board.

..Among recent commendable movements in the interest of Christian faith is the organization of "The American Institute of Christian Philosophy." Its object is "the defence and promotion of Christian faith against prevalent forms and influences of scepticism." This it seeks to do by the investigation of important questions of philosophy and science that bear upon Christianity, and by the diffusion in printed form of the papers read before the Institute. *The Christian Philosophy Quarterly* has now been established for the purpose of giving circulation and permanence to the papers read. It is published at No. 4 Winthop Place, New York, Prof. John A. Paine, editor, at 75 cents a number or $2.50 a year The first number contains six papers of great value.

Illustrated books for children and young people grow prettier every year. Prepared specially for the holiday trade, as most of them are, they are always appropriate as birthday presents, and are never unwelcome. The following are from Cassel, Petter, Galpin & Co., New York:

..THE CHANGING YEAR. Poems and Pictures of Life and Nature. The book is in four divisions, corresponding to the seasons of the year. Both poems and pictures are excellent. The volume is handsomely bound, and the illustrations are bright and attractive. Not necessarily a child's book. Young people too large to be called children will enjoy it. Price, $3.00.

..LITTLE FOLKS. A magazine for the young. A bound volume of this excellent magazine, full of interesting articles for little people, with pictorial illustrations. Price, $1.25.

..FRED BRADFORD'S DEBT. By Joanna H. Matthews. A bright, readable and interesting story for the young. Price, $1.25.

..BOOTS AT THE HOLLY TREE INN. By Charles Dickens. A well-known story revived; with full page colored illustrations. A very funny story. Price, $1.00.

Any of these books may be ordered from the Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1334 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.

ARE THE CHILDREN SAFE?

When our children go out from us in the morning to the day's duties, or in the evening to the night's scenes and pleasures, we know not to what terrible dangers they will be exposed before we see them again. We mourn for our dead, but if they have died in the arms of Christ they are safe. No danger ever can reach them. They have no more battles to fight. Do we never weep for our living when we remember to what perils they are exposed?

"Lord, we can trust thee for our holy dead;
They, underneath the shadow of thy tomb,
Have entered into peace; with bended head
We thank thee for their rest, and for our lightened gloom.

"But, Lord, our living—who on stormy seas
Of sin and sorrow still are tempest-tossed!
Our dead have reached their haven, but for these—
Teach us to trust thee, Lord, for *these*, our loved and lost.

"For these we make our passion-prayer at night;
For these we cry to thee through the long day."

Yes, our dead in Christ are safe. They are folded away under the shadow of God's wings.

"What is death, father?"
"The rest, my child,
When the strife and toil are o'er;
The angel of God—who, calm and mild,
Says we need fight no more;
Who, driving away the demon band,
Bids the din of the battle cease,—
Takes banner and spear from our trembling hand,
And proclaims an eternal peace."

The children that we laid in Christ's arms in infancy, in the sleep we call death, are for ever safe. It is our living that are in peril. It is life that is hard and full of danger; it is for our living that we need to be anxious, lest they be defeated in the field, where foes are thick and battles sore.

Where shall we find protection for these tender lives save in the keeping of the almighty Saviour? We cannot shelter them ourselves. We cannot make our home doors strong enough to shield them. We cannot protect them even by love's tenderness or by the influence of beautiful things—of art, of luxury, of music, or by the refinements of the truest and best culture. From amid all these things children's souls are every day stolen away. All history and all experience proves that nothing but the religion of Christ can be a shelter for our loved ones from this world's dangers and temptations.

A friend was telling of a wonderful little flower which he discovered high up on the Rocky Mountains. In a deep fissure among the rocks, one midsummer day, he found the snow still lying unmelted, and on the surface of the snow he saw a lovely flower. When he looked closely he perceived that it had a long, delicate stem, white as a tuberose, coming up through the deep snow from the soil in a crevice of the rock underneath. The little plant had grown up in spite of all obstacles, its tender stem unharmed by the cold drifts, until it blossomed out in loveliness above the snow. The secret was its root in the rich soil in the cleft of the rock, from which it drew such fullness of life that it rose through all to perfect beauty. Fit picture is that little flower of every tender child-life in this world. Over it are chilling masses of evil and destructive influences, and if it ever grows up into noble and lovely character it must conquer its way by the force of its own inward life, until it stands crowned with beauty, with every obstacle beneath it. This it can do only through the power of the divine grace within. Its root must be homed in the sheltered warmth of piety, in the cleft of the Rock of Ages. Those who grow up in truly Christian homes, imbibing in their souls from infancy the very life of Christ, will be strong to overcome every obstacle and resist every temptation. The influence of godly example, the memories of the home altar, the abiding power of holy teachings and grace of God descending perpetually upon the young life in answer to believing prayer, give it such inspirations and impulses toward all that is noble and heavenly that it will stand at last crowned with honor and beauty. To make a home godless and prayerless is to send our children out to meet all the world's evil without either the shelter of covenant love to cover them in the storm or the strength of holy principle in their hearts to make them able to endure.

But what is it that makes a home a Christian home? What is home religion? These questions are important enough for most thoughtful consideration. Those who wish to cultivate flowers so as to bring out the richest possible beauty in them, study long and diligently the nature of plant-life and the many conditions of soil, of temperature, of air and moisture essential to the growth of each particular kind of plant and the development of each variety of flower, and then with scientific exactness produce in each case the right conditions. In our homes we are growing immortal lives. The problem is to bring out in each one the very highest possible development of manly or womanly character. There are certain conditions which are essential to all true growth. If men take such pains to know how to grow flowers which fade in a day, should we not take pains to know how to grow souls which live for ever.

THE WESTMINSTER TEACHER.

VOL. XI. MARCH, 1883. No. 3.

—*Particular attention is called to the Review Exercise in this number. Copies will be furnished at 50 cents a hundred. Those desiring them should order at the beginning of the month.*

—It will be seen that Mr. Worden and Mr. Seal present different counsels with regard to the Review—the former advising class review and the latter a general exercise conducted by the superintendent from the desk. Both are right—that is, no one rule will do in all cases.

—Dr. Crosby's article on "Angel Appearances and Ministries in the Acts of the Apostles" will have an interest for all our readers. Mr. Worden's earnest word on the conversion of children as the central object of Sunday-school work will attract attention from many faithful teachers. The leading editorial touches on a theme started by one of the lessons.

—We had hoped to have our new *Sabbath-school Hymnal* out by April, and expressed that hope in the TEACHER for February. The book has made excellent progress, but will not be ready so soon as we anticipated. Its appearance, however, will not be long delayed, certainly not one day beyond the time needful to have it *right*. Our friends do not wish it to be a "half-baked loaf." Prof. Seward is busily engaged upon it, and the brief delay in getting it out will be compensated by the greater excellence of the completed book.

—St. Louis rejoices in the possession of Presbyterian headquarters, the Presbyterian Board of Publication having opened a depository in that city, at 1107 Olive Street, under the care of the Rev. J. W. Allen, D.D. The situation is excellent, near the Post Office, Custom House and Union Railroad Station, and Dr. Allen is admirably fitted to make such a centre as popular as it will be useful. It will be a centre from which the books, tracts and periodicals of the Board will go out to a wide-spread and important field.

—Very good advice is this, given by the Synod of Ohio, at its last meeting: "*Resolved*, That Synod recommend to all Sabbath-school officers and teachers, the publications, books and lesson helps of our own Board, and that they carefully guard the young, not only against pernicious literature, but also against that which is objectionable and inferior." The Sunday-school committee of the Synod of Minnesota says in the same strain: "It is the firm conviction of the committee that the publications of our Board ought to be used in every Presbyterian Sabbath-school," and the sentiment was endorsed by the Synod.

—Our observation coincides with that of our neighbor of the *S. S. Times;* it is the best prepared teacher who is most anxious to be at the teachers' meeting. Says the *S. S. Times:* "The more a teacher has studied his lesson, the more likely he is to feel the need of the further help of the teachers' meeting. He wants to know what points in the lesson have perplexed others, and what points have seemed to them of practical value, in order to direct his own thoughts and energies most effectively for his class. It is only the poorly furnished teacher who thinks he can get on as well without the teachers' meeting as with it. The trouble with him is, that he doesn't know how much more he needs to know."

—A good many people spend all their life hunting for the place in this world which they were intended to fill. They never settle down to anything with any sort of restful or contented feeling. What they are doing now is not by any means the work that is suited to their abilities. They have a sunny ideal of a very noble life which they would like to reach, in which their powers would find free scope, and where they could make a very bright record. But in their present position they cannot do much of anything, and there is little use to try. Their life is a humdrum and prosy routine, and they can accomplish nothing really worthy and beautiful. So they go on discontented with their own lot, and sighing for another; and while they sigh the years glide away, and soon they will come to the end, to find that they have missed every opportunity of doing anything worthy of an immortal being in the passage to eternity. The truth is, one's vocation is never some far-off possibility. It is always the simple round of duties that the passing hour brings. Some one has pictured the days as coming to us with their faces veiled, bearing only the commonest gifts in their hands; but when they have passed beyond our recall the draped figures be-

come radiant, and the gifts we rejected are treasures fit for king's houses. No day is commonplace if we only had eyes to see its splendor. There is no duty that comes to our hand but brings to us the possibility of kingly service.

CHEAP EDITING.—Two successive numbers of a paper for young readers come to us fresh from the press, for the instruction and edification of the children. The first number has a large picture of Paul before Agrippa. The apostle stands with outstretched arm, from which hangs his chain, and addresses the king, at whose left sits Bernice, and on the right, the Roman Festus, with lictors at each side of the throne. Effective use is made of this cut as illustrating the life of the Hebrew Joseph before the Pharaoh of Egypt! "This picture represents Joseph standing before the king. See the chain on his arm."

In the next number of the same paper is an engraving of the Mosque of Omar, at Jerusalem, with the following explanation:

"Here is another building which the people of the United States regard as well nigh sacred. It is Independence Hall. It is in Philadelphia. It is more than one hundred years old. Can you tell me what great event took place within its walls? If you do not know see if you can find out. Every American boy and girl ought to know that."

Now there is no deadly error in this display of ludicrous ignorance of persons and places on the part of the editor, but can we be sure that an ignorance so unconscious will not show itself in other relations? Can we afford to employ "cheap labor" on our papers for the young? Is it safe? Will it pay?

The Angel Face.

IT IS an unusual thing for the Bible to say about any one that his face was as it had been the face of an angel. Sentimental people often say that such a person is angelic, or looks like an angel, but the Bible is never sentimental. The look on Stephen's face must have been very remarkable to procure such mention on an inspired page.

We do not know what kind of a face Stephen had, whether it was beautiful or homely, on ordinary occasions. We only know that at this time there was something in his countenance that struck his enemies and judges as angelic, or celestial. Was it the reflection in his features of the glory which streamed from the open heavens? Was it not rather the shining out from within him of a radiance of soul? If it was this, then his angel look was not something supernatural and therefore unattainable by other mortals, but something which other men may wear if they have the same inner disposition or spirit which Stephen had.

What then is the inner spirit which gives the angel-look? We might answer in a word and say that if we would have the angel-face we must have the angel-heart. But what is the angel-heart? We know it is good, and simple goodness within gives radiance without, even though the features are the homeliest. The reverse of this is also true. A bad heart mars the finest features. Evil in the disposition comes out through the fairest countenance and spoils it. A lady took the photograph of her dead child, and with her brush touched it with most exquisite skill, till the face seemed like life itself. Then she laid it away and when she took it out again a few days later there were great blotches on the picture. A second time she went over it painting out the blemishes and again the witchery of nature was restored, but soon the blotches reappeared. The fault was in the paper and could not be hidden. So it is with a bad heart, it blotches the loveliest face. But a good heart makes the homeliest face radiant.

There must have been a brightness on the martyr's face which suggested the angel-look, for the angel-face, as we think of it, is bright, luminous, beaming with an inner splendor. There must therefore have been a light on Stephen's face that day. What is it that gives one's features this bright luminousness? For one thing, it is joy. The face does not shine when the heart is heavy; but if there is gladness within the breast there will be a glow on the countenance. The Christian should have perpetual joy. He is God's child, his sins are forgiven, all things work together for his good, he has the sweetest secrets of gladness in his heart. He should therefore rejoice always; and if he rejoices always his face will always shine. Even the sorrows that come to him should not obscure the shining or quench the brightness in his features. Nothing helps more to give the angel-look than sorrow sweetly borne.

Peace is another element of the angel-heart. The angels are never vexed nor anxious. They know no fear nor terror. Anxiety dims the brightness of the fairest countenance. It plows deep lines and furrows. It breaks the calm and poise of restful beauty. No one can ever get or keep the angel-look who yields to the disturbing influence of distracting thoughts. But when the heart is at peace the face shines. To look like an angel, therefore, one must learn to live habitually above the disquietude and discontent of life. His heart must be at peace amid all the world's agitations and alarms; it must be "kept" by the peace of God. The lamp of

peace burning in the soul with its calm, steady flame, will always pour its brightness out through the dullest features.

A desire to do good is another element in the angel heart. The angels are interested in the salvation of the lost. They rejoice when a sinner repents. Their daily work is ministering to God's children in this world. Their hearts are full of love. This makes their faces radiant, and no human face can appear as an angel's unless there is pure love within. Hatred, malice, desire for revenge, selfishness and anger make the loveliest features hard and cold and dark. Those who would have the angel-face must have in their hearts gentleness, kindness, patience, unselfishness, forgiveness and love. Dante speaks thus of an angel he met:

"Another of those splendors
Approached me, and its will to pleasure me
It signified by brightening outwardly,
As one delighted to do good;
Became a thing transplendent in my sight
As a prize ruby smitten by the sun."

It is said of the missionary Judson that one day he met a heathen woman of high caste. He could not then speak a word of her language, but he felt that he must try to save her. He approached her silently, with glowing face and eyes wet with tears, took her hand and gently pressed it, pointed upward, then turned and walked away. Meeting a native soon after she said "I have seen an angel of God." His intense love for souls gave him the angel-face.

These are hints only of the inner spirit that gives to the features the angel look. It will not be forgotten that Stephen was filled also with the Holy Ghost, and that it was really the outshining of a divine light within him that gave the brightest lustre to his countenance. The angel-look is not therefore to be attained by any treatment of the complexion, or by any resolving to look like an angel, but by having an angel-heart, a heart of purity, of love, of peace, of courage, of hope—a heart filled with the Holy Spirit of God.

Angel Appearances and Ministries in the Acts of the Apostles.

BY HOWARD CROSBY, D. D., LL.D.

THERE are six such appearances recorded in the Acts—two to all the apostles, one to Philip the Evangelist, one to Cornelius the Roman centurion, one to Peter and one to Paul.

1. *To all the Apostles.* It is recorded Acts 1: 10, 11. The eleven had just seen Jesus suddenly removed from them and taken upward, disappearing in a cloud. They were gazing upward in bewilderment when they perceived they were joined by two men, whom they recognized to be heavenly messengers. The two spoke while the eleven listened. Their words were, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." These were words that solved the problem then distracting the apostles' minds, and gave them courage to go on their way. They had expected the risen Lord to establish at once the external kingdom of Israel, and his sudden departure and disappearance filled them with perplexity. Now, although they still think of an earthly kingdom, they know that their Lord's absence is but for a time, and they are content to wait for his return. Doubtless they think that the promised coming of the Holy Ghost and of power is to be connected with the bodily return of Jesus as King at Jerusalem. It was not till afterward on Pentecost they understood the spiritual character of the Saviour's kingdom.

2. *To all the Apostles again.* It was now after the wonderful scenes of Pentecost. At least ten thousand in Jerusalem had confessed Christ. (See chap. 4: 4, "five thousand *men.*") The city was shaken to its foundations with the new doctrine. Astounding miracles had been wrought, (chap. 3: 7, and chap. 5: 12, 15, 16,) and the Apostles were the centres of reverential regard to all the people. All this only exasperated the Jewish rulers, whose jealousy was aroused, as they felt that their own influence and power were being rapidly undermined. Under these impulses they ventured to seize the apostles and put them in the public prison. It was while the eleven were thus incarcerated that an angel appeared to them, and opening the prison doors led them out, and said, "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life." Angels had before released them from doubt and now an angel released them from prison.

3. *To Philip the Evangelist.* It was probably in the first year of the Christian Church that Philip, one of the seven who had been appointed to attend to the Hellenistic poor of the Church (chap. 6: 1–6), leaving Jerusalem on account of the persecution started by the Sanhedrim, and supported by Saul, went to Samaria and was there the means of converting very many to Christ. It was there he baptized Simon among others, a man who had previousiy been a sorcerer. The apostles, Peter and John, had afterward followed on Philip's track and used the apostolic power of conferring the Holy Spirit's miraculous gifts upon the Samaritan converts. Simon had then shown his baseness and received

the fearful malediction of Peter. From this scene of labor Philip was directed by an angelic messenger to "arise and go toward the south, into the way that goeth down from Jerusalem into Gaza," and immediately obeyed. The manner of this appearance we are not told. It was probably (as in the two preceding cases) in the human form.

4. *To Cornelius the centurion.* In Cæsarea, the capital of the Roman province of Judea, sixty miles north-west of Jerusalem, was stationed a prætorian cohort composed of Italian soldiers, the rest of the Roman soldiers in Palestine being probably of Oriental birth. One of the centurions or captains of this cohort was named Cornelius, who had become (probably through his contact with the Jewish Scriptures) a devout, God-fearing man, and who presented in his household an example of family religion. At the hour of afternoon prayer (three o'clock), at a season of special prayer and fasting, he saw an angel coming to him, who called him by name, and on his reply said, "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God; and now send men to Joppa and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; he lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea-side, he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do." It was under this angelic ministration that Cornelius sent for Peter and received the light of the gospel, and thus the door was opened for the Gentiles to enter into the Church of Christ.

5. *To Peter.* About fourteen years after the birth-day of the Church on Pentecost, Herod Agrippa, grandson of Herod the Great, having recovered his grandfather's dominions by the favor of the Roman Emperor, determined to put an end to the Christian Church that had so suddenly risen up and so rapidly spread. Accordingly he seized the apostle James and put him to death. Anxious to please his Jewish subjects, and seeing their great satisfaction at the execution of James, he seized Peter, but as it was in the midst of the Passover week, he thought best to postpone his execution until the holy time was over. While Peter remained in prison, expecting to be led out to death, the Church in its several places of meeting in Jerusalem was earnestly praying for his deliverance. In answer to these prayers, in the night previous to the intended execution, an angel visited Peter with a brilliant glory about him and aroused the sleeping apostle. The two soldiers to whom he was chained by either hand were not aroused, and the chains fell off from Peter's wrists, and under the angel's direction he put on his coat and sandals, preparing himself for departure. Then under the angel's escort he went forth past both the couples of soldiers (of the quaternion) who guarded him, all of whom were wrapt in slumber. The great iron gate of the prison opened of its own accord and the angel and Peter passed out. At the distance of one square from the prison the angel disappeared, and then Peter recognized the fact that it was no vision which he had seen, but an occurrence of the outward life. Hastening to the house of Mark's mother, where one of the church assemblies was praying for him, he astonished the meeting by his appearance.

6. *To Paul.* The last appearance of an angel noted in the Acts is that to Paul, recorded in the twenty-seventh chapter. This was about eighteen years after the appearance of the angel to Peter in the prison. It was during the fearful tempest when the ship, in which Paul was being carried a prisoner to Rome, was driven from Crete to Malta. In the midst of general despair Paul stood forth and exhorted the sailors and passengers to be of good cheer, declaring to them that in the preceding night an angel of God had stood by him and had bidden him not to fear, for he should certainly reach Rome and all those in the ship should be saved for his sake. With this, however, an angel had announced their wreck on an island.

These six angel appearances may perhaps be chronologically arranged thus—

In the year of the ascension	3
Eight years afterward	1
Six years later	1
Eighteen year later	1

We see that they were few, and in the latter cases only given to apostles. They were for the comfort and encouragement as well as direction of those to whom they came. As the written word was given to the churches, these heavenly appearances became unnecessary, and we have no authentic instance of any after these which we have here considered. Moreover, in the beginning of a revelation peculiar evidences have to be given which at a later date are not needed to confirm the truth. These are the reasons why miracles and prodigies are not to be looked for in our day.

How Shall Our Scholars Be Converted?

BY THE REV. JAMES A. WORDEN.

A REVIVALIST recently declared in the *Independent* that "conversion is, if not altogether at least almost, among the lost arts." The editor in his leader the same week wrote these weighty words: "The children of the Church are in the Sunday-school, and the Church greatly fails if these children are not converted in their early youth. Teach-

ers fail, parents fail, superintendents fail just here. They do not appreciate as they should that definite results may be looked for. The child should be talked with personally and alone, and kindly led to the Saviour. The reason why in some churches they are not converted is because their conversion is not especially sought. The teacher is content with teaching the lesson and does not try to teach the child the greatest lesson of all. As sure as day follows sunrise, the presentation of the motives of Christianity to the youth of a church will bring them into its membership." I beseech you, dear teacher, not to say amen to this and then straightway go on in the old routine. Get out of the rut of "teaching the lesson and not trying to teach the child the greatest lesson of all;" and "because their conversion is not especially sought," suffer a word of exhortation: Let every teacher *concentrate all his prayers and efforts on leading every one of his unrenewed scholars to Christ.*

Consecration thorough and earnest, such as is unknown among Christians as a class, must begin this work. Soldiers before battle strip themselves of unnecessary accoutrements. We must strip ourselves for the conflict with sin, unbelief and Satan—laying "aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us." In the true sense Jesus says to you, as to the earliest workers, "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high." "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." Seek this enduement of power as the greatest, the indispensable qualification for converting souls.

We do not forget that, as we often use the word, conversion includes regeneration and conversion, strictly so called. Nor can we forget that regeneration means being "born again," "creating anew," "quickening or making alive," "calling out of darkness into God's marvellous light," "God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works." This work is wholly *God's.* We can no more do it than create a world. It is a supernatural work, a new spiritual miracle. To accomplish this we can only *pray* and plant in our scholars' minds that word of God, which is the seed of regeneration, for they are to be "born again, not of corruptible seed, but incorruptible, even the word of God which liveth and abideth forever." We must, realizing our own helplessness, cast ourselves upon the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit. Feeling that God alone can help us, we must say to him, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me."

Rev. Dr. Thomas H. Skinner says in his tract on "The Early Regeneration of Sabbath-school Children," published by our Board, "The writer has a friend whose love for souls and whose labors with God and with them for their salvation furnish a lesson to us. On a visit paid her a year or two since, she took him into her place of private prayer. In an inner closet, whose door she opened, he noticed the photographs of nineteen persons. He asked her whose they were. She replied they were poor people she was trying to save. She visited them regularly and instructed them carefully, but her great dependence was on God; and she was accustomed to take these photographs one by one and put them on a little table she had prepared for the purpose, and then looking at them, she would kneel and name their names and mention their wants and trials to her Father, and plead for mercy on their behalf." There is a picture for every teacher to look at! Never shall we have power with our scholars till we first have power with God and prevail.

Think of Christ praying for his disciples and for you. Think of the seventeenth chapter of John—

> "Think how he intercedes above
> For those whose sins he bore."

Begin anew to pray for your scholars. Enlist the Christians in your class to join in your secret prayers for the unrenewed. Remember the hours of our agreement in prayer Saturday afternoon and evening.

Can any one truly wrestle with God for his scholars and not use every means to convert their souls! Conversion includes (as we use the term) faith and repentance. How shall we lead them to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? How shall we make them feel their sins, guilt and pollution? How shall we enable them to behold grace and mercy in Jesus Christ and induce them with grief and hatred of sin to turn from it unto God?

Apply the truths of each lesson. If necessary depart from the lesson to introduce motives and reasons drawn from Christ's atoning death, with this one end in view. That end is *the immediate and entire surrender of each scholar to Christ as Saviour and Lord.* Seek for suitable opportunity to speak to each of your scholars alone. Let not your anxiety for their salvation and your prayerfulness betray you into a trembling nervousness when you come to converse with your scholars. Be natural, hearty and genuine. Your love must be evidently your controlling motive, and not simply a sense of painful duty.

When, dear teacher, are you coming to "the point?" Christ expects, the Church expects, your scholars expect you to lead them to the cross. How long are you going to wait? "Boast not thyself of to-morrow."

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FIRST QUARTER.

1. Jan. 7.—The Ascending Lord. Acts 1 : 1–14.
2. Jan. 14.—The Descending Spirit. Acts 2 : 1–16.
3. Jan. 21.—The Believing People. Acts 2 : 37–47.
4. Jan. 28.—The Healing Power. Acts 3 : 1–11.
5. Feb. 4.—The Prince of Life. Acts 3 : 12–21.
6. Feb 11.—None Other Name. Acts 4 : 1–14.
7. Feb. 18.—Christian Courage. Acts 4 : 18–31.
8. Feb. 25.—Ananias and Sapphira. Acts 5 : 1–11.
9. March 4.—**Persecution Renewed.** Acts 5 : 17–32.
10. March 11.—**The Seven Chosen.** Acts 6 : 1–15.
11. March 18.—**The First Christian Martyr.** Acts 7 : 54–60 and 8 : 1–4.
12. March 25.—**Review.**

Lesson IX. **PERSECUTION RENEWED.** *March 4th, 1883.*

Acts 5 : 17–32. Memorize vs. 27–29.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"We ought to obey God rather than men."—Acts 5 : 29.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 5 : 17–32....*Persecution Renewed.*
T. Matt. 10 : 16–39..*Persecution Foretold.*
W. Ps. 91 : 1–16.....*Ministry of Angels.*
Th. Acts 16 : 25–34...*Prison Doors Opened.* [*Christ.*
F. 2 Tim. 2 : 1–13...*Suffering and Reigning with*
S. Matt. 5 : 1–12....*Persecuted for Righteousness'*
S. James 1 : 1–12 ... *Tried and Crowned.* [*Sake.*

TOPIC.

We must obey God rather than men.

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Wrath of Man. 2. The Power of God. 3. The Charge of the Priests. 4. The Answer of Faith.

Time.—A. D. 34, not long after the last lesson. **Place.**—Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 4. *What is the work of creation?* A. The work of creation is, God's making all things of nothing, by the word of his power, in the space of six days, and all very good.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 518: "Am I a soldier of the cross?" Other hymns, 474, 628, 666, 953.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

INTRODUCTORY.—The terrible sin of Ananias and Sapphira with its swift and fearful punishment did not check the growth of the Church. The apostles wrought with great power, and multitudes were added to the company of believers. So great was the enthusiasm aroused by the words and works, especially of Peter, that the sick were brought out into the streets when he was passing that his shadow might fall upon them. We are reminded in vs. 15, 16 of some passages in the Gospels when the popularity of Christ was at its height. Multitudes were brought to the apostles from all the country round about, and *they were healed every one.* The effect of this rapid spread of Christianity and this intense popular interest was to alarm the high priest and to excite bitter hatred and enmity in the priestly party against the apostles. What followed our lesson tells.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

17 ¶ Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sad'du-cees,) and were filled with indignation, [Acts 4 : 1, 2, 6.]

18 And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison. [Luke 21 : 12.]

19 But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, [Acts 12 : 7; 16 : 26; Heb. 1 : 14.]

20 Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life. [John 6 : 68; 17 : 3; 1 John 5 : 11.]

21 And when they heard *that,* they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught. But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Is'ra-el, and sent to the prison to have them brought. [Acts 4 : 5, 6.]

22 But when the officers came, and found them not in the prison, they returned, and told,

23 Saying, The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors: but when we had opened, we found no man within.

24 Now when the high priest and the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these things, they doubted of them whereunto this would grow. [Luke 22 : 4; Acts 4 : 1.]

25 Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people.

26 Then went the captain with the officers,

and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned. [Matt. 21: 26.]

27 And when they had brought them, they set *them* before the council: and the high priest asked them,

28 Saying, Did we not straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Je-ru'sa-lem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. [Acts 4: 18; 7: 52; Matt. 27: 25.]

29 ¶ Then Pe'ter and the *other* apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. [Acts 4: 19.]

30 The God of our fathers raised up Je'sus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree.

31 Him hath God exalted with his right hand *to be* a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Is'ra-el, and forgiveness of sins. [Isa. 52: 13; Phil. 2: 9.]

32 And we are his witnesses of these things; and *so is* also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him. [Acts 10: 41; 13: 31.]

REVISED TEXT.

17 But the high priest rose up, and all they
that were with him (which is the sect of the
Sadducees), and they were filled with jeal-
18 ousy, and laid hands on the apostles, and
19 put them in public ward. But an angel of
the Lord by night opened the prison doors,
20 and brought them out, and said, Go ye, and
stand and speak in the temple to the people
21 all the words of this Life. And when they
heard *this*, they entered into the temple about
daybreak, and taught. But the high priest
came, and they that were with him, and
called the council together, and all the senate
of the children of Israel, and sent to the
22 prison-house to have them brought. But the
officers that came found them not in the
23 prison; and they returned, and told, saying,
The prison-house we found shut in all safety,
and the keepers standing at the doors: but
when we had opened, we found no man
24 within. Now when the captain of the temple
and the chief priests heard these words, they
were much perplexed concerning them where-
25 unto this would grow. And there came one
and told them, Behold, the men whom ye
put in the prison are in the temple standing
26 and teaching the people. Then went the
captain with the officers, and brought them,
but without violence; for they feared the
27 people, lest they should be stoned. And
when they had brought them, they set them
before the council. And the high priest asked
28 them, saying, We straitly charged you not
to teach in this name: and behold, ye have
filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and in-
29 tend to bring this man's blood upon us. But
Peter and the apostles answered and said,
30 We must obey God rather than men. The
God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye
31 slew, hanging him on a tree. Him did God
exalt with his right hand *to be* a Prince and a
Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and
32 remission of sins. And we are witnesses of
these things; and *so is* the Holy Ghost, whom
God hath given to them that obey him.

17 *The high priest.* Caiaphas was the actual high priest at this time, but no doubt Annas is here referred to. He had formerly been high priest, and still kept the title, being the real leader of the Jews at the time. See John 18: 13; Acts 4: 6. *Rose up.* This does not refer to his rising up from his seat in the council, but means that he was excited by what he saw of the growth of the Church and aroused to action. *They that were with him.* The party which clung to him and were led by him. They are defined more closely as being "the sect of the Sadducees." The Sadducees denied a future life and the existence of angel or spirit. Acts 23: 8. They were not powerful in numbers, but were very influential, as they included in their ranks many of the most prominent men of the nation. They were the bitterest enemies of the Church, as the central doctrine of the apostles' preaching was that of the resurrection, which was so hateful to them. *Filled with indignation.* Revised Version: *Jealousy.* Both the hated doctrine and the popularity and success of the apostles excited them.

18 *Laid their hands on the apostles.* They did not themselves seize the apostles, but sent the temple police to arrest them. How many of the apostles were taken is not said; not necessarily all. *The common prison.* Revised Version: *Public ward.* This was a room in connection with the temple used as a guard-house or temporary prison for those arrested and awaiting trial. They were placed here for the night, until the court could be summoned in the morning.

19 *But.* This is a separating word, showing where God's hand begins to work. So far the rulers seemed to have things their own way; now a new element comes into the story. *The angel of the Lord.* The Revised Version has it "*an* angel," which is an important difference. The phrase, "*the* angel of the Lord," always refers in the Old Testament to the Son of God himself. This was *an* angel, a messenger from heaven, sent on this particular errand. See Heb. 1: 14. It should be noted that a being of the order whose very existence the Sadducees denied here comes as God's agent to deliver the apostles. Angels appeared very frequently in the early days of the Church. The word *angel* occurs in the Acts twenty times, and there are six distinct records of angelic service. See besides this place, chap. 8: 26; 10: 3; 12: 7, 23; 27: 23. [See also article on another page by Dr. Howard Crosby, on "Angel Appearances and Ministries in the Acts of the Apostles."] *Opened the prison doors.* The narrative is very plain and simple. The gates were opened and the prisoners led out. The guards

were probably cast into a sleep. The gates were closed again. v. 23. The question has been raised, "What was the use of this divine interposition, since nothing apparently came of it, as the apostles were at once re-arrested?" Yet there were many good effects from this angelic help. The apostles were themselves reassured and encouraged by it, and strengthened for their further witnessing and suffering. The rulers were led to see that an unseen power was at work on behalf of the apostles and the Church. The disbelief of the Sadducees in angels was rebuked. The effect was manifest also in the trial in the dread felt by the rulers, and in the light punishment inflicted on the apostles.

20 *Go, stand and speak in the temple.* They were not to flee away and hide from the rulers, now that they were free. On the other hand, they were to return at once to the very work in which they had been interrupted by their arrest. They were not to preach more prudently, but to stand in the temple, in the most public place, and resume the very theme the speaking on which had so enraged the rulers. *All the words of this life.* That is, the life which Christ came to bring, the spiritual life, everlasting life. The Sadducees did not believe in any future life, but they were not to be silent on the great theme of the gospel, to avoid further antagonizing them, but were to continue to proclaim it. Notice here that the angel did not himself preach the gospel, but liberated the apostles that they might do it. Angels never preach to men; the gospel must be carried by redeemed sinners to the unsaved.

21 *When they heard that.* They promptly obeyed without hesitation or questioning. It was probably near morning when they were brought out. *Early in the morning.* Revised Version: *About daybreak.* The people of the East were astir usually very early, so as to have their work done before the day's oppressive heat came on. There would be worshipers at the temple even at break of day; the morning sacrifice was offered at sunrise. *But the high priest came.* To the council chamber, to meet the members of the Sanhedrim, to consult as to what should be done with the apostles, not knowing that they were already out and preaching. The room of the temple in which the Sanhedrim usually met was at some distance from Solomon's porch, where probably the apostles were speaking. *They that were with him.* Of his party. *The council . . . the senate.* Authorities differ as to whether the word *senate* designated a part of the Sanhedrim or a distinct body of men. Some suppose it to refer to "the lay members of the council;" others to influential elders summoned to consult with the council, but not belonging to it.

22, 23 *The officers.* Probably belonging to the temple guard and sent to bring the apostles before the council for trial. *Shut with all safety.* Closed and locked. The angel had not left the prison open, but had refastened the doors. The guards were in their place unaware that the prisoners had been taken out. *No man within.* The keepers were guarding an empty prison.

24 *The captain of the temple.* The chief of the temple police, who was also a priest. *The chief priests.* Heads of the twenty-four courses, and probably those also who had formerly been high priests. *They doubted of them.* Revised Version: *Were much perplexed concerning them.* That is, concerning the words they had just heard. *Whereunto this would grow.* They feared this strange escape of the apostles from prison would work still fresh excitement in their favor. It is remarkable that they said nothing to the apostles about the manner of their release. They did not want to know the facts, nor did they wish to give publicity to the matter by having it referred to or explained in the court; therefore they quietly ignored it.

25, 26 *Then came one.* The news he brought showed the council two things—that the apostles were not trying to escape, and that they had yet no intention of heeding the injunction to refrain from preaching. *Then went the captain.* To re-arrest them. *Without violence.* Quietly and respectfully. *For they feared the people.* The people were friendly to the apostles, just as they had been to Christ himself, and the officers did not dare to do anything to excite them. The many cures of sick wrought by the apostles and their earnest words had won them great favor at this time. Soon, however, the tide turned, and bitter persecution was the result.

28 *Did not we straitly command?* The high priest said nothing about their escaping from prison; he did not want to talk of that. For the charge here referred to, see chap. 4: 18. It has been noticed that the priests do not mention the name of Jesus, speaking of "this name," and "this man's blood." Was it hatred of Christ that caused this, or was it a feeling of guilt because they had murdered him? *Ye have filled Jerusalem.* All Jerusalem had not believed on Christ, but the city was full of the fame of the apostles' teaching. Evidently the excitement caused by the preaching was very great. *To bring this man's blood upon us.* To hold them responsible for his death. Peter had very boldly proclaimed that they were guilty of Christ's blood. It will be remembered that these same priests had publicly assumed all

responsibility for the death of Jesus. Matt. 27: 25.

29 *We ought to obey God.* See chap. 4: 19. Now they remembered also the fresh command given by the angel, to preach in the temple. The authority of the apostles for violating the command of the council was the bidding of God, which must always be obeyed.

30, 31 *The God of our fathers.* He speaks as a Jew. *Raised up Jesus.* Not referring to his resurrection, but to his divine appointment, incarnation and ordination. *Whom ye slew and hanged on a tree.* The last phrase is added to remind them of the ignominious way in which they had slain Jesus. Deut. 21: 23. He charges the murder upon the Sanhedrim, not upon the people in general. *Exalted.* Referring to his resurrection and ascension to the right hand of God. See Phil. 2: 9. *Prince . . . Saviour.* The former refers to his royal character—one to be obeyed; and the latter to his character as Saviour. *To give repentance.* The object of this exaltation is here stated. His great work of saving men he really began after he sat down on his throne. He gave the Spirit and sent out his followers to offer mercy to sinners. To *give repentance* is to incline men to repent. The *remission of sins* is more than pardon; it is the cleansing and putting away altogether of the sin. *To Israel.* First to Jews, then to all the true "Israel."

32 *We are his witnesses.* Christ's witnesses, appointed by him for this purpose. See Luke 24: 47–49. *Of these things.* His death, resurrection and ascension. *So is also the Holy Ghost.* The fact that the Holy Ghost had been given from heaven as promised by Christ was proof of the truth of Christ's claims. The power conferred by the Holy Ghost in the gift of tongues and other miracles wrought by the apostles, was a testimony also to the truth of the gospel. The ordinary work of the Spirit in the hearts of believers is to every one who experiences it a personal witness of salvation. See Rom. 8: 16; Gal. 4: 6; 1 John 3: 24. *Whom God hath given.* The Spirit was "sent" or "poured out" from heaven. This does not contradict the doctrine of the personality of the Holy Spirit. *To them that obey him.* These words are important as showing to whom God gives his Spirit. It is only to those who keep his commandments. Compare with v. 29.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

But the high priest rose up . . . filled with jealousy. To find the cause of his base passion we have but to read three or four verses before this. The gospel was winning great triumphs among the people. The apostles were doing uncounted deeds of mercy. Multitudes were thronging about them with their sick. It was this marvelous success of the gospel that so enraged the high priest. There are some people that can never be pleased with anything which is not done by themselves or their own party. They see nothing good in the best deeds wrought by others. The world is not freed yet from the spirit of this priestly faction. Even in churches are found those who are only embittered and roused to envy and jealousy by the prosperity of other churches. Instead of rejoicing that souls are saved, that the poor are helped, that evil spirits are cast out, they criticise and grow angry, sometimes talk bitterly against and violently oppose the efforts that are manifestly owned of God. We all need to watch against this envious or jealous spirit. A godly minister put it down at the end of a year as one of the year's blessings, that he had learned to rejoice in the prosperity and success of others.

They . . . put them in public ward. But an angel . . . opened the prison doors and brought them out. How foolish it is to try to contend with God! The Psalmist says he that sits in heaven laughs when rulers take counsel together against his anointed. The Bible is full of illustrations of this divine laughter. Joseph's brothers thought they had gotten him out of the way when they had sold him as a slave, but the Lord only laughed at their plot and took him into his own hands and made a mighty man of him. The princes laughed when they got Daniel into the lion's den, but the laugh was turned when he came out unhurt and they themselves were devoured by the hungry beasts. There was fiendish glee in certain quarters when three Hebrew youths were cast into a fiery furnace. Their stiff knees would be limbered now. But that laugh was turned, too, before the end came. Haman chuckled when he got the gallows erected for Mordecai. He would soon be rid of the old Jew. But he fell into his own trap. So it was, too, when the rulers killed Christ and sealed and set a guard about his grave. The Lord, sitting in heaven, laughed and had them in derision. They only brought ruin upon themselves while they exalted Christ to a position—on his cross—in which he draws all men to himself. Another illustration of the same principle is found here. The rulers cast the apostles into prison, bolted the doors and set their guards. But an angel came quietly by

night, took the prisoners out and left the keepers standing guard over an empty prison. The incident shows that wicked men do not have things all their own way in this world; that there is a God; that he keeps his hand on all the affairs of earth; that he looks to the defence of his own people, and that it is perfectly idle to try to outmatch him.

Go ye, and stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life. The first thing to mark here is that they were not to flee. When prisoners escape they usually hide or try to get beyond the reach of the authorities. These men were liberated, not to get away, but to resume their interrupted work. Then every word of the command is important. They were not to talk about their own sufferings and wrongs, and tell the story of their prison experiences or their marvelous escape, but were to speak the words of life; they were to declare the blessed gospel which brings life to dead souls, spiritual, immortal, eternal life, through Christ. They were to stand *in the temple* to speak, not in a quiet, safe spot, but in the most public place. There is nothing hidden or secret about the gospel. We are not to be afraid to speak of Christ anywhere. They were to speak these things *to the people*, to all the people, to poor as well as rich, to ignorant as well as learned. The meaning of this counsel interpreted for nineteenth century life, is that we are to give the glorious gospel to all the world. And mark, it must be the gospel—"all the words of this life." It is not art, or science, or education, or hygiene, or temperance, or beneficial associations—these may all come with the gospel and be used by it; but what men need is *life*, the life that comes from Christ. It is the gospel we are to proclaim, and we are to proclaim it everywhere, in every street and court and purlieu, in every house, to every soul.

The high priest . . . sent to the prison to have them brought . . . the officers returned, and told . . . when we had opened we found no man within. All the circles closed in and this was the result. There is a word which says: "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly." There is a promise also which assures us that "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it." These texts are illustrated here. Satan is always secretly plotting against God's people, and many times he seems to have them completely in his power, where escape is utterly impossible. But God knows how to deliver the godly out of the worst dangers, and he will always find some way to do it at the right time. A boy is employed in a grocery store. Some time after he enters a ten-dollar bill is missing, soon again a five. Suspicion attaches to the boy. He is in great distress, but conscious of his innocence he believes that God will in some way vindicate him. At length a customer brings back the ten-dollar bill; it had been given in change by mistake for a one, and kept for a while, but brought back in an hour of remorse. Soon after a mouse nest is found in the store behind some boxes, and among the bits of rags and paper the five-dollar bill is discovered. Thus God delivered this honest boy from a trouble that threatened the ruin of his name. In such cases we have only to go straight forward with our duty, and God will make the way of escape in his own good time and way.

Ye . . . intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Christ's blood was on them already. Had not they voluntarily taken it upon themselves when clamoring for his death? "His blood be on us and on our children." What Peter really wanted, however, was to get the blood of Christ off them in this sense, and get it on them in another and far different sense. Now it was on them as guilt for his murder; he wanted it on them as atonement and cleansing for all their sin. In one of these two ways his blood is on every soul. If we reject him we share in the guilt of his crucifiers; if we accept him there is no condemnation and his blood cleanseth us from all sin.

We must obey God rather than men. That should be the motto and life-principle of every one of us. It would be easy to find illustrations of heroic devotion to this principle. Many a martyr has gone to the stake on this ground. Bunyan, when condemned to three months' imprisonment for preaching the gospel, and told that if he did not promise to abstain from the course he had been pursuing he must be banished from the realm, nobly replied: "I am at a point with you; if I were out of prison again to-day, I would preach the gospel again to-morrow, by the help of God." It is very refreshing to read of such courageous fidelity to God's commandments, but it is not in such circumstances that we will be called to testify our faithfulness. We need to learn to do what God commands in the ordinary business of life, in secular transactions, in social life, in school, in play, at home. There are a great many voices to call us from the true way, but we must learn to follow conscience, to do what God commands, never to be swerved from duty by what men say. It might be very fine to do some such heroic thing as these men did, but I believe it is

just as fine in God's sight to live faithfully and loyally in the midst of the countless little temptations of the most common-place life.

LESSON POINTS.

1. In evil hearts the success of the gospel only stirs up jealousy and rage. v. 17.

2. The good are sometimes found in prison. Many of God's holiest and best servants have had such experiences. v. 18.

3. God makes even men's wrath to praise him. v. 19.

4. There are angels who dwell in heaven and minister on the earth to God's children. v. 19; Heb. 1: 14.

5. Angels do not preach the gospel; that is the sacred work of redeemed men only. v. 20.

6. God brings to nought the devices of the wicked. vs. 21–23.

7. God makes ways of escape from temptation and trouble for all his people.

8. There are two ways of having Christ's blood on us. v. 28, with 1 John 1: 7.

9. The rule for all life should be—to obey God rather than men, regardless of what it may cost us. v. 29.

10. Christ was exalted to carry on in heaven his work of saving men. v. 31.

11. Every Christian is a witness for Christ; we are to witness to his love and faithfulness. v. 32.

12. It is to those who obey God that the Holy Spirit is given, not to the disobedient. v. 32.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

BY THE REV. JAMES A. WORDEN.

I have been requested to give some ideas of the use of the blackboard or silicate slate or paper pad in class teaching. I will illustrate by this lesson. Write in the left centre the word—

PERSECUTION.

Then quietly ask, What does the word "persecution" mean? Give some examples, *e. g.*, martyrs. Why do we entitle this lesson Persecution **Renewed?** Refer with Bibles to the former arrest of Peter and John. Chap. 4: 5–21. What was the occasion of this renewal of persecution? Here bring out the deep impression made on the people by the death of Ananias and Sapphira, the consequent increased influence of the apostles, the signs and wonders wrought by them. vs. 12–16. This new assault was occasioned by these things. You thus bring out the leading facts of the last lesson. You emphasize and explain the connection of intervening events with this lesson, and you get out of the rut of asking again and again for the title and golden text of last lesson. You get a fresh introduction. Having thus awakened interest write a large, long capital B from top to bottom of your hand-blackboard. At the top of it write—

BEGUN BY THE HIGH PRIEST. vs. 17, 18.

Who was actually high priest at that time? Who was here called high priest? Who are meant by "all they that were with him?" (See Notes.) Why were they filled with indignation? (See Revised Version.) What is the sin of being filled with jealousy? Show the folly of it. Illustrate by the crimes wrought by jealousy recorded in the Bible, and even the daily press. You cannot avoid warning your scholars against such a passion. Call for the report on ancient prisons. What lessons can you draw from the apostles in prison? Answer—Christ bore his cross, the apostles theirs; great triumphs often followed by great trials. What does Paul say in 2 Tim. 3: 12? How are Christian boys and girls sometimes persecuted now? Illustrate by *facts*.

Write at the middle of your large B—

BAFFLED BY THE ANGEL. vs. 19–26.

Who rescued the apostles? Tell what you know about angels. Call for report on this topic. Heb. 1: 14. What was the command of the angel? Why did he call the gospel "the words of this life?" (See Notes.) What does the Psalmist say of angelic guards? Ps. 34: 7. What of their deliverance? Ps. 91: 11. How does v. 20 show us that sometimes angels are guides in earthly duty?

Write out in one corner a contrast between the entrance of the apostles into prison and their exit.

ENTRANCE.	EXIT.
Police Officers,	Angel,
Hatred,	Love,
Disgrace,	Honor,
Bars and Bolts,	Freedom,
Sorrow,	Joy,
Work Stopped.	Work Advanced.

"At night," bound in prison; in "the morning," in the temple teaching. An old missionary seal has on it an ox standing before an altar, and a plow with the motto, "Utrumque paratus"—"Ready for either." So were these apostles.

Write at the lower part of the B—

BRAVED BY THE APOSTLES. vs. 27–32.

Recall the courageous reply of Peter and John. Acts 4: 19, 20. Recall Luther's answer at the

Diet of Worms. Cranmer at his last trial. What testimony for Jesus did Peter give when arraigned before the council?

[Dear teacher, make perfectly clear to each member of your class that Jesus is the author of **repentance** as well as of forgiveness of sins, and that looking to Jesus on the cross is the only true means of repenting of sin—"an apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ."]

When your board or slate or paper has been completed, draw a faint line down beyond the first letter behind the B. Then add below, "Jesus the Prince and Saviour." It will then read—

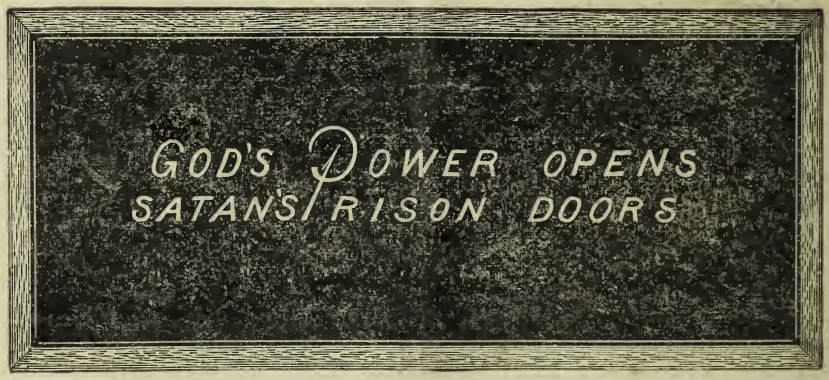
PERSECUTION
BEGUN BY THE HIGH PRIEST, vs. 17,18.
BAFFLED BY THE ANGEL, vs. 20–26.
BRAVED BY THE APOSTLES, vs. 27-32.
ALL
FOR
Jesus, the Prince and Saviour.

Assign to different members of the class for report on the lesson of next Sabbath, March 11, these questions:

1. Meaning of the word "Grecian" in the New Testament as distinguished from the word "Greek?"
2. What is the New Testament office of deacon?
3. The foreign Jews in Jerusalem in the apostles' time? The Alexandrians? The Libertines?
4. How should the Church care for its poor in these days?
5. The angelic brightness of Stephen's face? What was it? What caused it?
6. What passages in the New Testament indicate that there were many poor in the Church at Jerusalem?
7. What passages teach the duty of making provision for the poor?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

BY J. HOWARD SEAL.



The Purpose of the Lesson.—To shew that no prison is too strong for God to open. "There is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord." Prov. 21: 30. Jesus said before his death that his apostles would be delivered up to the councils, be scourged, cast into prisons, etc., but after his resurrection he said, "Lo, I am with you alway." We must expect *persecutions* in the world, but we are assured of his *presence* and help. No weapon formed against his Church shall prosper. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him and *delivereth* them." Ps. 34: 7. And when he opens the door, his command is "Go speak" (continue your work), not "Go, fly for your lives." On the reverse side of board may be placed—

"GO, STAND AND
SPEAK TO THE PEOPLE
ALL THE WORDS OF THIS LIFE."

These are the words the people need to hear, and *all* the people need to know them. And remember, "To obey is better than sacrifice." If preferred the following may be placed on the board—

JESUS WHOM THEY SLEW,
"HIM
ATH GOD EXALTED."
WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH HIM?

Directions for Coloring.—"God's power opens," light blue shaded with pink; "Satan's prison doors," brown shaded with red.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

BY MRS. G. R. ALDEN—"PANSY."

The Lesson Introduced by Story.—There was once a little girl who was forever getting into trouble because she "didn't think." One day her mother gave her a gold ring, which had written on it in tiny blue letters, "I OUGHT." This, her mother said, was to help her remember to ask her conscience whether or not she ought to do a thing. This kept her safe in many temptations. When asked to stay and play after school, she would stand twirling her ring on her finger a moment, then say suddenly: "I ought to go home." She said "I ought" so much, that after a while the children began to call her "Nellie Ought." It was a name of which her mother was proud.

This story will serve to introduce your lesson-thought, viz.: *Teaching the conscience to choose between right and wrong.* It will also give you opportunity to review the lesson on "Christian Courage," in which you perhaps taught the verse that is used as a golden text to-day.

This lesson is eminently one which will bear telling in story form. A prison outline drawn on the board, in which barred doors shall be prominent, will help you impress the striking facts. Be minute in detail. Help the class to see the angry mob who hurry Peter and John to prison. Imagine the council gathered the next morning waiting for the prisoners. Follow the messengers to the closed prison, bolts secure, all quiet, but the room is empty! Where are the prisoners? Make a square that shall stand for a church, with marks for the two disciples. They are there, preaching about Jesus. Follow the messengers back to the council with this astounding news—a prison closed and barred, as if guarding its inmates, yet they at the moment at work in the temple! How did it happen? Use all your power of story telling to describe the marvelous deliverance.

When finally brought before the council what have these men to say in answer to the charge? The words of the golden text give their noble answer.

The personal application of such a lesson is obvious. We, the children, who want to be followers of Jesus, ought to obey God, even though we may be laughed at by others (perhaps persecution comes more often in this form to a child), or may suffer some grievance or pain or punishment.

I think, for my own class, I shall try to prepare a card, or it may be a bit of card-board in the form of a locket, with those two words, "I OUGHT," printed on it in pretty letters, and give one to each child. This, after carefully impressing certain things that I, as one of Jesus' witnesses, ought or ought not to do.

In selecting examples for illustration as to our duties, the teacher should always keep in mind the temptations and opportunities of her own scholars, and point the moral accordingly.

The more I study the lesson the more I am impressed with the thought that we have in it a grand opportunity to hold the hearts of our children to the obligations of conscience. The theme sounds like a large one, but we are to remember that large themes can be presented in a simple manner.

By all means remember to warn the children that the only sure way out of temptation is to call upon God. It is more than probable that the disciples while in prison prayed, and the delivering angel was their answer. In connection with this thought teach the Lord's own promise, found on the *Westminster Primary Lesson Leaf.*

Lesson X. **THE SEVEN CHOSEN.** *March 11th, 1883.*

Acts 6: 1–15. Memorize vs. 6–8.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom." —Acts 6: 3.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 6: 1–15 ..... *The Seven Chosen.*
T. Ex. 18: 13–27 ..... *Moses' Assistants.*
W. 1 Tim. 3: 1–13 ..... *The Office of a Deacon.*
Th. Deut. 24: 10–22 ..... *Care for the Poor.*
F. 1 Tim. 5: 16–25 ..... *Widows Relieved.*
S. Isa. 58: 6–14 ..... *Bread to the Hungry.*
S. Job 29: 1–16 ..... *"A Father to the Poor."*

TOPIC:

Helpers in Church Work.

LESSON PLAN.

1. Helpers Needed. 2. Helpers Chosen. 3. Stephen Arraigned.

Time.—A. D. 34–36. **Place.**—Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 10. *How did God create man?* A. God created man, male and female, after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness and holiness, with dominion over the creatures.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 603: "Go, labor on; spread the Spirit." Other hymns, 575, 595, 601.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—The connecting link between the last lesson and this is the completion of the trial of the apostles. Gamaliel speaks and the council gives heed to his advice, beating the apostles, charging them again not to speak in the name of Jesus and then letting them go. They did not cease, however, to speak, but daily preached Christ in the temple and at home. Our present lesson tells of the first dissension in the Church. There are parties, and complaints are heard. This new trouble was met by the appointment of a new order of church officers, whose particular duty it was to look after the poor and provide for their wants.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

1 And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Gre'cians against the He'brews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. [Acts 5: 14; 9: 29; 11: 20; 4: 35.]

2 Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples *unto them*, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. [Ex. 18: 17.]

3 Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. [Deut. 1: 13; 1 Tim. 3: 7.]

4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. [Acts 2: 42.]

5 ¶ And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Ste'phen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Phil'ip, and Pro-cho'rus, and Ni-ca'nor, and Ti'mon, and Par'me-nas, and Nic'o-las a proselyte of An'ti-och: [Acts 11: 24; 21: 8.]

6 Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid *their* hands on them. [Acts 13: 3; 1 Tim. 4: 14; 2 Tim. 1: 6.]

7 And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Je-ru'sa-lem greatly: and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. [Isa. 55: 11; Acts 12: 24; Col. 1: 6; John 12: 42.]

8 And Ste'phen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.

9 ¶ Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called *the synagogue* of the Lib'er-tines, and Cy-re'ni-ans, and Al-ex-an'dri-ans, and of them of Ci-li'cia and of A'sia, disputing with Ste'phen.

10 And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake. [Luke 21: 15; Isa. 54: 17.]

11 Then they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Mo'ses, and *against* God. [1 Kings 21: 10–13; Matt. 26: 59, 60.]

12 And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon *him*, and caught him, and brought *him* to the council,

13 And set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law:

14 For we have heard him say, that this Je'sus of Naz'a-reth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Mo'ses delivered us. [Matt. 26; 61.]

15 And all that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel. [Ex. 24: 29, 30.]

REVISED TEXT.

1 Now in these days, when the number of
the disciples was multiplying, there arose a
murmuring of the Grecian Jews against the
Hebrews, because their widows were neg-
2 lected in the daily ministration. And the
twelve called the multitude of the disciples
unto them, and said, It is not fit that we
should forsake the word of God, and serve
3 tables. Look ye out therefore, brethren,
from among you seven men of good report,
full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we
4 may appoint over this business. But we will
continue stedfastly in prayer, and in the
5 ministry of the word. And the saying
pleased the whole multitude: and they chose
Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy
Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Ni-
canor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nico-
6 las a proselyte of Antioch: whom they set
before the apostles: and when they had
prayed, they laid their hands on them.
7 And the word of God increased; and the
number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusa-
lem exceedingly; and a great company of
the priests were obedient to the faith.
8 And Stephen, full of grace and power,
wrought great wonders and signs among the
9 people. But there arose certain of them
that were of the synagogue called *the syna-
gogue* of the Libertines, and of the Cyreni-
ans, and of the Alexandrians, and of them
of Cilicia and Asia, disputing with Stephen.
10 And they were not able to withstand the
wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake.
11 Then they suborned men, which said, We
have heard him speak blasphemous words
12 against Moses, and *against* God. And they
stirred up the people, and the elders, and the
scribes, and came upon him, and seized him,
13 and brought him into the council, and set up
false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth
not to speak words against this holy place,
14 and the law: for we have heard him say, that
this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this
place, and shall change the customs which
15 Moses delivered unto us. And all that sat
in the council, fastening their eyes on him,
saw his face as it had been the face of an
angel.

1 *In those days.* The time was after the release of the apostles and before the outbreak of the persecution in which Stephen fell. The date cannot be definitely ascertained. *When*

the number of the disciples was multiplied. The second arrest of the apostles did not check the increase of believers. *There arose a murmuring.* Not an outspoken complaint, but suppressed whispers of fault-finding. This is the first indication of dissatisfaction in the new Church. This murmuring was against the apostles. *Grecians . . . Hebrews.* The Revised Version has "Grecian Jews." These were Jews who had lived in other countries outside of Palestine and spoke the Greek language, using the Septuagint version of the Old Testament. The *Hebrews* were those who had come back to their own land from the captivity, and still spoke the Hebrew language and used the Hebrew Scriptures. There was a natural prejudice between the two classes. *Their widows were neglected in the daily ministration.* There seems to have been a daily distribution of food or money among the poor members of the new Christian household. The necessary money for this purpose was obtained through the voluntary contributions of the richer members. See chap. 2: 45; 4: 34. The apostles themselves up to this time had attended to this distribution. The complaint now is, on the part of the converts among the Grecian Jews or Hellenists, that injustice was shown toward their widows in these daily disbursements. There may have been no ground whatever for the murmuring, as the feeling that they were regarded by the Hebrew-speaking Jews as inferior to themselves would naturally give rise to just such jealousy, even without reason.

2 *The twelve called the . . . disciples.* The apostles wisely acted in this case at once, while the complaints were only whispers of discontent, and before there was any public manifestation of dissatisfaction. Calvin says, "It is a point of prudence and godly carefulness in that they prevented the evil which began to arise, without deferring the remedy." They consulted together, and then called a meeting of the whole church to confer on the subject. It may be noticed here that Peter did not assume the authority, but that "the twelve" acted together; further, that the apostles did not themselves take the responsibility of directing the change, but referred the matter to a general meeting of the whole church. This does not favor the theory of Peter's primacy, nor yet or apostolic authority over the Church. *It is not reason.* Revised Version: *Not fit.* Literally, *Not pleasing.* It was not the desire or choice of the apostles to attend to this duty, which drew off their attention in some measure at least from their legitimate work of preaching the word. *Serve tables.* That is, look after the distribution of alms, whether as money or as food.

3 *Brethren, look ye out.* The apostles did not assume the authority to name these men, but proposed to this church meeting their plan, and asked the people to select the new officers if the suggestion met their approval, the apostles appointing those whom the people selected. *Seven men.* There is no use in asking why *seven* men were chosen, for no one can answer. That so many men were needed for the work shows how important the duty of caring for the poor was considered to be and how generously it was performed. The qualifications necessary for this new office are distinctly marked: 1. *Men of honest report.* Revised Version: *Good* report. They should not be merely honest men, but men of good name among their fellow-Christians, possessing their confidence and regard. 2. *Full of the Holy Ghost.* Men of spiritual power. 3. *Full of . . . wisdom.* Goodness and piety were not enough. For such a responsible position men of intellectual ability and of capacity for affairs were also necessary. *Whom we may appoint.* The apostles being accountable for the money given for alms, reserved the right of confirming the men whom the people would choose; besides, they must be set apart and ordained to their office.

4 *To prayer and the ministry of the word.* Freed thus from the care of the alms of the church they would devote themselves exclusively to conducting religious services and preaching the gospel.

5 *They chose.* The people approved the apostles' plan, and at once selected the men. The choice was made by the whole church, but it is remarkable that all the names of those chosen are Greek, apparently implying that they were all selected from among the Grecian Jews. This shows the broad and generous spirit which pervaded the Hebrew converts, leading them to put the entire work of distribution in the hands of the party that had felt its poor neglected. Of Stephen and Philip only is there any further mention in the Acts. There is a special designation of Stephen—*a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost*—probably because of all the seven he was the most distinguished for these qualities, and also because his martyrdom was so soon to occur. There is an undesirable tradition that Nicolas was the founder of the sect of the Nicolaitans (Rev. 2: 6), but it lacks authority.

6 *Set before the apostles.* For their approval. *When they had prayed.* For the divine blessing on the men now to be set apart for this sacred work. *They laid their hands on them.* In the Old Testament the laying on of hands was a common rite, first mentioned in Gen. 48: 10, where it signified blessing only. Moses was

commanded (Num. 27: 18) to lay his hand upon Joshua in conferring upon him the office of leader. Christ laid his hands upon the sick in healing them, and upon the children in blessing them. This is the first mention of the rite in the Acts, but after this it was used by the apostles in healing the sick (Acts 9: 17, 18; 28: 8) when the gifts of the Holy Ghost were imparted (Acts 8: 17; 19: 6), and when men were set apart for the ministry (1 Tim. 5: 22; Acts 13: 3; Heb. 6: 2). The rite has passed down into nearly all branches of the Christian Church, being used in the Presbyterian Church in the ordination of ministers, and, in some cases, of ruling elders and deacons; and in some other churches in the confirmation of those who are admitted to the communion.

[It is customary to call these seven men Deacons, although they are not so called in the record. They were chosen, however, to "serve tables," and the word rendered to serve is *diakonein*, from which the name deacon is derived. It is evident, however, that there were deacons in the early Church subsequent to this time, as the office is referred to in Phil. 1: 1; 1 Tim. 3: 8–12. In the latter passage Paul speaks of the qualifications for this office. That the order originated here in the appointment of the seven we are not absolutely certain, although this is highly probable. It is difficult to define the exact duties of these seven. They were chosen to distribute the alms among the poor, but both Stephen and Philip became preachers. Philip is known as the Evangelist (chap. 21: 8), not as a deacon. He also administered baptism. Chap. 8: 38. The office of deacon has been retained in the Church, but in different branches of it with different functions and duties. In the Roman Catholic Church the deacon is an assistant of the Bishop; in the Episcopal Church he is a clergyman without full power; in the Methodist Church he assists in the administration of the Lord's Supper; in the Congregational Church the deacons are the pastor's spiritual advisers, as the elders are in the Presbyterian Church; in Presbyterian churches the office is not maintained with uniformity, but where it is found the duty of the deacons is to care for the poor.]

7 *The word of God increased.* The remainder of this verse defines this clause. The preaching was effective. The danger of dissension was obviated by the prudence of the apostles. There were many conversions; among these a great number of priests accepted Christ. But now we come to a new era in the history of the Church. Stephen's preaching arouses the enmity of the Pharisees, a powerful and intolerant sect.

8 *Stephen.* We do not know whether he had been preaching or not before his ordination as one of the seven, but he was endowed with grace in an extraordinary degree, and this grace [not faith; see Rev. Ver.] gave him great power, by which he wrought many miracles.

9 *There arose certain.* Stephen's preaching and work gave a new impetus to the growth of the Church, and this aroused fresh enmity. It is probable that five different synagogues are here referred to. The number of synagogues in Jerusalem was put by the Rabbinic writers as high as four hundred and eighty, representing all shades of opinion. Every foreign colony of Jews had its own synagogue. *The Libertines.* Jews who had been captives but were now freed. *Cyrenians.* From Cyrene in North Africa. *Alexandrians.* From Alexandria. *Cilicia.* A province occupying the south-eastern portion of what is now Asia Minor. Paul was of Cilicia, and may have been among the teachers who disputed with Stephen. *Asia.* Not the continent bearing that name, but a Roman province. See Bible Dictionary for full description of these places. *Disputing with Stephen.* In the synagogue services any teacher might set forth his opinions.

10, 11 *Not able to withstand.* He preached Christ in these synagogues, and they disputed with him, but were unable to answer him, he spoke with such eloquence and such skillful use of the truth. The power Stephen had was divinely given. *Then they suborned men.* Unable to cope with him in argument they secretly instructed men to testify falsely. *Blasphemous words.* Referring to his preaching of Christ as superior to Moses and his gospel as the fulfillment of the law. Christ himself was also charged with blasphemy when on his trial.

12 *Stirred up the people.* They sought to arouse popular indignation against Stephen and his teachings. *The council.* The Sanhedrim.

13, 14 *False witnesses.* They may have quoted Stephen's own words, but in such perverted and distorted form as to make their testimony really false. *Destroy this place.* The same charge was brought against Christ himself with a similar perversion of his words. Matt. 26: 61, with John 2: 19.

15 *Saw his face.* As they looked upon him sitting there his face probably shone with a bright radiance like that which the angels were supposed to wear. Compare Ex. 34: 30, where the face of Moses is represented as shining with a preternatural lustre.

[For further suggestions on this peculiar appearance of Stephen's face, see editorial in this number on "The Angel Look."]

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

When the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a murmuring. Increase of numbers does not always give increased happiness in a church. There are more to please, and parties are apt to spring up with their rivalries and jealousies. Many a church that has grown great and strong has nothing like the harmony and close fellowship that it had when it was small and struggling. Large growth is not therefore an unmixed blessing. Still murmuring is all wrong. Even if these widows did not quite receive their just share it was not the Christian way to begin to find fault. They or their friends should have gone to the apostles and have stated the case frankly. A little straightforward dealing would have set all things right. But there are always classes of people who would rather go around murmuring secretly, and thus stirring up ill feeling and bitterness, than take a frank, honest course. The evils that come from this wretched habit are incalculable.

Because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. So the first murmuring in the Christian Church sprang out of the generous character of its members. Money was poured out by the rich to relieve the poor, and it was about the distribution of this money that the dissension arose. Money has caused a great many bickerings and heart-burnings in churches since that day. Wherever charities are dispensed with a generous hand there are apt yet to be complaints. Somebody feels neglected, and thinks some other body gets an undue share. The more generous a church is to its poor the greater is the danger from this source. One way to avoid all such vexatious and annoying disturbances is not to do anything at all for the poor. Then nobody will feel slighted. But that is a bad way to cure such evils. It is like keeping a garden soil sterile and trodden down hard for fear the weeds might grow if it were fertilized and made mellow. It is better to have charity with all its perplexing care than a cold, ungenerous church that reaches out no helping hand.

The twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them and said. The time to heal troubles is just when they are beginning, and before they break out. There is a good lesson in this for pastors and all who have to do with church management. The apostles might have gotten angry at the imputations upon their fairness in dispensing the alms and resented the charge. But this would probably only have fanned the little sparks into a great flame. They took a far wiser way. Without saying whether the complaints were just or unjust they took measures to secure a satisfactory distribution, and thus prevented, no doubt, an unseemly strife. Most church quarrels could be prevented if like wisdom and patience were shown at the right time. The spirit of conciliation is essential in all who are set as leaders of others. Most people are more easily led than driven. The same principles apply in personal affairs. The time to heal quarrels is before they really begin, and the way to do it is by generous forgetfulness of one's "rights" and one's "dignity," and by a spirit of Christian concession. "Blessed are the peacemakers."

It is not fit that we should forsake the word of God and serve tables. The people should not expect their ministers to do all the work of the church. There are a great many things that others can do just as well, and every one should do his part. The minister should not have to kindle the fires and sweep the house. He should not have to look after the collection of pew-rents or the repairing of the roof. All such matters as these the people should attend to. He should not be required to attend to the distribution of relief among the poor. One reason is, that it is almost impossible to do this without causing dissatisfaction in some quarter, and this would mar the minister's usefulness. But the chief reason is that his spiritual work will suffer if he has to leave it to attend to everything else. It is no disgrace for a minister to do any kind of honest work. Paul wrought at tent-making to help support himself. Many a frontier pastor has to be builder and sexton and board of trustees and leader of the singing and superintendent of the Sabbath-school, and it is no disgrace to him that he builds the fires and sweeps the church—it is an honor in such cases. But when there are those who can help they should do all these things, and leave the pastor free for his spiritual duties.

Look ye out . . . men . . . full of the Spirit and of wisdom. These men were to have care only of the charities of the church, the distribution of food or money among the poor, yet they must be men full of the Spirit. So piety is a necessary qualification for a church officer, even though his duties are of a secular kind. But it must be noticed also that piety is not enough. A man may be good, devout and spiritually-minded, and yet not fit for a deacon or a trustee or a Sabbath-school superintendent or secretary. Brains are necessary as well as grace and goodness for such positions. Ability and wisdom are just as necessary in God's business as in the world's.

The word of God increased. This would not have been the case if the murmuring had been allowed to go on. The result then would have been alienation and bitterness, perhaps a division in the church, which would have checked all growth and hindered the success of the preaching. But the healing of the dissension at its very beginning, and in such a loving, generous way, produced a new era of peace and good will, as "when a broken bone is healed, the limb is stronger than before." No church can ever prosper when it is vexed by unhappy strifes and quarrels; but there is no quicker way to bring a new blessing and a revival of grace than by putting away all bitterness.

Stephen, full of grace and power, wrought great wonders. Teachers would do well to study this verse for themselves. The secret of Stephen's great works was the grace that was in him. This was a divine gift. Back a little, when he was chosen as one of the seven, we are told that he was "full of faith and of the Holy Spirit," and here we learn that he was "full of grace and power." The way to have great blessing in teaching is to be filled just as Stephen was. It is well to know the art of teaching, and to have the best lesson-helps and use them, and to study every point in the passage, and to have good illustrations and all that; but with all this skill and knowledge and preparation, unless we have the Holy Spirit *in* us, we shall not win souls to Christ. It is the teacher that is full of grace and power, whose words the scholars are not able to resist.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Even in the Pentecostal church, under the care of the apostles, there were murmurings. v. 1.
2. The very best things in a church sometimes become the occasion of dissatisfaction and discontent. v. 1.
3. The time to heal church dissensions is when they are only whispered murmurings. v. 2.
4. The way to nip strifes in the bud is by a liberal, self-forgetting spirit of conciliation. vs. 2, 3.
5. Murmuring is wretched business for a Christian.
6. The people ought all to do their part in the church to leave the minister free for prayer and preaching, and the care of souls. vs. 2–4.
7. Both piety and brains are necessary in a church officer. v. 3.
8. Restored peace in a church is followed always by revival and new blessing. v. 7.
9. Grace in the heart is what gives power in the life and work. v. 8.
10. The enemies of Christ resort to all manner of wrongs to oppose his kingdom. vs. 11–14.
11. The secret of the angel-face is the angel-heart. v. 15.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

It is seen at a glance that here are two great subjects:

DEACONS APPOINTED. vs. 1–7.
STEPHEN ARRAIGNED. vs. 8–15.

But the first is really an introduction to the second, and the second must not be crowded for time. [Try writing out your own questions. Those given below are only suggestive.]

DEACONS APPOINTED.

Begin, as usual, with a brief review of last lesson, title, golden text, etc. Then ask, What different officers are there in our church? This question will not admit of a prompt answer from an ordinary class. Give them time. If necessary, change the form of your question into this, What office does Mr. —— hold? (mentioning the name of one of your elders.) If necessary ask them, What office does Mr. —— hold? (mentioning the name of a deacon.) If necessary, tell them this, and the names of all your deacons. What are the duties of deacons? The subject of our Presbyterian Church government has been neglected in the education of the majority of our young people. Procure a copy of our Form of Government. Have one of the scholars read chap. 6. It contains only two sentences. Call for the report on the question assigned last week—Who are meant by Grecians? Also on the question, What evidence is there in the New Testament that there were many poor in the Jerusalem church? Rom. 15: 25, 26; 2 Cor. 8: 2; 9: 2, 4; Acts 2: 45; 4: 35. How did it come that the Grecian widows were overlooked? (Probably their circumstances were not as well known as those of the Jewish widows.) As the class may be ready for them, ask here such questions as, How did the apostles treat this complaint? How should we regard the cry and murmurs of the poor? What measures did the apostles take to remove the ground of complaint? Why did not the apostles, inspired as they were, themselves appoint these new officers? Why consult the church members? Why is it wise for church and Sabbath-school leaders to take the church and Sabbath-school teachers into their counsels? Why was it not "reason" or fit for the apostles to serve tables? To what were the apostles to give their whole time? What lesson is there here as to concentrating our efforts on one thing? Whom did the people select? What was their charac-

ter? What are some qualifications of deacons? Who set them apart to the office of deacon? With what ceremonies? What was the effect of this perfecting of the church organization? Why are priests "specially mentioned?"

STEPHEN ARRAIGNED.

[The teacher is recommended to read the second chapter of Conybeare and Howson's "Life and Epistles of St. Paul" in connection with this and the succeeding lesson.]

What do you know of Stephen? What was his character, as drawn by inspiration? Whence the secret of his power? How would the performance of a deacon's duty bring Stephen near sufferers? How would this occasion his use of miraculous power? What was the synagogue of the Libertines, Alexandrians, etc.? What advantages would these naturally have over Stephen in debate? Why could they not resist him? What was probably the truth spoken by Stephen which they perverted into the charge in v. 11? He had probably preached that the Mosaic economy, with all its ceremonial laws and temple services, was done away in Christ, as Jesus himself had said. John 4: 21–23.

Picture the holy Stephen going through Jerusalem's streets carrying bread to some poor widow's house. See the Libertines, and Alexandrians, Cyrenians and Cilicians, perhaps Saul of Tarsus in the mob, seize Stephen, hurry him to the Sanhedrim chamber, the council crowding in, false witnesses crying out, murder in every heart, fury in every eye. But what are they all gazing at? Stephen's face. Look at it. Beautiful words tell how *he* appeared. Read Ex. 34: 30; 2 Cor. 3: 13; 1 Peter 4: 14. What caused the angelic brightness of Stephen's face? The baptism of glory before the baptism of suffering.

Now take the WESTMINSTER TEACHER into your hand. There is one time in every lesson when the teacher should take the lesson help in his hand, only once. It is while giving out the next Sabbath's lesson. Call their attention to the fact that the next lesson skips over Stephen's speech. Chap. 7: 1–53. Tell them how to study that speech. Refer them—*i. e.*, older scholars—to chap. 2 of Conybeare and Howson's "Life and Epistles of St. Paul (if accessible). Tell them that you will examine them briefly next Sabbath on that speech. Then having written each on a slip of paper, give out such questions as—

1. The main argument in Stephen's speech.
2. Elements of grandeur in Stephen's character.
3. What evidence have we that Stephen was in advance of Peter and the other apostles in reference to the Mosaic law?
4. In what sense was Stephen a forerunner of Paul the apostle to the Gentiles?
5. Illustrations of wonderful triumph in dying Christians.
6. Saul's part in Stephen's trial and martyrdom.
7. Prepare a word-picture of Stephen's trial.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Seven white marks on the blackboard. Print over them the word "CHOSEN." Let class tell by whom chosen, and for what. What they were full of. What their report was among the people. What they were to do. How they were set apart, etc. In other words, by your questions call out the details of the lesson, taking care to have class see how important is the part they have learned.

OBJECT ILLUSTRATION.—Take with you a little blank book containing certain statements about several imaginary children. Imagine yourself to have taken up a teacher's or a mother's private book and found records something like this: "Katie was full of mischief today. She made trouble all the time." "John came in full of anger, and spoke naughty words." "Charlie's heart seemed full of kindness; he tried to help us all." Some illustration of this sort will impress the fact that there are histories being written about little lives. Here is the history of these seven men. A wonderful history. Let class give it again, and in this lesson and all others try to weave the golden text *continually* into the story, calling for it often from different scholars, that they may realize the importance of being prepared with it.

SPECIAL POINT.—Try to arouse ambition to have such a record as this, taking care to explain what it is to have a heart full of the Holy Ghost.

1. *Chosen.—Picked out* from others, because they were fitted for a certain work. It is an honor to be chosen. A boy chosen by his mother to do an errand that needs care and thought. All children can be thus honored. They can be chosen by God to show how sweet tempered they can be under trial. To show how faithful they can be to their little duties, etc.

2. *The Report.*—Let the golden text tell again what report was given of these seven men. Then make the lesson practical by setting the children to thinking what report might be given of them. A story illustration will help fix this point.

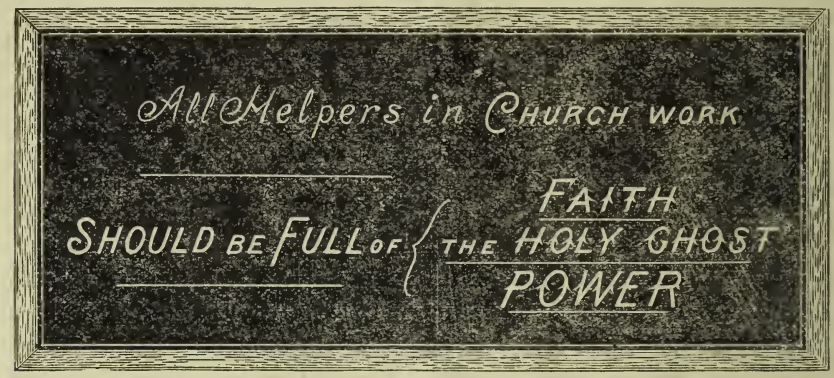
Mr. Stuart wanted to hire a little boy. Johnnie Burns was recommended to him. He asked different people about Johnnie. His Sunday-school

teacher said: "Johnnie always has his lesson, and is very well-behaved." His mother said: "I can always trust Johnnie to do *just* as I tell him." A playmate said: "Johnnie is the nicest boy in school; he always helps us little fellows." Seven different people did Mr. Stuart ask for a report about Johnnie, and they all agreed. Johnnie got the place.

Doubtless each teacher can best weave her own story. The above is simply suggestive. There is abundant opportunity to make the lesson practical as well as interesting.

FINAL THOUGHT.—*God* has a report of each of us. He reads it from our hearts. If he sees there that we love Jesus and try to serve him, it will be reported in heaven, that down there in that house, or school, or street, is one of Jesus' children.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD



The Purpose of the Lesson.—The Church needs helpers. "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit, etc." 1 Cor. 12: 4–11. Every Christian scholar should be a helper, and like Stephen, "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost," and like him, they will be full of power. Then the enemies of Christ will not be able to resist the wisdom by which they speak. Oh, that the Church to-day had more such workers! Then the effect would be the same as in Stephen's day; "the word of God" would increase, the number of disciples multiply greatly, and the faces of God's children would shine as the result of internal faith and hope and the consciousness of a life well spent in his service. May this lesson teach us our duty, as it shows us our privilege, and may there be the willingness to perform it.

The board may be used to impress another line of thought, viz.—

OUR { STRENGTH . . . Prayer.
AUTHORITY . . The Word of God.
ACTIVITY . . . The Work of God. }

Directions for Coloring.—"All helpers in Church work," white; "Should be full of," orange shaded with red; "Faith," white, blue shade; "The Holy Ghost," green, yellow shade; "Power," brown, white shade.

Lesson XI. **THE FIRST CHRISTIAN MARTYR.** *March 18th, 1883.*

Acts 7: 54–8: 4. Memorize vs. 54–60.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." —Rev. 2: 10.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 7: 54–8: 4. *The First Christian Martyr.*
T. Rev. 2: 1–11 ... *Faithful Unto Death.*
W. Rev. 6: 9–17 ... *Slain for the Word of God.*
Th. John 15: 18–27 . *Hatred for Christ's Sake.*
F. 1 Pet. 4: 12–19.. *Partakers of Christ's Sufferings.*
S. 2 Cor. 4: 1–18.. *Unto Death for Jesus' Sake.*
S. 2 Tim. 4: 1–8... *Ready to be Offered.*

TOPIC.

Dying for Christ.

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Martyrdom of Stephen. 2. The Persecution of the Church.

Time.—About A. D. 36 or 37, in immediate connection with the last lesson. **Place.**—The council-hall in Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 11. *What are God's works of providence?* A. God's works of providence are his most holy, wise and powerful preserving and governing all his creatures and all their actions.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 223: "Must Jesus bear the cross alone?" Other hymns, 225, 227, 336, 781, 791.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—The early part of this chapter contains Stephen's address when arraigned before the council. He began by quietly and calmly recalling the early history of the Jewish people, mentioning the names of famous national heroes, showing as he went on how even these had been rejected. Joseph and Moses had both been thus treated. The prophets also had been persecuted and put to death. Then with great fervor he charges upon the council, before which he now stands, that they had been the betrayers and murderers of the Messiah. At this point he is violently interrupted and hurried to his death. Thus his defence was unfinished. Had he been permitted to finish it there can be no doubt but that his speech would have contained the offer of mercy and pardon through the blood their own hands had shed.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

54 ¶ When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with *their* teeth. [Acts 5: 33.]

55 But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Je'sus standing on the right hand of God, [Zech. 3: 1; Acts 6: 5; Eph. 1: 20; Col. 3: 1.]

56 And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. [Ezek 1: 1; Dan. 7: 13; Acts 10: 11.]

57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, [Matt. 26: 64, 65.]

58 And cast *him* out of the city, and stoned *him:* and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. [Luke 4: 29; Heb. 13: 12; Lev. 24: 16; Deut. 17: 7.]

59 And they stoned Ste'phen, calling upon *God*, and saying, Lord Je'sus, receive my spirit. [Ps. 31: 5; Luke 23: 46.]

60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep. [1 Cor. 15: 5–18; 1 Thess. 4: 13, 14.]

1 And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Je-ru'sa-lem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Ju-dæ'a and Sa-ma'ri-a, except the apostles. [Acts 22: 20; 11: 19.]

2 And devout men carried Ste'phen *to his burial*, and made great lamentation over him. [Gen. 23: 22; 50: 10; 2 Sam. 3: 31.]

3 As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed *them* to prison. [Acts 9: 1, 13, 21; 22: 4; 1 Cor. 15: 9.]

4 Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word. [Matt. 10: 23; Mark 16: 20.]

REVISED TEXT.

54 Now when they heard these things, they
were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on
55 him with their teeth. But he, being full of
the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into
heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus
56 standing on the right hand of God, and said,
Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the
Son of man standing on the right hand of
57 God. But they cried out with a loud voice,
and stopped their ears, and rushed upon
58 him with one accord; and they cast him out
of the city, and stoned him: and the wit-
nesses laid down their garments at the feet
59 of a young man named Saul. And they
stoned Stephen, calling upon *the Lord*, and
60 saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And
he kneeled down, and cried with a loud
voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.
And when he had said this, he fell asleep.
And Saul was consenting unto his death.
1 And there arose on that day a great perse-
cution against the church which was in
Jerusalem; and they were all scattered
abroad throughout the regions of Judæa and
2 Samaria, except the apostles. And devout
men buried Stephen, and made great lamen-
3 tation over him. But Saul laid waste the
church, entering into every house, and haling
men and women committed them to prison.
4 They therefore that were scattered abroad
went about preaching the word.

54 *When they heard these things.* Particularly the words contained in vs. 51–53. *Cut to the heart.* Literally, "They were cut asunder as with a saw." The expression denotes the most intense rage. *Gnashed on him with their teeth.* The same words are frequently used in the Scriptures to signify uncontrollable anger. Job 16: 9; Ps. 35: 16; 37: 12. The outward show of passion is far more violent among Orientals than with us. It is remarkable that Christ used the same language when he spoke of the sufferings of the condemned, implying that not penitence and sorrow for sin, not even self-condemning remorse, but furious rage shall characterize the finally lost.

55 *But he.* Mark the contrast here between their feelings and Stephen's. *Being full of the Holy Ghost.* See chap. 6: 5, 10. The Greek implies that this was his permanent state, but it is probable that the divine influence within him increased as the human rage about him waxed more furious. *Looked up.* Instead of looking

upon the angry scene around him he kept his eyes turned intently toward heaven. It is supposed by some that the council was sitting in an open and uncovered place, from which the heavens were visible, but this supposition is not necessary, as the vision which he saw was spiritual, not dependent on an open sky. *Saw the glory of God.* In the opening of his speech (v. 2) he spoke of the "God of glory;" now to his own eyes is revealed the "glory of God." He saw a vision of great splendor. *And Jesus standing on the right hand of God.* Alford's words here are very fine: "Stephen under accusation of blaspheming the earthly temple, is granted a sight of the heavenly temple; being cited before the Sadducaic high priest, who believed in neither angel nor spirit, he is vouchsafed a vision of the heavenly High Priest standing and ministering at the throne, amidst the angels and just men made perfect." We have in this a representation of the trinity—the glory of God *the Father*, Jesus *the Son* at his right hand, and Stephen filled with *the Holy Ghost*. The attitude of Jesus here is peculiar. Usually he is represented as *sitting* in glory, this position signifying his majesty and power as King and Judge; also that his great mediatorial work is finished. See Matt. 26: 64; Mark 16: 20; Eph. 1: 20; Ps. 110: 1. But Stephen saw him *standing*. This posture denotes his interest in his servant's case on the earth, his sympathy with him in his suffering. It signifies also honor to Stephen, the first martyr to witness with his blood; thus Jesus confesses him before the Father and the angels. This attitude implies also that he was ready to receive the spirit of his witness to himself. The vision was granted to sustain Stephen in his great trial.

56 *The Son of man.* Christ often used this title of himself when on earth; it was employed also by Daniel, speaking prophetically of Christ; but in the New Testament it is nowhere applied to Christ by any other than himself, save here and twice in Revelation. Stephen used it here when full of the Holy Ghost, and when speaking to the same council before which Jesus himself had foretold his coming in glory as the Son of man. Matt. 26: 64. Thus he reminded his judges that he whom they had crucified was already glorified. Notice also that it is as Son *of man*, that is, in his human nature, with all his human affections, feelings and sympathies, that Christ lives in heaven and carries on there his mediatorial work on behalf of his people.

57 *Then they cried out.* When the martyr had declared what vision he saw, there seems to have been an outburst of anger either from the members of the council or from the crowd of bystanders. It is not very clear from the narrative whether the trial went on with its regular formalities, ending with a vote of the council condemning Stephen, or whether at this point the members were carried beyond all bounds by their rage, breaking into a mob and hurrying the martyr forth to death. The latter seems to have been the course pursued. There is no indication in the account of any putting of the question to the court or of any formal vote of condemnation. The Sanhedrim had not at this time the power to inflict the death penalty, and the high priest remembering with what difficulty he had procured Pilate's approval in the case of the condemnation of Jesus, may have purposely incited the mob in Stephen's case to hurry him to execution without regard to legal forms. There are indications later on of some attention to the formalities of the law, as in the matter of witnesses, but it seems most probable that the first outbreak was tumultuary.

58 *Cast him out of the city.* According to law (Lev. 24: 14; Num. 15: 35; 1 Kings 21: 13) executions were to take place outside the camp or city. *Stoned him.* This was the ordinary way of executing the death penalty among the Jews, and was prescribed for blasphemy. Ex. 19: 13; Lev. 24: 16. Crucifixion was a Roman penalty. *The witnesses.* Two witnesses were required under Jewish law to convict any accused person, and on the execution of the sentence they were required to cast the first stones; afterward the people generally were to join. Deut. 17: 5–7. *Laid down their clothes.* The witnesses before casting the stones took off their outer garments, loose, flowing cloaks, so as to be unencumbered. This is the first mention of Saul. He was probably active in the persecution of Stephen. He is called a young man. If he was a member of the Sanhedrim, as appears probable (Acts 26: 10), he must have been above thirty. Men were called young in those days till forty or forty-five. The eastern gate of Jerusalem, opening on Kidron and Olivet, is now known as St. Stephen's Gate, from the tradition that it was through it that Stephen was hurried to execution just without the gate.

59 *Calling upon God.* Literally, "invoking." The word "God" is supplied, and in the Revised Version the words "the Lord" are supplied. The prayer was addressed to Jesus. Notice that it is fashioned after our Lord's prayer on the cross as he was dying, when he commended his spirit into the Father's hands. Luke 23: 46. Stephen saw Jesus standing up to receive him and prayed *him* to receive his departing spirit. We have a proof here of the divinity of Christ, as Stephen was full of the

Holy Ghost. Compare also Matt. 28: 17; Luke 24: 52; Heb. 1: 6; Rev. 5: 13, 14.

60 *He kneeled down.* While they were stoning him, and when he was dying, he raised himself to his knees, that he might spend his last breath in prayer for his murderers. In this prayer also he followed his Master. Luke 23: 34. It has often been said that probably to this prayer the Church is indebted for Paul. See 1 Tim. 1: 16. *He fell asleep.* An expression for death which belongs to Christianity. See Acts 13: 36; John 11: 11; 1 Cor. 11: 30; 15: 6, 18, 51; 1 Thess. 4: 13. Our word *cemetery* means a sleeping place. This expression for death implies hope of resurrection and immortality. In the Roman catacombs the inscriptions do not say of Christians that they *die*, but that they *sleep*.

Chap. 8: 1. *And Saul.* This sentence belongs to the narrative of Stephen's death and ought not to have been cut off from chap. 7. *Consenting.* Literally, *Taking pleasure in.* His conscience was so perverted that he looked upon Stephen's death as a proper punishment for what he considered a terrible crime. See Acts 22: 20. *At that time.* Literally, *That very day.* Stephen was not the only victim. A great and general persecution started with his death. It is probable that the mob went directly from stoning Stephen to the places where the Christians were accustomed to meet to disperse them. This sudden change of popular feeling is not incredible when we remember how quickly the hosannas were changed in Christ's case to "crucify him!" *All scattered abroad.* All were driven from the Christian assemblies and all prominent leaders were driven from the city. Many of the disciples could not flee. *Except the apostles.* Perhaps the persecution was not against them but against those who sympathized with Stephen's more radical teaching concerning the old dispensation.

2 *Devout men.* Whether Christians or godly Jews, not professedly believers, yet respecting and admiring Stephen, we cannot determine. The latter supposition seems probable, as the phrase is nowhere used of Christians. *Made great lamentation.* Literally, *A great beating*, that is, on the breast, according to the mourning customs of the Jews. There is a tradition that Gamaliel, as a secret believer, gave the sepulture in his own garden, and that he was afterward himself buried in the same tomb. Tradition also names Nicodemus in the same connection.

3 *As for Saul he made havoc.* Revised Version: *Laid waste.* See Gal. 1: 13. Saul was the bitterest leader of the persecution, but he acted also under authority from the rulers. Chap. 26: 10. The original word rendered, "made havoc," or "laid waste," is properly used, says Alford, of wild beasts or of hostile armies, devastating or ravaging. *Entering into every house.* Pressing his search for Christians, determined to exterminate the heresy. *Haling men and women.* Dragging them forth when found. The fact that even women were thus haled or "hauled" out of their houses shows the intense bitterness of Saul's spirit. See also chaps. 9: 2; 22: 4. *To prison.* For trial. Many of them were put to death. 22: 4; 26: 10. For other references to Saul's part in this persecution, see Acts 9: 13–21; Phil. 3: 6; 1 Tim. 1: 13; 1 Cor. 15: 9.

4 *They that were scattered.* The Christians driven out and dispersed by persecution. *Went everywhere preaching.* They did not flee away to hide, nor did the terror at home intimidate them into silence concerning Christ. They preached the gospel wherever they went. Thus the wrath of man was made to praise God.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

He . . . looked up stedfastly into heaven. If he had looked down he would not have seen what he did see; nor would he if he had looked at his angry judges sitting around him, their eyes flashing murder at him. He looked up and saw not the human rage and fury, but the calm, sweet peace of heaven. It is good always to look up and not down. There is a story of a man who once found a gold coin on the street; and ever after, as he walked, he kept his eyes down to the ground watching for coins. He found a number of gold and silver pieces during his life, but he missed seeing the blue skies and the bright stars and the lovely landscapes which he would have seen had he learned to look up and not down. We had better train our eyes to look up, for upward are our goal and our home and the angels and God himself and all fair and radiant visions.

I see the heavens opened. For one moment his eyes were opened to have a glimpse of the heavenly glory, but what he saw there was not something brought within sight just for the instant. The glory was no nearer him that moment than it had been before, but he was enabled just now to see it. Heaven is never far from any one of us—it is only "within the veil," and a veil is very thin. If our eyes were opened we should see any hour just what Stephen saw, for the same glory is as near each one of us all the time as it was to him. The prophet's servant needed only the opening of his

eyes to see a mountain full of horses and chariots of fire round about his master. It ought to cheer us to know that heaven is always so near.

Behold, I see . . . the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. Jesus is personally interested in his servants in this world. Though not visible to us we are all seen by him. He watches us from his throne. A mother, while her boy was at school where she could see him only at long intervals, hired a room in an upper story of a house opposite the school, from which she could look into his little bed-room and down on his play-ground, and there, unseen by him, she would sit for hours watching him. So Christ looks down upon each one of us every moment, although we do not see him. We are never out of his sight. He is deeply interested in all that we do and in all that befalls us. When the battle of Sedan was in progress, General Sheridan stood on the heights watching it. The Emperor William was also there watching. But the two men did not watch the battle with the same feelings. Sheridan watched only as a soldier, but the emperor watched as a father, for his sons were in the midst of the strife, and the cause of his country was involved in the contest. Jesus looks with love in his eye, for they are his children that are engaged in the fierce struggles, and they are the interests of his kingdom that are concerned. See a picture of his eager interest in his rising to his feet as if to watch more closely. Does any one say that Jesus is not concerned in his people's trials and sufferings?

They stoned Stephen. So they stopped him in the great work he was doing. They silenced his eloquent voice. His defence was unsuccessful; instead of listening to his words they were excited to greater fury by them and rushed upon him in a maddened mob. But his speech fell on the ears of one who never forgot it. Stephen died, but Saul, his persecutor, was converted. Stephen's preaching was stopped, but Saul was soon called to take up his unfinished work. There can be no doubt that we owe Paul to Stephen's martyrdom. This is an illustration of the way the Lord works in his providence. He takes man's wrath and compels it to work out his own glory. He takes man's efforts to destroy and makes them help to build up his kingdom. This ought to give us faith in these days when there is so much that seems destructive of the sacred things of Christian hope and belief.

Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. Then Stephen did not expect to die. He believed in a hereafter. His body was being mangled and crushed, but his spirit, his real self, would not be harmed. He saw on beyond death, and there was glory, and in the midst of the glory, Jesus standing up to receive him. That is a true picture of death, and what it means for every Christian. Beyond the mystery of dying, Jesus waits in the brightness of the Father's house to receive the departing spirit. Death is only going to him. There is a story of a chamois hunter in the Mer de Glace who fell into a deep crevasse in the ice, and after creeping along for a great distance, following a stream, came to the end, apparently, of the passage. The waters seethed and gurgled, and he knew there must be an outlet. He thought it might lead out to the open valley, and he knew that to stay where he was would be swift death. He plunged into the water—for a moment there was darkness—he was swept on in a wild torrent—then he was out in the light, in the lovely vale of Chamouny, with flowers and bird songs and beauty all about him. Here is a parable of dying. It is a moment's darkness and mystery, and then—heaven, the arms and bosom of Jesus, glory, eternal life. We ought to keep this picture in our minds and familiarize ourselves with this true view of Christian dying.

He fell asleep. What a picture of holy peace! In the midst of the rage and fury about him, he fell asleep. We think of a tired child creeping into the mother's bosom and falling asleep. Sleep is not a terrible experience, is nothing to be dreaded. We sleep when we are weary, and we are refreshed by it. Sleep is not the cessation of life. We expect to rise again after we have slept. As we part for the night to sleep we do not say farewell, but good-night, for we expect to wake and meet again in the morning. This beautiful scriptural designation of death tells therefore of life beyond, of resurrection, of immortality. We shall awake from this sleep of death, and our life shall go on again. We shall awake refreshed, lying down weak and weary, and rising again strong; lying down sick or old or deformed mayhap—rising well and young and radiant in heavenly beauty. Truly the Bible does not clothe death with terrors. That hideous picture—the skeleton with a scythe, is not a Scriptural representation. Death is painted for us in the word of God in the gentlest, kindliest guise, as a friend. We need only make sure that we are in Christ by faith, and then death's door is glory's portal.

They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word. They did not flee away and hide. They did not keep quiet about their faith lest persecution might again find them. They were driven away from Jerusalem but they could not be silenced. They had suf-

fered for Christ's sake, but they would not give him up. There are a great many thoughts started by this sentence. For one thing, it is impossible to stamp out the cause of Christ. Here is a little parable: There was a fire burning in the midst of a great forest. A few logs were piled together and the flames glowed hot. An angry storm looked down upon the fire and determined to put it out. Gathering all the winds it let them loose in a furious tempest upon the fire, but instead of putting it out, it only made it burn all the hotter, and then it scattered the embers and sparks and pieces of burning wood in every direction, so that instead of a little fire burning quietly in one place, the whole great forest was soon in flames. The application of this parable is obvious.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Faithfulness to the truth provokes enmity and bitterness. v. 54.

2. When dangers gather around Christ's servants he gives new grace. v. 55.

3. God gives visions of glory to his servants in their great trials to cheer them and make them strong to endure. v. 55.

4. The spiritual world is always near the believer, whether he sees it or not. v. 56.

5. Jesus has a deep personal interest in his servants in this world. v. 56.

6. When this world drives Christ's people out heaven opens to welcome them—there is always room there for them. v. 56.

7. The enemies of Christ may hush the witness, but they cannot stop his testimony. v. 58.

8. The martyr dies, but the persecutor is converted and takes up his unfinished work. v. 58.

9. Death to a Christian is but going to be with Christ. v. 59.

10. Death to a Christian is only falling asleep in the bosom of Jesus. v. 60.

11. Persecution only spreads, does not destroy the influences of grace. vs. 1–4.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

The approach to this lesson should be by the most rapid glance at last lesson, but by a more extended consideration of Stephen's speech. vs. 1–53. Call for the report of this topic assigned last Sabbath. What was the charge against Stephen? See chap. 6: 11–14. Four elements were in that charge. Blasphemous words—1. Against Moses. 2. Against God. 3. Against the temple. 4. Against the law. The high priest says, "Are these things so?" "Guilty or not guilty." Stephen's speech is an answer to these four charges. Show this briefly. How does Stephen speak of God? v. 2. And from first to last he reverently speaks of God. How does Stephen speak of Moses? He says Jehovah sent him as a ruler and a deliverer. v. 35. How does Stephen speak of the law? In v. 38 he calls it "the lively oracles," and in v. 53 he says the law was given by the disposition of angels." How does Stephen speak of the temple? In vs. 44–46 he says God instituted its worship. Where was there blasphemy in all this? What then is the drift of Stephen's historical argument? To prove that God never meant the ceremonial law of Moses or the temple to be the final or highest form of his religion. How came Stephen suddenly (in vs. 51–53) to break off his argument and turn to rebuke?

His whole speech culminated in showing that as the patriarchs rejected Joseph, as the Hebrews refused Moses and murdered the prophets, so had the Jews rejected, refused and murdered Jesus. Probably some sign of anger on the part of his hearers also led him abruptly to apply the truth to them.

STEPHEN'S MARTYRDOM.

Enlist every member of the class in picturing in words two scenes.

FIRST SCENE.

The council chamber of the Sanhedrim. Seventy-two priests and elders sitting as judges in a half circle, grave and learned men, long beards, turbans and flowing garments. The high priest sitting as president, venerable and dignified. At either end of the semicircle sit the scribes with their rolls of the law in their hands. There stands in the centre the prisoner, a look of heaven on his face. On his left hand stand his accusers, Saul of Tarsus possibly one of their leaders. But where is the advocate of the prisoner? Usually "the counsel for the defence" stood at the prisoner's right hand. Ps. 109: 31. But that place is empty here. Stephen has been pleading his own cause. His hearers listen until he quotes Isaiah in v. 49, to show that God needs no temple made with hands. Then their anger bursts out, and Stephen rebukes them. Vs. 51–53. Then fury seizes the high priest and all the judges. They gnash their teeth at him. Then, lo, Stephen's Advocate appears. Where is he? At his right hand? No, at *God's* right hand.

How is Jesus usually represented in heaven? *Sitting*. Ps. 110: 1; Heb. 10: 12. Why here represented as standing. In answer quote Chrysostom: "That he may show the attitude of help to the martyr. For of the Father also it is said, *Arise, O God*." The prisoner is pointing upward. He is telling what he sees. What are his words? v. 56. What had Jesus said to

that same council? Matt. 26: 64. See—What is that mob in the council chamber? What do they do with Stephen?

SCENE SECOND.

A crowd dragging a man out of the Sanhedrim hall. They rush through the streets. Great excitement in the city. "What is the matter?" cry the bystanders. A blasphemer! The mob pour through the gate, over against Gethsemane, down the Jehoshaphat ravine. There—What do they do? In what posture did Stephen die? In what spirit? What were his words? The word Stephen means crown. He obeyed the command of the golden text.

Apply.—Why do we need the martyr spirit? Have we the **Holy Spirit** Stephen had? Have we the **faith** he had? How can we look up and see Jesus standing ready to help us? 1 Pet. 1: 8. Have we Stephen's **assurance,** whenever and wherever we are called to die, to say, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit?" Have we the **love** for our enemies Stephen had for his? When others injure us do we pray, Lay not this sin to their charge? Will dying to us be falling asleep in Jesus?

Then question the class on Saul. What part in Stephen's martyrdom did he take? What effect probably had Stephen's death on him? Acts 22: 20. Quote Augustine's saying, "If Stephen had not prayed, the church had not had Paul." What was its immediate effect on Paul? v. 3.

Carefully announce the review lesson for next Sabbath, March 25, 1883. Tell the scholars precisely how you want them to prepare for it; that you will expect the titles, golden texts, etc., from every member of the class, not forgetting the Catechism. Write on a slip and hand to each scholar one of such questions as—

1. All you can learn of the book of the Acts.
2. A list of all the historical events in Acts to the close of chap. 7.
3. List of the doctrines found in Acts 1–7.
4. List of duties enjoined in Acts 1–7.
5. Persons mentioned by name in Acts 1–7.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Dear teachers, so many letters reach me questioning as to how I use the *Westminster Primary Leaf* in classes of quite little children, that I have determined to give a lesson composed largely of the questions which I shall probably ask my class. If you notice you will observe that, somewhere through the teaching, each question that appears on the *Primary Leaf* is woven in. My method is to prepare a *written* outline of all questions that I think I shall want to ask, *always* weaving the *Primary Leaf* questions into them and memorizing the list topically, that is, studying it sufficiently to be able to remember the thoughts that I wish to bring out. The wording is of little consequence, save as one tries to use as simple and direct language as possible. I cannot, of course, give you all the questions, simply the leading ones; and of course I must omit much explanation in detail, and simply hint at what comes between the questions. With this introduction I proceed to give you my blackboard outline, as it would appear at the close of my lesson.

Two red lines pointing upward, indicating prayer. A monument, with the name "STEPHEN." Just above the name, a picture of a crown; on the crown the words: "Faithful unto Death." A mark to represent Saul, made in the sin-color. You will remember that Stephen's name means a crown.

"What do we know about Stephen that we learned in last Sabbath's lesson?" (After this question is answered the teacher must give a hint of the story contained in the verses which come between the two lessons—of the speech Stephen made, and how the effect of this speech was to make the judges very angry with him.)

What is the name of this lesson? How many think they know the meaning of that word, Martyr?

Once I saw a dreadful sight. I stood at the window and looked out at a mad dog that went rushing by. His eyes were red and his mouth was all covered with foam, and he gnashed his teeth together! Should you suppose any man could ever remind me of that dog? Yet how did the men act who listened to Stephen? What had he been telling them? Think of the sight around him. Angry men gnashing their teeth at him, speaking angry words! Yet what did Stephen see? Think how glad he must have been to see Jesus again! But all people are not glad to hear about Jesus. What would you do now if you didn't want to hear a word I said? And when Stephen told the people what he saw how did they act? Describe to them in as vivid a manner as possible the scene in the court-room—the angry faces, the eyes that glared with hatred and murder upon Stephen. Remind them again of his face shining like that of an angel. Which of these faces, the judges' or Stephen's, is the more beautiful?

Let us all look at our pink papers. Who is this kneeling? What are the people doing to him? Describe what took place in the court-room, how the venerable judges grew so angry that they leaped from their seats and rushed toward Stephen and dragged him out into the

street and away out of the city and stoned him. Show some stones to the class and tell how he was killed.

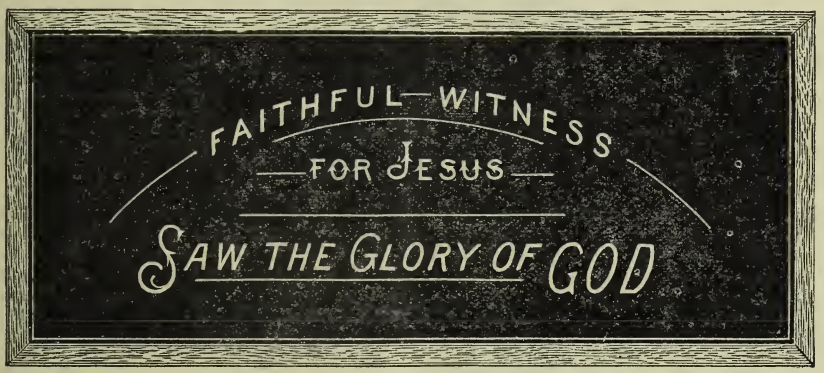
Here is a mark for a man who stood looking on. What was his name? What does the story tell us about him? Remember his name, please; we shall hear of him again. What does this red line stand for? Who prayed? Who can tell me for whom he prayed? Do you know of any one else who prayed for his enemies when he was dying? What did he say? What is this that I am making on the board? (Monument.) Whose shall it be? Did Stephen die? What are the words in the lesson which tell of it? God calls it "falling asleep" when one of his dear children dies. What am I making now? (Crown.) What is there in our lesson about a crown? Then what shall we print on Stephen's crown?

ILLUSTRATION.—A little boy in Africa learned to love Jesus. His chief told him to stop praying to Jesus and pray only to *him;* but the little boy said: "Jesus head man; me pray to him." Then the chief was angry, and took him out on the river in his boat, and told him he would throw him in if he would not promise never to pray to Jesus again. The little boy said: "Me can die; but Jesus head man, me *must* mind him." Then the chief threw him into the river, and when he tried to cling to the boat, cut his hands off with a knife, so that the little martyr's blood flowed out on the river. Once the chief leaned over and asked him if he would give up praying, but with his last gasp he said: "Jesus head man; me mind him." He was "faithful unto death."

This story is strictly true; it was told to me by Miss Dewsnap, the missionary, who recently died in Africa.

FINAL THOUGHT.—Call out ways in which *little* children may prove themselves faithful and so win crowns.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



HINTS.—Stephen being full of the Holy Ghost bore faithful testimony for Jesus. He was rewarded with a glance of his heavenly home, and "saw the glory of God" and Jesus standing to receive his spirit. Show what it is "to be faithful unto death," and the reward that awaits the faithful witness. Let the boys read John 16: 33, and the girls Ps. 37: 37. God's servants may expect to be rejected by men, but by their Master, never.

The points of this lesson may be used to work out and show to the school (which is a desirable way to use the blackboard) Stephen's triumph, as follows:

STEPHEN'S

TESTIMONY,
REJECTION,
INHERITANCE,
UNION WITH CHRIST,
MEEKNESS,
PIETY,
HEAVENLY HOME.

His *testimony:* Dwell on his faithfulness in uttering the truth, regardless of consequences. His *rejection:* Who rejected him? Why did they reject him? His *inheritance:* He had none on earth; he was driven out of this world. But what and where was his inheritance? [Illustrate by martyr who, when his enemies threatened to take away his possessions, said, "You cannot, for they are laid up in heaven."] His *union with Christ:* When Stephen was assailed Christ was assailed. Compare the Lord's words to Saul (chap. 9: 4), "Why persecutest thou *me?*" His *meekness:* See his prayer for his murderers. His *piety:* Mark his committal of his spirit to Christ. His *heavenly home:* He was allowed to look into it.

Directions for Coloring.—"Faithful witness," white; "For Jesus," light blue, red shade; "Saw the glory of God," orange, shaded heavily with white (a beautiful effect).

Lesson XII. **QUARTERLY REVIEW.** *March 25th, 1883.*

[*From the Westminster Quarterly.*]

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 1 : 1–26.
T. Acts 2 : 1–47.
W. Acts 3 : 1–26.
Th. Acts 4 : 1–37.
F. Acts 5 : 1–42.
S. Acts 6 : 1–7 : 29.
S. Acts 7 : 30–8 : 4.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all."—Acts 4 : 33.

REVIEW CHART.

Lessons in Acts.	*Title.*	*Topic.*	*Golden Text.*	*Lesson Plan.*
1.—1 : 1 – 14.	The Ascending Lord.	Christ's Departure from Earth.	And when he had spoken these. 1 : 9.	1. The last meeting. 2. The parting promise. 3. The departing Lord. 4. The waiting disciples.
2.—2 : 1–16.	The Descending Spirit.	The Baptism of the Holy Ghost.	And they were all filled. 2 : 4.	1. Strange signs. 2. New power. 3. Great wonder. 4. Prophetic fulfillment.
3.—2 : 37–47.	The Believing People.	Belief in Christ gives Joy.	Then they that gladly rec'd. 2 : 41.	1. Anxious inquirers. 2. Earnest confessors. 3. Faithful disciples.
4.—3 : 1–11.	The Healing Power.	Christ the Great Healer.	Then shall the lame. Isa. 35 : 6.	1. The helpless cripple. 2. The mighty name. 3. The wondering witnesses.
5.—3 : 12–21.	The Prince of Life.	Light and Life in Christ.	In him was life. John 1 : 4.	1. The rejected Messiah. 2. The name of power. 3. The hope of salvation.
6.—4 : 1–14.	None Other Name.	Christ the Only Saviour.	Neither is there salvation. 4 : 12.	1. The arrest of the apostles. 2. Their arraignment by the council. 3. Their noble answer.
7.—4 : 18–31.	Christian Courage.	The Grandeur of Christian Courage.	If God be for us. Rom. 8 : 31.	1. The answer of courage. 2. The refuge of courage. 3. The prayer of courage.
8.—5 : 1–11.	Ananias and Sapphira.	Lying unto God.	Lying lips are. Prov. 12 : 22.	1. A fearful sin. 2. A terrible judgment. 3. A mighty effect.
9.—5 : 17–32.	Persecution Renewed.	We must Obey God Rather than Men.	We ought to obey God rather. 5 : 29.	1. The wrath of man. 2. The power of God. 3. The charge of the priest. 4. The answer of faith.
10.—6 : 1–15.	The Seven Chosen.	Helpers in Church Work.	Seven men of honest report. 6 : 3.	1. Helpers needed. 2. Helpers chosen. 3. Stephen arraigned.
11.—7 : 54–8 : 1–4.	The First Christian Martyr.	Dying for Christ.	Be thou faithful. Rev. 2 : 10.	1. The martyrdom of Stephen. 2. The persecution of the Church.
12.—1 : 1–8 : 4.	Review.	The Church in Jerusalem.	And with great power. Acts 4 : 33.	

SUGGESTIONS FOR REVIEW.

Our lesson to-day is a review of the first seven chapters of the Acts of the Apostles. It contains an account of the formation and growth of the Church in the city of Jerusalem from its beginning until its temporary dissolution and the dispersion of its members on the martyrdom of Stephen. All the events occurred in the city of Jerusalem. They cover a period of about seven years.

The lesson opens with two introductory events —the ascension of the risen Saviour, and the choice of Matthias to fill the place of Judas. After the ascension, the disciples for ten days wait in united prayer for the promise of the Father. Then follow the events of the Pentecost—the outpouring of the Spirit and the gift of tongues; Peter's first sermon and the conversion and baptism of three thousand, with a beautiful picture of the newly-formed church. A wonderful miracle of healing brings together a multitude of people, to whom Peter preaches with great effect. Then follows the first assault upon the infant church, which ends in a new triumph of truth over its enemies. The apostles continue their work with constantly increasing boldness and zeal, and with a rapid growth in the number and strength of the disciples. The sin of Ananias and Sapphira, committed under the guise of worship and consecration, is followed by speedy detection and punishment. Persecution is soon renewed, but ends in another triumph of the new faith, and a further enlargement of the Church. A new danger now threatens from dissensions within, which is happily removed by the prompt and wise action of the apostles. Seven deacons are appointed as helpers in church work. Among them is Stephen, a man full of the Holy Ghost, of great wisdom and earnest piety. His miracles and preaching so excite the wrath of Jewish bigots that he is arrested, and, after a mock trial, stoned to death, thus gaining, first among the disciples, the honor of a martyr's crown. His death is the beginning of a fierce persecution which scatters the Church into distant regions and threatens its destruction. But instead of destroying it the result is the sending of the gospel into all parts of the known world by the dispersion of the disciples, who went away from Jerusalem, not to hide from danger, but to preach.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

[*From the Westminster Quarterly.*]

Introductory.—What do you know about the author of the book of Acts? For what purpose was it written? Into what two parts may it be divided? How is the first of these parts sub-divided?

Lesson I. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? Where did Jesus last meet his disciples? What promise did he give them? What command? What then took place? What did they do?

II. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? What signs were given to the disciples on the day of Pentecost? With what were they filled? What new power was given them? How did this affect the multitude? What did Peter say to the multitude?

III. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? Whom did Peter and John see at the temple gate? What did Peter say to him? What effect followed? What did the man do? How did this miracle affect the people?

IV. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? What was the effect of Peter's preaching? What was Peter's answer? What encouraging promise did he give them? How many were baptized? What did these new disciples do?

V. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? With what crime did Peter charge the people? How has God honored his Son? How had the lame man been cured? What did he exhort them to do? How did he encourage them to repent?

VI. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? By whom were Peter and John arrested? Before whom were they arraigned? What question were they asked? What was their answer? What further did they say?

VII. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? What command did the council give to Peter and John? What was their reply? Where did they go when released? For what did they all pray? How was their prayer answered?

VIII. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? What did Ananias do? What did Peter say to him? Who was his companion in sin? How were they both punished? What was the effect of this judgment?

IX. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? What did the rulers do with the apostles? How were they delivered? What was done the next day? Of what were they accused? What was their answer?

X. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? Of what did the Grecian disciples complain? What remedy was provided? What is said of Stephen? What false charges were brought against him? What was his appearance before the council?

XI. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? How was Stephen strengthened to suffer death? What did his enemies do? How did he pray for himself? How did he pray for his murderers? What followed this?

General Questions.—What have you learned about the ascension of our Lord? The first meetings for prayer? The day of Pentecost? The preaching of Peter? The first Christian baptism? Signs and wonders wrought by Peter? Further effects of his preaching? The apostles' imprisonment? Their release? Their boldness for Christ? The growth of the Church? The sin of Ananias and Sapphira? Their punishment? Renewed persecution? Its effect on the Church? Internal jealousies? The appointment of deacons? The arrest of Stephen? His defence? His martyrdom? The dispersion of the disciples?

What have you learned about Christian unity? The baptism of the Holy Ghost? The power of Jesus' name? Life in Christ? The only Saviour? Christian courage? Falsehood and hypocrisy? Obedience to God? Dying for Christ?

CATECHISM REVIEW.

1. What is the chief end of man?
2. What rule hath God given us to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him?
3. What do the Scriptures principally teach?
4. What is God?
5. Are there more Gods than one?
6. How many persons are there in the Godhead?
7. What are the decrees of God?
8. How doth God execute his decrees?
9. What is the work of creation?
10. How did God create man?
11. What are God's works of providence?

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

Shall the Quarterly Review be conducted solely by the superintendent with the whole school? Or shall the teachers teach the review first to their classes, and the superintendent afterward conduct it as a general exercise? To the first question I say No; to the second, Yes.

1. The individual teacher alone knows what his class has learned. He only knows the precise phases of the lessons he has taught, and consequently he only knows what things to go over in the review.

2. The work of the Sabbath-school is the work of the teacher, the individual Christian man or woman before the class. To dispense even for one Sabbath with this individual influence and personal power of all the teachers upon their classes will prove a sad loss and *mistake*.

3. The teacher of each class alone can adapt the practical lessons of the review to the special needs of his scholars. The review must have a living power over the heart and life of the scholar. It is not a mere exercise of the memory. It is not simply an intellectual effort. The teacher alone knows his scholars sufficiently to impress the spiritual import of the review.

4. Only the teacher can make the review a test of the exact knowledge of the individual scholar. In a general exercise the superintendent cannot stop either to **test** or **correct** mistakes of individuals.

5. For the superintendent's sake the teachers should first teach the review. If the superintendent has wisely disclosed to the teachers assembled in the teachers' meeting the plan of his general review, each teacher can drill his class on that plan, besides making his own special additions and adaptations. Only this previous work of the teacher can insure entire success to the superintendent's review.

The usual opening and closing exercises should be shortened this Sabbath, to give time for both teacher's and superintendent's review.

How shall the Teacher Conduct this Quarterly Review?

I. A review is **to test and correct** the class' knowledge of the lessons passed over. It will also test and correct the value of the teacher's work for the past three months. Therefore question carefully at first on every lesson. Mark which scholars recite the titles, golden texts, lesson truths and facts and the answers of the Shorter Catechism. Kindly aid timid and forgetful scholars, and correct their misunderstanding of lessons.

II. A review is **to repeat and emphasize** things taught. Therefore, hesitate not to **go over again and again** all the particulars contained in the review chart, including the Shorter Catechism.

III. A review is to **give fresh views of truth.** When you have watched the building of a stately church day by day, you have seen every row of stone, every timber frame, every window and arch slowly added. You have seen the tower and spire gradually rise. But when at last all is finished, and you stand at a distance and see the bright sunlight fall on the building, you see more than each row of stone, each timber frame and window, and arch and part of tower and spire. You catch the meaning and feel the grand impression **of the church as a whole.**

So after laboriously teaching truth after truth, fact after fact, duty after duty, for the last Quarter, to-day you stand in the light of God's Spirit and look upon your divine building. You see more than separate truths or facts or duties. You catch the glory of the whole impression of the first seven chapters in Acts.

What is the totality of these lessons? You can use the blackboard, or simply paper, writing

FIRST.

THE ACTS OF THE RISEN JESUS.

1. Ascends to the Father.
2. Pours out his Spirit.
3. Wins faithful disciples.
4. Makes the lame to walk.
5. Offers forgiveness and refreshing.
6. Gives boldness to his apostles.
7. Gives renewed courage.
8. Disciplines his Church.
9. Delivers his persecuted apostles.
10. Adds new officers to his Church.
11. Receives his first martyr.

SECOND.

THE CHURCH AT JERUSALEM.

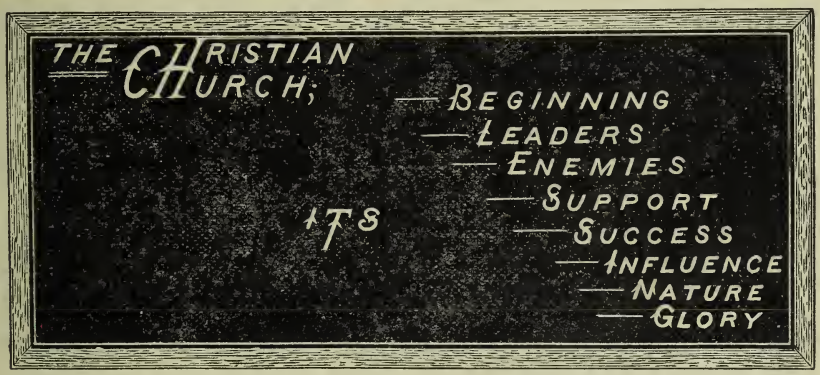
1. Waiting for the promise.
2. Baptized with the Holy Ghost.
3. Gathers converts.
4. Heals the lame.
5. Proclaims forgiveness of sin.
6. Bold in testimony.
7. Courageous in danger.
8. Purified by judgment.
9. Persecuted yet triumphant.
10. More complete in organization.
11. Crowned by Stephen's martyrdom.

How are all these lessons acts of Jesus? Acts 1: 1. In what sense are they all concerning the acts of the Church? How does this history illustrate Mark 16: 20? What practical lesson is ours for Lesson I.? For Lesson II.? etc.

Points in the lesson for Sabbath, April 1, 1883, to be assigned:

1. The Samaritans, and Philip's preaching among them.
2. Eastern sorcery.
3. Miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost in the early Church. See 1 Cor. 12.
4. The sin of simony—the origin of the word and its meaning.
5. True and false repentance.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



BLACKBOARD REVIEW HINTS.—The result to be desired in this, as in all reviews, is to ascertain what is remembered of the interesting lessons we have been studying during the Quarter. The best plan is that which will accomplish this result. By word pictures, as suggested in previous review hints, we may refresh the memory of the scholars, and draw out the title, golden text and central thought of each lesson, thus preparing the way for the general review outline. I am still of the opinion that, as a rule, the review conducted by the superintendent from the desk, with varied exercises occupying the entire session, will accomplish the best results. The *establishment* and *extension* of the Christian Church is the general theme. Around this theme I shall build my review, and after drawing out the titles, texts and central thoughts from the school as suggested above, endeavor to show the blessing to the world of the Christian Church, using the blackboard as below. The time occupied should not be long, but the preparation must be thorough. The leader must know his lessons, and without notes or books must secure the attention and interest of the school. The attention of superintendents is invited to the excellent review hints on another page as as helpful in the use of this plan.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

A successful primary teacher, whose name I have forgotten, told me that she sometimes conducted the review by appointing, on the previous Sabbath, twelve little people, each to take a given lesson, and give as good an account of it as possible, recalling the practical lesson taught, the object, if any, presented, and the blackboard work connected with it. The rest of the class were to be on the alert to supply any omissions or correct any errors, and all were to join with the leading scholar in repeating the golden text. Four hymns were also selected from the Quarter's work, to be introduced during the progress of the review. It occurs to me that such an exercise, well managed, might be made profitable and enjoyable. Of course the teacher in this case must be prepared to help the little reviewers with suggestive questions occasionally, and must often add a tender personal word to the story. The mistake to guard against would be in letting the voluble children occupy too much time to the exclusion of the later lessons. One way of managing this would be to allow (say two minutes to each child) and one for the class to make additions or corrections. Incidentally, you might be able in this way to teach valuable lessons on condensation, which, judging from many grown people, is a branch of education that was once sadly neglected.

In all reviews there is a temptation to collect a mass of *facts* without aiming to make a tender application of any of them. As leader, I should, whatever the method employed, be prepared with one thought of marked prominence in the Quarter's work to press home to little hearts. For instance, in this first Quarter's closing I should try to impress the thought of the *faithful witnesses for Christ* and to awaken the desire to be counted among them.

REVIEW EXERCISE.*

Bell.—Perfect silence.

SCRIPTURE SENTENCES.

Superintendent.—This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

School.—I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go unto the house of the Lord.

Supt. and Teachers.—Blessed is the man whom thou choosest and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts; we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.

Girls.—How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!

Boys.—We have thought of thy loving kindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple.

All.—Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, they will be still praising thee.

Singing. –

With joy we hail the sacred day
Which God hath called his own;
With joy the summons we obey
To worship at his throne.

Thy chosen temple, Lord! how fair!
Where willing vot'ries throng
To breathe the humble, fervent prayer
And pour the choral song.

Prayer.—Closing with the Lord's Prayer.

RECITATION OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

Singing.—Hymn 155 (Pres. Hymnal):

Christ the Lord is risen to-day,
Sons of men and angels say:
Raise your joys and triumphs high,
Sing, ye heavens, and earth, reply.

Love's redeeming work is done,
Fought the fight, the battle won:
Lo! our Sun's eclipse is o'er;
Lo! he sets in blood no more.

Vain the stone, the watch, the seal;
Christ hath burst the gates of hell!
Death in vain forbids his rise;
Christ hath opened Paradise!

Lives again our glorious King:
Where, O death, is now thy sting?
Once he died our souls to save:
Where thy victory, O grave?

Soar we now where Christ has led,
Following our exalted head;
Made like him, like him we rise:
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies.

REVIEW QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

LESSON I. **Supt.**—What parting command did our Saviour give his apostles?

School.—That they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father. 1: 4.

Supt.—What was the promise?

School.—Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. 1: 5.

Supt.—How is his ascension described?

School.—While they beheld he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. 1: 9.

II. **Supt.**—How was the parting promise fulfilled?

School.—They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. 2: 4.

III. **Supt.**—What question did the people ask the apostles?

School.—Men and brethren, what shall we do? 2: 37.

Supt.—What was Peter's answer?

School.—Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. 2: 38.

IV. **Supt.**—What did Peter say to the lame man?

School.—In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. 3: 6.

Supt.—What did the lame man do?

School.—He leaping up stood, and walked and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. 3: 8.

Singing.—Hymn 943:

Come, let us sing of Jesus,
While hearts and accents blend;
Come, let us sing of Jesus,
The sinner's only Friend;
His holy soul rejoices,
Amid the choirs above,
To hear our youthful voices
Exulting in his love.

We love to sing of Jesus,
Who died our souls to save;
We love to sing of Jesus,
Triumphant o'er the grave;
And in our hour of danger
We'll trust his love alone
Who once slept in a manger,
And now sits on the throne.

V. **Supt.**—What power of Jesus did Peter say had produced this wonderful effect?

School.—His name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know. 3: 16.

VI. **Supt.**—Why did the rulers arrest the apostles?

School.—Being grieved that they taught the people and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. 4: 2.

Supt.—What effect upon the council had Peter's defence?

School.—Beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. 4: 14.

VII. **Supt.**—What command did they give the apostles?

School.—They commanded them not to speak at all nor to teach in the name of Jesus. 4: 18.

Supt.—What did Peter and John reply?

School.—We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. 4: 20.

VIII. **Supt.**—What was the sin of Ananias and Sapphira?

School.—He sold a possession and kept back a part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet. 5: 2.

Supt.—What did Peter say to him?

School.—Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie unto the Holy Ghost? 5: 3.

Supt.—How was he punished?

School.—Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost. 5: 5.

Singing.—Hymn 304:

Rock of ages, cleft for me!
Let me hide myself in thee;
Let the water and the blood
From thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure;
Cleanse me from its guilt and power.

Not the labors of my hands
Can fulfill thy law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears for ever flow,
All for sin could not atone:
Thou must save, and thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring;
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress,
Helpless, look to thee for grace,
Foul, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Saviour! or I die.

IX. **Supt.**—How were the apostles delivered from prison?

School.—The angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors and brought them forth. 5: 19.

Supt.—What did the high priest say to them when they were again arrested?

School.—Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? 5: 28.

Supt.—What did the apostles reply?

School.—We must obey God rather than men. 5: 29.

X. **Supt.**—What false witness was borne against Stephen before the council?

School.—This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place and the law. 6: 13.

Supt.—What was his appearance when thus accused?

School.—All that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel. 6: 15.

XI. **Supt.**—What was done with him?

School.—They stoned Stephen, calling upon God and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. 7: 59.

Supt.—How did he die?

School.—He kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep. 7: 60.

Singing.—Hymn 223:

Must Jesus bear the cross alone
And all the world go free?
No; there's a cross for every one,
And there's a cross for me.

The consecrated cross I'll bear
Till death shall set me free,
And then go home my crown to wear,
For there's a crown for me.

Upon the crystal pavement, down
At Jesus piercéd feet,
Joyful, I'll cast my golden crown,
And his dear name repeat.

Oh, precious cross! oh, glorious crown!
Oh, resurrection day!
Ye angels, from the stars come down,
And bear my soul away.

Review-drill on titles, topics, golden texts, Catechism, etc., with whatever further exercises or addresses may be provided.

Singing.—Hymn 518:

Am I a soldier of the cross,
A follower of the Lamb,
And shall I fear to own his cause
Or blush to speak his name?

Must I be carried to the skies
On flowery beds of ease,
While others fought to win the prize,
And sailed through bloody seas?

Are there no foes for me to face?
Must I not stem the flood?
Is this dark world a friend to grace,
To help me on to God?

Sure I must fight if I would reign;
Increase my courage, Lord!
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
Supported by thy word.

CLOSING SENTENCES.

Supt.—Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.

School.—In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted.

Supt.—O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.

All.—Amen.

Books and papers delivered as classes retire.

---

* Extra copies of this Review Exercise will be furnished at 50 cents per hundred, on application to the Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1334 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.

ABOUT NEW BOOKS.

..Dr. Mark Hopkins writes of one of our Board's books: "Having read a work by the Rev. Samuel Hutchings, entitled THE MODE OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM, I have pleasure in saying that it seems to me kindly in spirit, attractive in manner, thorough in research, and conclusive in its argument." Price, $1.00.

..THE PROHIBITION WAVE is a piece of music in the interests of the temperance reform. Words by Dr. J. W. Chisholm, music by Prof. S. T. Wallace. Published by O. Ditson & Co. Price, 30 cents.

..The ten-cent tractate, entitled THE SOCIABLE, THE ENTERTAINMENT AND THE BAZAR, by the Rev. Alfred E. Myers, is exciting a good deal of attention. Some think that it is a little too strong, but all admit that it strikes fair blows at unquestionable evils prevalent in our churches. It will not hurt us to look the questions raised fairly in the face, and to ask what is right in these matters. Presbyterian Board. Price, 10 cents.

..The Century Company announces for immediate publication in this country, from advance sheets, the new edition of the IMPERIAL DICTIONARY, a work which has been accepted in Great Britain for more than a quarter of a century as a standard lexicon of the English language. It contains about 130,000 words, with 3,000 illustrations. As the real meanings of words and the grammatical constructions into which they enter are generally most clearly shown by means of illustrative quotations, vast numbers of these are given. The encyclopædic character of this dictionary is said to add greatly to its usefulness as a book of reference. It does not confine itself merely to giving the meanings of words; it gives also, as a rule, some account of the things to which words are applied. The work will be issued here in four volumes of convenient size, each containing 700 to 800 pages. The price in this country will be lower than that in England.

..HISTORY OF INDIAN MISSIONS ON THE PACIFIC COAST. By Rev. Myron Eells. We have here a plain statement of facts from the pen of one who was born amid the work of which he now writes. The book tells of the devoted and self-denying labors of missionaries among the Indians in Oregon, Washington and Idaho, and of the results of their noble work. It cannot but be of interest to those who desire the welfare of the Indian. Philadelphia: American Sunday-school Union. 12mo, 320 pp., illustrated. Price, $1.25.

..ON THE WAY HOME. By the author of "Through the Winter." The author says that she offers this story to young Sunday-school girls of the country with the hope that it will help them to recognize, in all the changes of their lives, the loving purpose and beautiful design of their Father in heaven; to lead them by all the windings and turnings of their way, more surely homeward; that is—heavenward. Philadelphia: American Sunday-school Union. 390 pp. Price, $1.50.

..DANTE'S INFERNO. Translated by the Rev. Henry Francis Cary, M.A. Illustrated with the designs of Gustave Doré. Dante's wonderful genius is becoming more and more recognized as his works are growing familiar. Of Doré also nothing need be said, further than that he is never so much at home as when treating just such subjects as this, in which his wierd pencil finds congenial work. However, his illustrations of the Inferno are not his best. This new edition is well gotten up. The illustrations are large, full-paged, and usually well printed. Cary's translation of the poem is given, with valuable notes, critical and explanatory. There is also a short life of Dante. New York: Cassell, Petter, Galpin & Co. Large 4to, pp. 183. Price, $6.00.

..All Bible students will hail with pleasure the appearance of the second of the new series of THE LAND AND THE BOOK, by the Rev. William Thomson, D.D. The first volume, "Southern Palestine," took up the Holy Land in the south; this second volume, "Central Palestine and Phœnicia," starts at Bethlehem, passes through upper Judea, Samaria and Galilee, and closes with Tyre and Sidon on the Phœnician shore. The characteristics of these books are such as might be looked for from the author's close, prolonged and intimate acquaintance with the land, where he has spent forty-five years, together with his thorough knowledge of the Bible, of which he has been a life-long student and teacher. But to these qualifications he adds a glowing enthusiasm which imparts to his narrative an atmosphere of delightful warmth. His volumes are alive with the spirit of his subject—"the land and the book." Indeed, there is no work that can take their place in the library of the Christian. An index of names and subjects and one of Scripture texts add immensely to the value of these volumes to the student and teacher. The Harper Brothers, who publish the work, have been most generous in their outlay for engravings and maps, of which "Central Palestine" contains one hundred and thirty, on the truthfulness of which the greatest care has been bestowed by Dr. Thomson, and the workmanship of which is of a high order. Paper and print also are admirable. 8vo, pp. xxiv, 689; illustrated. Price, $6.00.

Robert Carter & Brothers, New York, send the following:

..THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE. A series of lessons on the Acts of the Apostles. By William Arnot. A new edition of this well-known book has been brought out for use in connection with the Sunday-school lessons. It is not a commentary on the Acts, but presents the practical teachings in a form that will prove very suggestive to teachers and others. 464 pp., 12mo. Price, $1.50.

..SEEKETH NOT HER OWN; or, The Workers of La Garaye. By Sidney Mary Sitwell. The scene of the story is laid in France, and its aim is to exhibit the power of Christian love in overcoming the barriers that separate rich and poor. It is full of good things, and is an excellent Sunday-school book. Price, $1.25.

..CRIPPLE JESS, THE HOP PICKER'S DAUGHTER, by Louisa Marsten, is a tender little story, showing how the love of Christ can brighten the gloomiest life. Price, $1.00.

..JILL AND JACK OF OUR OWN DAY. By Mrs. Stanley Leathes. The persons introduced are quite ordinary, but with simple and hearty goodness. The book is pleasantly written and interesting to little people and all who love them. Price, $1.00.

..LONELY JACK AND HIS FRIENDS AT SUNNYSIDE. By Emily Brodie. Written to show to children the blessedness of giving and doing good, and to inspire them toward unselfishness. Price, $1.25.

..HEROIC ADVENTURE. Chapters in Exploration and Discovery. The contents are: "Schweinfurth and the Heart of Africa;" "Prejevalsky in Eastern Asia;"

THE WESTMINSTER TEACHER.

VOL. XI. APRIL, 1883. No. 4.

—The kind of Christianity the Bible teaches is that which flows over the rim of the Sabbath and runs down through all the days of the week, making men and women better, holier, purer, truer and more unselfish.

—A tender little item says that in Auburn recently a rosebud from a garden was placed in the hand of a dead child. Before the funeral the bud gradually unfolded, and at the time of the service had become a flower. The incident is very suggestive. Just in the same way had the life of that little child opened from a bud into a blooming flower in passing from earth to heaven.

—Living for Christ becomes very simple and beautiful when we understand it. A year ago a little child planted a flower in a box, saying that it was for Jesus. She watched it carefully as it grew, never forgetting that it was "for Jesus." When it began to bloom she carried the box to the room of an invalid and left it there, blooming "for Jesus." Who doubts that the Master accepted it?

—In this number there is much of interest for our readers. Rev. Meade C. Williams writes intelligently of the missing verse in one of our lessons; Dr. C. A. Dickey has a very suggestive article on the work of human hands in conversion; Israel P. Black gives valuable suggestions to primary class teachers; Dr. R. M. Patterson gathers up in one view the conversions in the Acts. It will be noticed that all but one of these articles refer to the current lessons.

FLOWER CULTURE IN SABBATH-SCHOOLS.—The following communication from Mr. William Sidebottom, Chairman of the Philadelphia Superintendents' Committee on flower culture, will have an interest for many of our readers. Wherever the matter has been fairly tried the results have been very satisfactory:

"The communications received by you in answer to an article on Sabbath-school flower culture, published in your columns, February, 1882, were placed by you in the hands of a committee of the Philadelphia Presbyterian Sabbath-school Superintendents' Association. Mr. John Wanamaker, President of the Association, offered to give without cost four hundred packets of flower seeds to each school that would accept the conditions, viz.: (1) To hold a midsummer display; (2) offer prizes, and (3) make a report of the result to the committee. Flowers were thus supplied to 616 schools, 250,000 packets of seeds being distributed, in thirty-nine States and territories (including Canada). Reports have been received to date from only one hundred and twenty-one schools. Of these, ninety-one were successful, and many encouraging things are said of the results; seventeen were partial and thirteen entire failures. In Philadelphia the superintendents of some of our schools, not embraced in the above statement, gave most encouraging verbal reports of their success, recognizing floriculture as a means of grace. They will continue the annual seed-planting and midsummer displays.

"The committee in closing up their work take pleasure in announcing that at their request David Landreth & Sons, Philadelphia, will continue to supply Sabbath-schools with seeds at half the regular rate, viz., at 2½ cents a paper, postage included. The Superintendents' Association endorse this proposal, and recommend it to all Sabbath-schools desiring to procure flowers. Circulars giving full information will be sent by the Messrs. Landreth to all who apply."

The Missing Verse in the Eighth of Acts.

BY REV. MEADE C. WILLIAMS.

BY comparing the parallel versions of the lesson for April 8th, as given in the TEACHER for this month, it will be seen that the New Testament Revisers have omitted the 37th verse—"And Philip said, if thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest. And he answered and said I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Doubtless there are many Bible readers who have not yet become so accustomed to the changes made by the new version that they can observe this particular omission without a somewhat startled feeling. We owe it, however, not only to the present stage of textual study, but also to our reverential and *jealous* sense of what is God's word that we give candid and conscientious attention to all such points as this. It will be found that our old cherished beliefs and teachings have nothing to fear from the closest sifting of textual sources which has

been made, or from the slight pruning of the authorized version which has resulted.

There are 7,968 verses in the New Testament. The preservation and transmission of all this material during the many centuries past has been the work of man, embraced of course in that general scheme of divine providence which encompasses all the movements of time. It is not strange if in that long period, and in the multiplying of copies by manual process for the first 1,400 years, some few errors may have occurred; errors, not in God's word, but in "man's work in connection with God's word." But here is our deepened confidence that after years of the most minute investigation, and the thorough sifting and comparison of all parts of documentary authority, we find that of the nearly 8,000 verses of the whole book, those which have been omitted or marked as doubtful, are entirely inconsiderable in number, and that their omission occasions not the loss nor the doubtfulness of any doctrine or precept, or any single important fact.

The leading manuscript authorities for the omission of this verse from the text, as given by Dean Alford in his Greek Testament are the following (placed in what may probably be considered the approximate order in the estimate of the Revisers): B (Vatican), Aleph (Sinaitic), L (Regius), C (Ephraem) A (Alexandrine). Besides other uncial MSS. the most of the early versions are also without it. I quote a part of Westcott & Hort's note concerning the passage: "Though not contained in the Greek MS. chiefly used by Erasmus, and found only by him in the margin of another, he inserted it as 'having been omitted by the carelessness of scribes;' it is absent from the best MSS. of the Latin vulgate, as well as from the Syriac vulgate and the Egyptian versions; but it soon found its way from the old Latin into the late text of the vulgate, with which alone Erasmus was conversant. From his editions it passed into the 'Received Text,' though it forms no part of the Syrian text." While some ancient copies of inferior authority do contain it, there is a diversity of form both in the words themselves and in their order, which, in a disputed passage, as Dr. Addison Alexander says in his note here, "is commonly considered a suspicious circumstance."

Consider what this omission does and what it does not imply.

1. It does not imply a rejection, or the slightest doubt of the *sentiment* contained in the verse. The terms "if thou believest," &c., is the very touchstone of Christian experience; while the confession, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," whether actually altered then by the eunuch or not, is the very essence of the New Testament teaching.

2. It does not imply that what is narrated in the omitted verse did not *actually take place*. Even supposing Luke did not write it, it is very likely that just such a colloquy was held.

3. It does not imply that this, as a correct report of what passed between Philip and the eunuch, may not *have been current* among the early fathers. The sacred writers may have made epitomes only of some incidents, where cotemporaries may have had fuller or supplementary accounts.

4. All that *is* implied, in case the omission be acknowledged, is simply this, that the Holy Ghost did not lead the author of that part of Scripture known as the "book of Acts" to record this particular part.

Perhaps some one may here interpose as follows: If the teaching of the verse is gospel truth; if it is likely such words, or their substance, passed between the two men, and the report was current among the early Christians as actual history, why then question its right to a place in this chapter? The reply to this brings out the difference between authenticity and genuineness. A statement may have one and not the other. If in some copy of the New Testament we should find an account of the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem and the visit of the magi, purporting to belong to *Mark's* Gospel, we would say those narratives are *authentic*, that is, entirely true; but are not *genuine*, that is, they were not written by the author of the second Gospel. It would not do to allow them to stand as part of Mark simply because they were true. And omitting them from that portion of the New Testament would not in the least invalidate the story of the Saviour's infancy. Likewise the teaching contained in verse 37, if lost from the 8th of Acts, is not lost from the New Testament.

God's Work in Human Hands.

BY CHARLES A. DICKEY, D.D.

WE will lose the best lessons of Saul's conversion if we fail to observe carefully the work that Christ entrusted to human hands. The display of divine power at the gate of Damascus is magnificent; but the immediate and successful employment of human means for the completion of the work deserves our close attention.

We could hardly conceive a case in which there would seem less room or need for human agency. Christ had done so much by the sudden manifestation of himself; Saul was so deeply convicted, and so thoroughly convinced, and so

sincere in his resolution to serve the Lord, that it seemed as if there was nothing more needful to complete this conversion. But we soon learn that Christ had left a work for a human helper; that he had chosen his assistant, and would direct his work. He could have followed Saul through Straight street as well as stop him at the gate of Damascus, but he preferred to send Ananias on this errand. He could have gone himself to the house of Judas to speak to the blind suppliant; he could have put his own hands on Saul's dark eyes to restore the sight that his startling appearance had blinded; he could have completed by direct miracle what miracle had already begun. Human help was not solicited because divine power was exhausted. Natural means were not employed because miraculous means would no longer avail.

But, however unnecessary we may regard human hands in the completion of this work of God, the fact is conspicuous that Christ, still guiding by plain directions, committed the completion of Saul's preparation for his work to human hands. Miracles should blind and bewilder the blasphemer, but the touch of human hands should restore his sight and bring him to the consciousness of Christian life.

Leaving Saul to feel his way into the city to find a place to pray, with the simple promise that somebody would be sent to show him his duty, Christ withdrew himself and commanded Ananias to go in his name and verify Saul's vision by "putting his hands on him that he might receive his sight." Christ had shown Saul power enough; he wanted to give him for consolation a revelation of his compassion. It was time to close the awful revelation that convicted and condemned the sinner. Saul had been enough "astonished," he had "trembled" enough. Christ would apply his balm to the convert's wounded heart, and by a familiar human touch, by a human voice that would break the dark silence with a brother's call, bring the praying penitent into the sympathy and fellowship of the Christian brotherhood.

What Christ did alone in the work of Saul's conversion, should remind us what he alone can do; should convince us of our dependence upon divine power. But this commission given to Ananias, the specific work which he was directed to perform, and the manifest results of his obedience when his reluctance had been overcome, should likewise remind us that Christ wants us to work with him, and that he leaves something for us to do. This work, done under his direction, earnestly solicited by him, urged against protest and reluctance, seems very clearly to indicate his desire and our duty. In the wisdom of Christ there seems to be some advantage in the aid of human hands. The combination of divine power and human effort is represented in this incident as the most beautiful completeness, as the best promise of success. Christ seems to intimate that the dark eyes need the solace of the softer light, that the touch of human hands will reveal when they have been burned blind by the terrifying vision of his insulted person. It rouses the best impulses of the new life, it stirs the strongest affections of the changed heart to go into the darkness of sorrowful conviction with this tender message that Ananias took from Christ to Saul: "Brother, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath *sent me*, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost."

The reluctance of Ananias suggests the unwillingness and severe judgment and fear of men that so sadly prevent us from giving the help we could in the work of the conversion of others. Saul did not seem to Ananias an interesting or promising convert. Ananias had grave fears and suspicions. "He had heard the evil Saul had done." Such suspicions are sure to tie our hands when we attempt to work for the Master. He may discover great possibilities in men and women whom our suspicions would reject. Grace can make "chosen vessels" out of very unpromising material. When our prejudices control us we are powerless. We had better keep our hands off till we have evidence that our hearts are constrained by the impartial love of Christ.

We are to take sinners at their word when they show a desire to turn from their wicked ways, and ask earnestly what they must do. We are to meet them with outstretched hands, and speedily strengthen and comfort them with the touch of our sympathy. Our hesitation can only discourage them; it may drive them back into ways more wicked than those which they tried to escape. Christ only waited to make sure of faith and willingness. Previous life never prevented the touch of his hand of help. He would not listen to the suspicions of Ananias; he gave his fears no countenance. Saul was a vessel he had chosen to carry the water of life, the blessings of the gospel, to Gentiles, kings and Jews. He only repeats his command, "Go thy way." And Ananias "went his way;" went the way Christ made clear, went and found the man he feared "praying" for light, and, convinced that his own fears were groundless and that Saul was sincere, he "put his hands on him," and the human touch was a new revelation of divine power—the scales fell from the convicted sinner's eyes, and the convert was baptized.

Golden Texts in the Primary Class.

BY ISRAEL P. BLACK.

MANY primary teachers find themselves asking the question, "How shall I secure a better memorizing of the golden texts." As it is possible for nearly all the little ones to learn and recite the golden text every Sabbath, I would like to give some methods by which this has been done in other schools as well as my own.

All children over four years of age, with proper attention paid to them, will esteem it a pleasure to come to school prepared to say one verse every Sabbath. I say, *proper* attention, and on this point hangs all the secret, if any there be, in this subject. How long would you, dear teacher, learn your golden text if you were never asked to recite it? I have heard of scholars who have learned the verse for several weeks, but who have never had an opportunity to recite it.

The subject of "Proper Attention" may be divided into four heads: 1. Find out if the children know the verse, and hear them say it. 2. Take pains to let them see that you have made a minute of it in your record book. 3. Talk with the parents in their homes, encouraging them to teach it to their children. 4. Reward them when they have recited a number of verses.

I know of a school where, at the close of the year, a class, numbering usually about thirty, can say *all* the golden texts and lesson hymns for the whole year. Each scholar is obliged to recite them accurately to the teacher, and then all recite them together in public, after which they receive a handsome book as a reward. To learn all these verses and retain them for a whole year (which is more than many teachers can do), is no small task, and ought to be suitably rewarded.

I know of a class whose custom it is to recite every Sabbath the texts for a whole year, thus keeping them constantly fresh in the children's minds. I also know of a mother who keeps all the lesson cards on a string by the head of her children's bed, and they enjoy saying them every morning and night. One teacher has a custom of dividing the school into four classes. Class number one rises and recites the golden text; class number two, the golden text and lesson hymn; number three, the golden text, lesson hymn and memory truth, while class number four recites all of these and the eight or ten questions that may be on the lesson card.

Another system keeps account of every text and hymn, truth and question recited during the quarter, and all who have fifty marks are rewarded with the first prize; those who have twenty-five marks receive the second prize. The marks are made up by counting one for each of the four lessons recited each Sabbath during the quarter, and adding one for attendance. These quarterly cards are sent home to the parents, who can readily see what progress their children are making. Why should we not be more particular in these reports than are the teachers in the secular schools? We are trying to teach God's word, and to have the children retain it in their memory. I care not if every word I teach is forgotten, if the words of our dear Saviour are remembered and treasured in the little heart. The more I teach little ones, the more I feel the importance of their learning and retaining the word of God. The task can and should be made pleasant. There is nothing that stimulates little ones so much as to see others learning. They all want to share in the prize and belong to the Honor Class. Many parents feel this stimulus also. I have heard mothers say: "Well, my John must belong to the 'Honor Class' next year, and I shall see that he learns his verses better in future."

Golden texts can be recited during the half hour before school, or after school if you have assistants whose business it is to attend to this. I doubt the wisdom of stopping for ten minutes during the exercises for the purpose of having the assistants hear each child say its text; it takes too much time, and occasions too much disorder among those who are not reciting.

Many children fasten their lesson cards together for a whole year, or paste them into a little book, keeping them near at hand and constantly reviewing their texts. In my own school I have had a shade made (eighteen inches in width and fourteen feet long), fastened to a curtain roller at the top of the room, on which are stenciled the fifty-two texts of the year, but only the first or first and second words of the text, the children readily saying the rest if the first words are before them. It makes a pleasant exercise to recite all these in concert, the boys saying one verse the girls the next. I have also prepared for some quarters cards about 15 x 12 inches, of different colors, on which I put either a symbol or a word as a reminder of the lesson. The children can say the golden text when one of these cards is held up to view. It is a better test of the memory to change the order in which you show them the cards.

Let us not forget, dear teacher, we are sowing the precious seed that God has promised shall not return to him without fruit. May our prayers follow God's words as they find a lodgment in the tender hearts of these little ones.

Conversions in the Acts.

BY THE REV. R. M. PATTERSON, D.D.

THERE are in the Acts of the Apostles six accounts of conversions which are of a typical character—that of the three thousand on the day of Pentecost, of the Ethiopian eunuch, of Paul, of Cornelius, of Lydia, of the jailer at Philippi. The laws of conversion may be illustrated by them.

Observe:

I. The previous history and character of the persons.

The three thousand were devout Jews. The eunuch was a Gentile proselyte to the Jewish religion, and he had come all the way from Ethiopia to one of the festivals of that religion. Cornelius was a devout man, one who had abandoned heathenism and become a worshiper of the true God, though he had not entered the Jewish Church; a man who had family religion as well as personal; a charitable and liberal man. Lydia was a Gentile proselyte: "she worshiped God." Paul had been brought up a strict Jew, a self-righteous Pharisee, and was a persecutor of the Church. Of the jailer we know nothing; but certainly he was a heathen, and not very likely a moral man.

II. What they were doing at the time of their conversion.

The three thousand had been drawn together by a good kind of curiosity to see what was the meaning of the Pentecostal blessing. The eunuch was reading the prophecy of Isaiah. Cornelius, in answer to prayer for guidance, had been directed to send for Peter, and was listening to his preaching. Lydia was in a prayer-meeting. Paul was on a wicked mission of persecution against Christ's people. The jailer was asleep at his post at midnight.

III. The means by which they were brought to conviction.

The three thousand were reached by an expository and historical sermon preached by Peter, closing with a proclamation of Christ's crucifixion and exaltation and a charge upon them of the guilt of his death. The eunuch was reading the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, which describes the sacrificial death of the Messiah; and from that Philip preached to him Jesus the crucified. To Cornelius, in his own house, Peter was preaching the mission of Jesus; and as he said, "Through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins," the Holy Ghost fell on the audience. A light from heaven arrested Paul. At a prayer-meeting the Lord opened the heart of Lydia to attend to the things spoken by the apostle. The jailer was terrified by an earthquake.

IV. The first effect of the Spirit's influence.

The three thousand were pricked to the heart, deeply convinced of their sin and danger, and asked, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then when the answer was given, they at once gladly received the word, and were baptized. The eunuch quietly asked to be baptized. Cornelius was at once baptized also. Paul, trembling and astonished, cried out, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" He began to pray, and then was three days in trouble, after which he was baptized. Lydia's heart was opened to attend to the things spoken (this includes faith in them), and she was baptized. The jailer sprang in trembling to the apostles, and fell down before them and put his agonizing question; and the same hour of the night was baptized. They were all immediately *submissive* to the divine influence, and obeyed the direction given by the word of the Lord through the mouth of his servants.

V. The direction given to them.

To the three thousand: "Repent and be baptized, every one of you." To the eunuch: "Believe with all thine heart." To Paul: "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do;" and Ananias was sent to direct him to his profession of faith. To the jailer: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

VI. The general lessons taught:

1. Opposers and rejecters of religion (Paul and the jailer) may be converted. Therefore, hopefully seek for all, even for the worst and most skeptical.

2. There may be sudden conversions in the very midst of a sinful course—Paul. Expect them.

3. But attendance on the means of grace is a preparative—the three thousand, the eunuch, Cornelius, Lydia. Therefore, encourage that, and be hopeful of those who practice it.

4. It is a good thing to get people to come to church, even from curiosity—the three thousand.

5. Conversion is not a matter of feeling. This runs against a prevalent error. In none of these cases is it stated that the first and deciding experience was an inrush of joy. They did have joy after entering upon the Christian life; but it was not waited for before confessing Christ. There was, however, in all the prompt beginning of a change of life, manifesting itself in these ways: (*a*) Belief in Christ; (*b*) repentance; (*c*) baptism, where not before baptized, or profession of faith; (*d*) the doing of God's will, when and as far as made known (*e*) and that immediately, without waiting for anything further. These, therefore, are the solid and only essential proofs of true saving conversion.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

SECOND QUARTER.

1. April 1.—**Simon the Sorcerer.** Acts 8: 14–25.
2. April 8.—**Philip and the Ethiopian.** Acts 8: 26–40.
3. April 15.—**Saul's Conversion.** Acts 9: 1–18.
4. April 22.—**Saul Preaching Christ.** Acts 9: 19–31.
5. April 29.—**Peter Working Miracles.** Acts 9: 32–42.
6. May 6.—Peter Preaching to the Gentiles. Acts 10: 30–44.
7. May 13.—The Spread of the Gospel. Acts 11: 19-30.
8. May 20.—Herod and Peter. Acts 12: 1–17.
9. May 27.—Paul and Barnabas in Cyprus. Acts 13: 1–12.
10. June 3.—At Antioch. Acts 13: 13–16 and 43–52.
11. June 10.—At Iconium and Lystra. Acts 14: 1–18.
12. June 17.—End of First Missionary Journey. Acts 14: 19–28.
13. June 24.—Review.

Lesson I. **SIMON THE SORCERER.** April 1st, 1883.

Acts 8: 14–25. Memorize vs. 20–23.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Thy heart is not right in the sight of God."—Acts 8: 21.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 8: 14–25.....*Simon the Sorcerer.*
T. Ex. 7: 1–13.....*The Sorcerer's Enchantment.*
W. Dan. 2: 1–28.....*Wisdom not Bought with Gold.*
Th. 2 Pet. 2: 17–22....*False Prophets.*
F. 2 Tim. 3: 1–17....*Men of Corrupt Minds.*
S. Rev. 3: 17–32.....*Gold that makes Rich.*
S. Isa. 55: 1–13.....*The Gospel without Price.*

TOPIC.

God's Gifts cannot be Bought.

LESSON PLAN.

1. Gifts of the Holy Ghost. vs. 14–17. **2. The Sorcerer's Offer.** vs. 18, 19. **3. The Apostle's Rebuke.** vs. 20–25.

Time.—A. D. 36. **Place.**—A city of Samaria.

Catechism.—Q. 12. *What special act of providence did God exercise towards man, in the estate wherein he was created?* A. When God had created man, he entered into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of perfect obedience; forbidding him to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, upon pain of death.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 396: "With broken heart and contrite sigh." Other hymns, 322, 331, 409, 410.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

INTRODUCTORY.—The persecution which began with Stephen's martyrdom and grew into such violence that it drove multitudes of believers from Jerusalem, became, under God's overruling, the means of sending the gospel over all the known world. Philip, one of the seven deacons, went to Samaria and preached there with great power and success. Simon, a sorcerer, resided there, practicing his magic arts and deceiving the people. He heard Philip preach, saw his miracles, gave his assent to the gospel and was baptized, attaching himself to Philip as a helper in some way. He was not, however, a truly converted man, as our present lesson shows.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

14 Now when the apostles which were at Je-ru'sa-lem heard that Sa-ma'ri-a had received the word of God, they sent unto them Pe'ter and John: [Acts 15: 4; 1 Thess. 3: 2; Matt. 13: 23.]

15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: [Acts 2: 38; John 14: 13, 14.]

16 (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Je'sus.) [Matt. 28: 19; Acts 10: 48; 19: 2.]

17 Then laid they *their* hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. [Acts 6: 6; 19: 6; Heb. 6: 2.]

18 And when Si'mon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, [1 Tim. 6: 5.]

19 Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. [John 5: 44; 3 John 9.]

20 But Pe'ter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. [Matt. 10: 8–10; 1 Tim. 4: 1.]

21 Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. [Ezek. 14: 3; Ps. 78: 37; Isa. 44: 20.]

22 Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine

heart may be forgiven thee. [Dan. 4: 27; 2 Tim. 2: 25.]

23 For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and *in* the bond of iniquity. [Heb. 12: 15; Prov. 5: 22.]

24 Then answered Si'mon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me. [Gen. 20: 7, 17; Ex. 8: 8; Num. 21: 7; James 5: 16.]

25 And they, when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, returned to Je-ru'sa-lem, and preached the gospel in many villages of the Sa-mar'i-tans. [John 15: 27; 1 Pet. 5: 12.]

REVISED TEXT.

14 Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter
15 and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the
16 Holy Ghost: for as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they had been baptized
17 into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then laid they their hands on them, and they received
18 the Holy Ghost. Now when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them
19 money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay my hands, he may re-
20 ceive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto him, Thy silver perish with thee, because thou hast thought to obtain the gift of God
21 with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right be-
22 fore God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray the Lord, if perhaps the thought of thy heart shall be forgiven
23 thee. For I see that thou art in the gall of
24 bitterness and in the bond of iniquity. And Simon answered and said, Pray ye for me to the Lord, that none of the things which ye have spoken come upon me.
25 They therefore, when they had testified and spoken the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans.

14 *When the apostles . . . heard.* They still remained at Jerusalem. v. 1. Communication was kept up between the apostles and the dispersed believers. *That Samaria had received the word.* The traditional prejudice among the Jews against the Samaritans is well known. This prejudice was already giving way, however, in the hearts of Christ's followers, under the influence of his grace, as is evidenced first by Philip's preaching to the Samaritans and subsequently by the apostles' approval of his work. *Peter and John.* They were sent by the apostolic company at Jerusalem to look at the work in Samaria. The sending of two together was in accordance with our Lord's direction. Mark 6: 7. Peter and John were devoted friends, and are frequently mentioned together. John 18: 16; 20: 3; 21: 7, 20; Acts 3: 1. This is the last mention of John in the Acts. It has been noted here as a significant fact that the apostle who wished to call down fire from heaven on a Samaritan village that rejected Christ (Luke 9: 54), is the one sent to call down upon Samaria the fire of the Holy Spirit, not to destroy but to save.

15, 16 *That they might receive the Holy Ghost.* They had no doubt received the ordinary regenerating influences of the Holy Spirit when they first repented and believed; the reference here is to the extraordinary influences which were manifested in miraculous gifts and powers, such as the speaking with other tongues. It seems that none but the apostles were empowered to impart these gifts, and in their case the power could not be used at discretion, for they *prayed* for the believers that they might receive the Holy Ghost. The object of the bestowal of these special gifts was to give the divine sanction to the work of apostles. There is no evidence that this power outlasted the apostolic times.

17 *They laid their hands on them.* On the significance of the laying on of hands, see note on chap. 6: 6. (Lesson of March 11th.)

18 *When Simon saw.* Simon is usually called Simon Magus, or the magician. Many traditions have gathered about this man's name, but very little is certainly known of him. Magicians were common in those days, and in that superstitious age had great power over the people. The arts they practiced were similar to those exercised by modern fortune-tellers. Simon seems to have been one of the most noted of these deceivers. He claimed to be "some great one." v. 9. According to early writers he pretended to be God himself, "the Son of God," the "Paraclete," "the Almighty." This was after his experience with the apostles, when he became an open enemy and sought to destroy their influence. *That through laying on of the apostles' hands.* He was excited by seeing what great power they had, and became ambitious to have the same power himself. This proves that it was the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit which were bestowed through the apostles. v. 15. Simon was accustomed to perform all manner of magical tricks, but here was something that surpassed his performances, which, however, he ranked in the same class. He looked upon the apostles simply as magicians who had secrets yet unknown to him. He had been accustomed to buy such secrets from other magicians with money, and supposed he could do the same in this case. It is clear from this that he had never understood the spiritual nature of Christ's religion, and that his faith (v. 13) was not genuine. This proves that baptism does

not regenerate, for he was baptized. He was only attracted to Philip by his desire for power.

19 *Give me also this power.* It is probable that Simon had not received the Holy Ghost as the true believers had. v. 17. Whether the apostles had laid their hands on him or not the narrative does not indicate. What he asked for, however, was not merely the gifts conferred upon the others, but the power to impart those gifts as he had seen the apostles do. The name of Simon and his proposal to buy the gift of the Holy Spirit furnished the designation for the offence of buying or selling positions in the Church, which is known as *simony.* The practice was common in the middle ages, but, strictly speaking, can occur only in an established church, where ecclesiastical offices are at the disposal of individuals who may make the sale of them pecuniarily profitable. The sin of Simon, in its spirit, may however be repeated by any one who is ambitious for ecclesiastical power or preference, or who wants to gain influence through a reputation for piety.

20 *Thy money perish.* This is not a curse pronounced on him by Peter, for afteward he exhorts him to repent. It is an expression of the apostle's horror at such a blasphemous offer. Yet the words, "perish *with thee,*" contain a clear warning that Simon is doomed to destruction unless by repentance he escapes from his present condition. Such a conception of God's gifts and powers—that they might be bought for money—could arise only in an unrenewed heart. *Because thou hast thought.* Even such a *thought* of God's gifts, without the actual offer of the money, is abhorrent. "As he thinketh *in his heart,* so is he."

21 *Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter.* Literally, *in this word,* that is, in the gospel, in this word or way of life. He was not a saved man, had no saving interest in Christ. *For thy heart is not right.* He had professed faith in Christ and had been baptized, but his proposal had proven that his heart was wrong in the Lord's sight, and when the heart is wrong the man is not truly converted.

22 *Repent therefore.* There was no salvation for him unless he repented, unless his heart was changed. *Pray God.* Revised Version: *The Lord. If perhaps.* The apostle does not assure him of forgiveness, but only holds out a hope that he *may* be forgiven. The great gravity of the sin was the reason for this doubt. It should be observed here that Peter does not presume to receive his confession and then pronounce absolution. Peter's "successors" go further than the apostle went.

23 *The gall of bitterness.* Referring to the bitter hatred of the gospel in Simon's heart. See Deut. 29: 18. *Bond of iniquity.* He was bound in the strong fetters of sin. See Isa. 58: 6.

24 *Pray ye to the Lord for me.* He has no sense of sin. It is only to escape the penalty that he asks. There is no true penitence in his prayer. It is not forgiveness that he seeks, but that "none of these things" may come upon him. See the cases of Pharaoh (Ex. 8: 29; 9: 28; 10: 17), and of Saul. 1 Sam. 15: 30. This is the last glimpse of Simon in the New Testament; he passes from view with this dark shadow hanging over him.

25 *They therefore.* The apostles Peter and John. They went back to Jerusalem, leaving Philip still laboring among the Samaritans. *Preached . . . in many villages.* On their way home they made a tour of these villages.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

Peter and John . . . prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. The grace of God changes men's feelings toward others. It causes them to love their enemies, and to pray for those whom they hated before. The Jews and Samaritans had no dealings with each other, but here we see a Christian Jew, Philip, going among the Samaritans and preaching Christ to them. Then we see the apostles, Christian Jews, sending a committee down to help Philip and confirm his work among the Samaritans. And here we see Peter and John, both Christian Jews, praying God to give to these Samaritans all the gifts of the Holy Ghost he had given to the Jewish Christians. We remember, too, that John once wanted to call down fire upon a Samaritan village because the people rejected Christ. Now he is intent on calling down a different kind of fire—to save, not to destroy. We ought to want our worst enemies to become Christians, and should pray for them and do all in our power to save them.

Simon . . . offered them money. He had professed to be converted, and seems to have had some prominence among the Christians, but here he proves to have been only a hypocrite of the worst kind. Yet his hypocrisy does not prove that there was nothing genuine in the great work in Samaria. Because one of the professed converts turned out an impostor we are not to decide that all were impostors. It very often happens, when a large number of persons are received into a church, that one or more of them goes back, and then people of the

world, scoffers, skeptics and enemies of Christ raise a loud cry of horror, as if all professed conversions were only shams. But they take no account of the many who prove sincere and faithful Christians. There was only one Simon Magus among the Samaritan converts, but there were a multitude who were true. Christianity must not be judged by its few hypocrites, but by its many lives that are changed and sanctified.

Give me also this power. He wanted the apostolic power, not that he might use it to glorify God and bless the world, but that he might glorify himself and fill his own pockets. Any persons who seek a religious name or reputation merely to advance their own interests, are following in Simon's footsteps. One who joins the church to get the confidence of good people, one who gives money to benevolent or religious objects to advertise himself or win the praise of men or help on his worldly business, is simply offering to buy the gifts of God with money. "Simony," in its ecclesiastical sense, is not the only sin that approaches Simon's in character.

Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter, for thy heart is not right before God. If the heart is wrong profession amounts to nothing, and the person is not saved. The heart really makes the character. No matter how correct and proper the outward actions may be, if the heart is polluted and corrupt, that is what the person really is. Pirates carry the flag of an honored nation over decks which hide treachery, robbery and murder. So bad men often carry the flag of religion over hearts full of all manner of evil. The heart is the fountain out of which all sin flows. For an illustration of the kind of stream it is that flows out of the natural heart, see Matt. 15: 19. No one is better than he is in God's sight, and it is upon the heart that God looks to see what a man is. So we need to look well to our hearts. We cannot be saved till our heart is renewed. No external reformation amounts to anything while under it there still remains a foul, bad heart.

Repent therefore, of this thy wickedness. There is a door of hope flung open by the grace of Christ to every sinner, and it is always this door of repentance. There is mercy for the worst sinner, but not till he turns away from his sins. No man can carry his sins with him into God's family. Repentance is more than a few tears shed over guilty acts which we intend to repeat again to-morrow. True repentance is a turning away from our sins with hatred of them and a leaving of them behind. There is no other way of hope for a guilty sinner.

Pray the Lord, if perhaps the thought of thy heart shall be forgiven thee. So wicked *thoughts* need forgiveness as well as wicked acts. Some people think they never do anything wrong unless they actually commit open sins. No matter how many wicked thoughts they have in their hearts, if these do not become acts, they think they are not sins. They do not ask God to forgive their bad *thoughts.* But the Bible teaches us that bad thoughts are sins in God's sight requiring forgiveness. If a boy wants to steal and does not only because he has no chance, he is a thief in God's sight. Let us look well after our thoughts.

Thou art in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity. The first of these figures describes the nature of sin—terribly bitter, a fountain of bitterness in the heart, spreading its bitter poisoned streams through all the life. The other represents sin as a chain, which binds the sinner hand and foot, and holds him in bondage, from which he has no power to extricate himself. Simon was an aggravated case, no doubt, but in him we see just what sin does for every sinner in the end. It poisons his whole nature, and it binds him in chains of steel—chains small at first, but increasing in strength until no power on earth can break them. It is a terrible thing to think of what sin will do for us in the end if we continue in it. Let us hasten to Christ to be safe from it.

Simon said, Pray ye for me to the Lord. He did not pray to the Lord as Peter had bidden him, but to a human mediator. He did not say he had sinned. There is no sign of penitence in his words. He was not sorry for what he had done, and he had no intention, apparently, of giving up his sin. He does not ask to be forgiven. Peter's words started for a moment in his soul a vague fear of terrible penalty, and in his terror he wanted to be delivered from that penalty. But there was no real repentance, no confession, no cry for pardon. So the veil drops upon him, so far as the Bible is concerned, with this cry on his lips.

Dr. Howard Crosby, in his sermon on this lesson in "Half-Hours with the Lessons," makes and discusses the following points:

1. The natural heart has no knowledge of divine things.
2. Man's wickedness before God is in the condition of his heart.
3. Only God's power can renew the heart.
4. The hope of man is in prayer.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Grace melts down the icy barriers of hate between man and man. v. 14.
2. The best gifts we can ask for others are the gifts of the Holy Spirit. v. 15.

3. Even bad men covet the power and influence which religion gives. v. 18.

4. One hypocrite in a church does not prove that religion has no power. v. 18, with vs. 6–8.

5. Any person who seeks the reputation of a Christian for personal ends is guilty of Simon's sin. v. 19.

6. It is an awful sin to think to make merchandise of religion. v. 20.

7. If the heart is still wrong one is not converted. v. 21.

8. All sin begins in the heart. v. 21.

9. Wicked thoughts need forgiveness.

10. Sin brings wretchedness and helpless bondage. v. 23.

11. The dread of consequences is not the fear which is "the beginning of wisdom;" there must be repentance also. v. 24.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

BY THE REV. JAMES A. WORDEN.

In this lesson combine the didactic, the questioning and the illustrative methods. That is, arouse attention, quicken thought, concentrate thought by your *questions*, then sow the seeds of truth in the soil thus prepared.

Lines of Approach.

1. A glance backward. Titles of the lessons of last quarter. What city is the scene of those lessons? Where were the apostles and the disciples to *begin?* What advantages were there in "beginning at Jerusalem?"

2. A glance forward. To what places, according to the lessons of the present quarter, do the disciples carry the gospel?—Judea, Samaria, etc. Last quarter—home or city missions; this quarter—foreign missions. The bridge over the chasm between Jews and Gentiles is building.

3. What drove the disciples out of Jerusalem? Who remained? Where did the persecuted Christians go? What did they do wherever they went? How does this illustrate that the God of providence is the God of missions? How does this illustrate Matt. 10: 23? Who was Philip? Where did he preach? Who were the Samaritans? 2 Kings 17: 24–41. Who had first preached there the kingdom of God? John 4. How did God confirm Philip's preaching?

4. Which of you has ever seen a magician? What tricks did he do? Which of you has seen a fortune-teller? What did he claim to know? Why was Samaria an inviting place for magicians? (The Samaritans worshiped they knew not what. John 4: 22.)

What great magician had come to Samaria before Philip? How had he affected the people? What did they think he was? Contrast Philip's true miracles with Simon's pretended ones. What effect had Philip's preaching and miracles on Simon?

The Holy Ghost Given. vs. 14–17.

Why did the apostles send Peter and John to Samaria? Who had appointed the apostles overseers and rulers of the Church? Why should they send two of their number to oversee the work in Samaria? What was the effect of the prayer and laying on of hands by Peter and John? In what sense had the Holy Spirit accompanied Philip's preaching? In what sense had the Holy Spirit "fallen on none of them?" Prove that it was the miracle-working power of the Spirit these persons now received. Acts 2: 4; 4: 31; 1 Cor. 12. Why did the apostles pray for this? Why lay their hands on them? What did John once want to cause to fall on the Samaritans? Luke 9: 54. Whence the difference of feeling now? What gifts of the Holy Ghost are we now to seek? Ps. 51: 10–12; John 3: 5; Rom. 5: 5; Gal. 5: 22, 23; 1 Peter 1: 2.

Simon Exposed. vs. 18–25.

What did Simon offer to buy? For what purpose did he want this power? How does this offer show that his heart was not right before God? How did this offer reveal his hypocrisy? How show his selfish ambition? How show his desire for vain glory? His greed for money? Why was this offer an insult to the apostles? Why an insult to the Holy Spirit? What is *simony?* In what is it unlike Simon Magus' sin? In what like it? Rev. Dr. Addison Alexander said: "It is only by a figure of speech that simony, a term derived from this man's name, has been applied to the sale and purchase of ecclesiastical office, which, however heinous it may be, is something very different from offering to buy and sell the Holy Ghost."

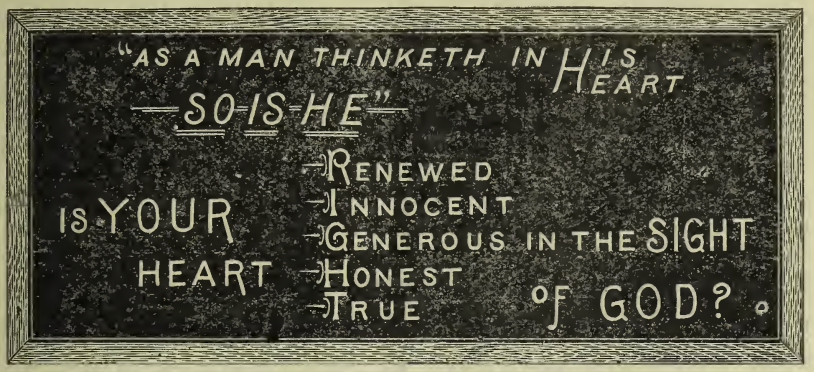
How does God now expose hypocrites? What warning is in this lesson against those in the Church whose hearts are not right before God? How can we decide whether we are true or false professors? What did Peter exhort Simon to do? Why do you think Simon failed to do it? What should false professors in the Church do?

Points in Lesson for April 8th, to be assigned:

1. Locate cities and countries mentioned.
2. God's providence, an angel and the Holy Spirit guiding Philip.
3. Various methods of reading the Bible.
4. Examples of individual work for Christ.
5. The necessity of baptism.
6. The joys of salvation.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

BY J. HOWARD SEAL.



Here is a lesson for much thought. No doubt Simon believed the work of Peter and John a more effective mystery than his own, and he wanted to know how it was done, but only because he thought he saw "money in it." There was no heartfelt penitence for sin. No real trust in Christ. No sincere love to God. "His heart was not right." Here is the secret, and hence the lesson for the blackboard as prepared above. A personal question to each of us.

Directions for Coloring.—"As a man thinketh, etc.," yellow shaded with green; "Is your heart," white shaded with red; "In the sight of God," orange shaded with white; the words of the acrostic in several plain colors.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

BY MRS. G. R. ALDEN—"PANSY."

Object Illustration.—A flower made of wax or of paper. Secure one that is a good imitation. Some of the artificial flowers which are worn on bonnets are very perfect imitations. Take it to class, and encourage free conversation concerning it. Call attention to its different parts. Pass it around to be smelled, being careful to choose a flower which in the natural state has a sweet perfume. What do the children think of this? Is it real? Does it look much like the real? In what important points does it differ? Will it ever grow larger or brighter? Can seed ever be gathered from it to plant? In these ways awaken thought as to the essential differences between the real and the imitation flower.

Story Illustration.—Ask class what a Christian is. Draw from them the fact that he is one who professes to love Christ.

"Here is a mark for Peter. This country is Samaria, where he had gone to preach. Many people here had been baptized, to show that they had chosen Jesus for their Lord and Saviour. Here is a mark for one named Simon. He had been baptized by a minister named Philip. When Peter laid his hands on the people and prayed, they received from God the gift of the Holy Ghost. Simon, looking on, thought it would be nice to have such power, and he offered money to Peter and said: 'Give me this power, so that when I lay hands on people the Holy Ghost will come.'"

I have given the story with exceeding brevity. Let me remind the teachers to aim rather to have the account given them by the children, and to hold themselves in readiness to supply missing links.

Blackboard Illustration.—A heart outlined while you ask class what there is in the lesson about a heart. Lead them to respond in the words of the golden text: "Thy heart is not right in the sight of God." Whose heart? Who said this to Simon? Did Peter know it at first? Simon was like the flower, a good imitation. How did Peter find out? Lead class to see that Simon's action was not in keeping with his profession; he professed to believe in Christ, and had been told that God only could do the great thing that he was asking to be taught how to do, expecting to pay for the gift with money.

Who knew all the time that Simon's heart was not right? No imitation can deceive him. This is a very solemn and important thought to impress. Print the word "SIN" in the heart. The same thing was the matter with Simon that

in some form or other is the matter with every child. Is there no help for Simon? Let class answer this question as Peter did.

APPLICATION.—Did you ever see any children who reminded you of this imitation flower? Illustrate with the story of a child who came regularly to Sabbath-school, had perfect lessons, etc., but showed habitually a hateful spirit toward little children who were poorly dressed, or dull, or not agreeable to her. That is an imitation flower. It looks like a real one, until you discover that the sweet perfume which comes from right actions is lacking. What help is there for such a child? Only that which there was for Simon—Repent, ask forgiveness.

FINAL THOUGHT.—God looks down on every heart in this class. How many are "right" in his sight?

Lesson II. **PHILIP AND THE ETHIOPIAN.** **April 8th, 1883.**

Acts 8 : 26–40. Memorize vs. 35–38.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And he went on his way rejoicing."—Acts 8 : 39.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 8 : 26–40.....*Philip and the Ethiopian.*
T. Isa. 53 : 1–10 .....*The Ethiopian's Reading.*
W. John 5 : 39–47 .....*Searching the Scriptures.*
Th. Mark 16 : 1–20.....*Faith and Baptism.*
F. Luke 24 : 25–48 ....*Scripture Testimony to Jesus.*
S. Acts 16 : 1–15.....*Baptism of Lydia.*
S. Ps. 19 : 1–14.....*God's Word Precious.*

TOPIC.

Salvation through Faith in Christ.

LESSON PLAN.

1. A Meeting Divinely Arranged. vs. 26–29. **2. An Inquirer Directed.** vs. 30–35. **3. A Disciple Rejoicing.** vs. 36–40.

Time.—Probably about A. D. 36, immediately after the last lesson. **Place.**—On the desert way between Jerusalem and Gaza.

Catechism.—Q. 13. *Did our first parents continue in the estate wherein they were created?* A. Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from the estate wherein they were created, by sinning against God.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 192: "Just as I am, without one plea." Other hymns, 134, 136, 143, 335.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—Philip has been preaching to the Samaritans; now his influence is to be carried away beyond, into heathendom. He is called away from his work among crowds to go out along a desert highway. He knows not what work there can be for him there, but he finds it at length. There is only one man to teach, but he when converted carried the gospel to his own country, and we know not what great results followed.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

26 And the angel of the Lord spake unto Phil'ip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Je-ru'sa-lem unto Ga'za, which is desert. [Heb. 1 : 14.]

27 And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of E-thi-o'pi-a, an eunuch of great authority under Can'da-ce queen of the E-thi-o'pi-ans, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Je-ru'sa-lem for to worship, [Ps. 68 : 27; Zeph. 3 : 10; John 12 : 20.]

28 Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read E-sa'ias the prophet. [Ps. 1 : 2; John 5 : 39; Col. 3 : 16.]

29 Then the Spirit said unto Phil'ip, Go near and join thyself to this chariot. [Acts 13 : 2.]

30 And Phil'ip ran thither to *him*, and heard him read the prophet E-sa'ias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? [Ps. 25 : 8, 9.]

31 And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Phil'ip that he would come up and sit with him. [James 1 : 5]

32 The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: [Isa. 53 : 7, 8.]

33 In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. [Phil. 2 : 8, 9; Dan. 9 : 26.]

34 And the eunuch answered Phil'ip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?

35 Then Phil'ip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Je'sus. [Luke 24 : 27; Acts 18 : 28.]

36 And as they went on *their* way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, *here is* water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? [Acts 10 : 47.]

37 And Phil'ip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he an-

swered and said, I believe that Je'sus Christ is the Son of God. [Mark 16: 16; John 6: 69; Rom. 10: 9.]

38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Phil'ip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

39 And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Phil'ip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing. [1 Kings 18: 12; 2 Kings 2: 16; Ezek. 3: 12–14.]

40 But Phil'ip was found at A-zo'tus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Cæs-a-re'a.

REVISED TEXT.

26 But an angel of the Lord spake unto
Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the
south unto the way that goeth down from
Jerusalem unto Gaza: the same is desert.
27 And he arose and went: and behold, a man
of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority
under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who
was over all her treasure, who had come to
28 Jerusalem for to worship; and he was re-
turning and sitting in his chariot, and was
29 reading the prophet Isaiah. And the Spirit
said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself
30 to this chariot. And Philip ran to him, and
heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and
said, Understandest thou what thou readest?
31 And he said, How can I, except some one
shall guide me? And he besought Philip to
32 come up and sit with him. Now the place
of the scripture which he was reading was
this,

He was led as a sheep to the slaughter;
And as a lamb before his shearer is dumb,
So he openeth not his mouth:
33 In his humiliation his judgment was taken
away:
His generation who shall declare?
For his life is taken from the earth.

34 And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I
pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet
35 this? of himself, or of some other? And
Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from
this scripture, preached unto him Jesus.
36 And as they went on the way, they came
unto a certain water; and the eunuch saith,
Behold, *here is* water; what doth hinder me
38 to be baptized? And he commanded the
chariot to stand still: and they both went
down into the water, both Philip and the
39 eunuch; and he baptized him. And when
they came up out of the water, the Spirit of
the Lord caught away Philip; and the eunuch
saw him no more, for he went on his way re-
40 joicing. But Philip was found at Azotus:
and passing through he preached the gospel
to all the cities, till he came to Cæsarea.

26 *The angel of the Lord.* Revised Version: *An* angel. Philip was busily engaged in his work in Samaria when this call came to him. We are not told in what manner or form the angel appeared to him. The frequency of angelic manifestations and ministries in the apostolic days should be noted. See Dr. Crosby's article in last number of the TEACHER. *The way that goeth down . . . unto Gaza.* Gaza was one of the most ancient cities in the world (mentioned Gen. 10: 19). It fell to Judah in the apportionment of Canaan among the tribes (Josh. 15: 47), but was soon taken by the Philistines, and is always spoken of as a Philistian city. 1 Sam. 6: 17; 2 Kings 18: 8. Here Samson died. Judges 16: 21–31. Alexander the Great took it after five months' siege, but did not destroy it. It is mentioned repeatedly in the accounts of the wars of the Maccabees. At the time of this narrative it was a flourishing city. At present it has a population of 15,000 to 16,000. *Which is desert.* That is, the *way* was desert, running through a desolate, uninhabited region. There were two different roads leading to Gaza, and this designation was used to indicate which one he was to take, as if he had said, "Go down toward Gaza by the desert road."

27, 28 *He arose and went.* Mark his prompt obedience. In whatever way the command came he recognized it as divine. *A man of Ethiopia.* The region then called Ethiopia lay south of Egypt, embracing the modern Nubia, Kordofan, Senaar, and a portion of Abyssinia. The inhabitants were black. The country was rich. This man was not a Jew, but may have been a proselyte. That he had adopted the Jewish religion is evident from the fact that he had now been worshiping at Jerusalem and was studying the Jewish Scriptures. *Candace, queen of the Ethiopians.* Candace was the name given to all the rulers of the dynasty, like Cæsar in the Roman Empire. This eunuch had great authority, being the custodian of all the queen's treasure houses. *Esaias the prophet.* He was reading aloud (v. 30) from a roll containing the book of Isaiah's prophecies. It was the Septuagint (Greek) version that he had.

29 *The Spirit said.* The first command to Philip was borne by an angel, and the second by the Holy Spirit. How the Spirit communicated with him we cannot tell, whether by audible voice or by inward impulse. There is here another incidental proof of the personality of the Holy Ghost.

30 *Philip ran.* Notice again the alacrity of Philip's obedience. *Understandest thou?* He heard him reading aloud, and perhaps something in the reader's manner showed that he did not understand what he was reading. Notice how directly he goes to the point in his first salutation. The eunuch's eagerness to learn, as indicated in his face and manner, opened the way.

31 *How can I except some man should guide*

me? The humility of his attitude and his eagerness to know the truth are shown not only in the answer itself to Philip's question, but in the manner in which he, a prince, received this abrupt question from the lips of a stranger on foot. The really earnest seeker after light welcomes the light from whatever source it may come. *He desired Philip.* The Spirit of God had prepared his heart and then sent the preacher to him.

32 *The place of the Scripture.* Isaiah 53 : 7, 8. The words of this chapter describe so minutely the sufferings of Christ that a noted infidel said that Jesus had brought about his own crucifixion so as to fulfill this prophecy. *He was led as a sheep.* The principal point in the figure is the quiet and unresisting manner in which Jesus submitted to the indignities put upon him. The fulfillment of this prophecy was very plain, when we read the narrative of his arrest, trial and crucifixion. *So opened he not his mouth.* Fulfilled in his uncomplaining silence on his trial. Matt. 27 : 12–14; Luke 23 : 9. The reference to the sheep and lamb also implies that Christ was the fulfillment of the types of the Old Testament, in which these animals were offered as sacrifices; thus the vicariousness of Christ's sufferings and death was declared.

33 *In his humiliation his judgment was taken away.* Different interpretations are given of these words. One is, that he was denied justice, and taken away without proper trial. Another is, that in his humiliation the judgment or condemnation pronounced against him as the sinner's substitute was taken away. In this latter view the passage asserts the great Pauline doctrine of Rom. 8 : 1. *Who shall declare his generation?* Here also interpreters differ. Some suppose the reference to be to the wickedness of the men of his time; others, to the countless number of his spiritual posterity; others, to the glory of his own descent, as the eternal Son of God and as conceived by the Holy Spirit, as to his human nature. *For his life is taken from the earth.* Referring to his violent death.

34 *Of whom speaketh the prophet this?* The question shows the utter perplexity of the eunuch's mind as to the meaning of the prophecy.

35 *Philip opened his mouth.* An expression used to denote the beginning of any weighty and important utterance. *Began at the same scripture and preached unto him Jesus.* The sermon is not given, but no doubt he went over the principal facts of Christ's death, and showed how the words of the prophet had been fulfilled in his life and death.

36 *A certain water.* Tradition has tried to fix the site, but without any reasonable probability of correctness. *What doth hinder?* The evangelist had no doubt declared to his princely inquirer the necessity of baptism. He had not only told him of Jesus as fulfilling prophecy, but of Jesus as the Saviour, and had preached to him the way of salvation by faith and baptism.

37 This verse is omitted in the Revised Version, though placed in the margin. Yet just this requirement and confession of faith are certainly implied as preliminary to adult baptism. *With all thine heart.* Simon Magus "believed" without his heart. vs. 13, 21. (See article on another page on this missing verse.)

38, 39 *Into the water . . . out of the water.* The words imply that they stepped down into the water, not merely to its edge; but they do not imply that Philip *immersed* the eunuch. Dr. Alexander says: "Without insisting, as some writers have done, that the Greek phrase may mean nothing more than to the water's edge, its stronger sense is fully satisfied, if we suppose that they stood in it. That the phrase does not necessarily imply submersion is moreover clear from the consideration that such an inference would prove too much for those who draw it, namely, that the baptizer must himself be totally immersed. For not only is there no distinction made, but it is twice said expressly, in two different forms, as if to preclude all doubt and ambiguity, that *both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch.*" *He baptized him.* He did not have him wait to receive fuller instruction. So the three thousand on the day of Pentecost were baptized immediately upon believing; so was the jailer at Philippi. *The Spirit . . . caught away Philip.* He was probably removed suddenly and in a supernatural way, for the eunuch saw him no more. The same word is used in 1 Thess. 4 : 17 of those who shall be alive when Christ comes again; also in Luke 24 : 31 and in 1 Kings 18 : 12. This may have been to impress the new convert with the divine mission of the man who had taught him and baptized him. *He went on his way rejoicing.* He was now a saved man. There is a tradition that he preached the gospel in Ethiopia with great success on his return, and that Candace herself was among the converts.

40 *Philip was found at Azotus.* Or Ashdod, between Gaza and Joppa. *He preached.* He entered upon a tour of the towns and cities between Ashdod and Cæsarea. Here, at Cæsarea, twenty years afterward, we find him still, when he and his daughters welcome Paul and Luke. Acts 21 : 8.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

An angel of the Lord spake unto Philip. We do not see the angels now nor hear them, yet there is no reason to doubt that they still come just as they did in the Scripture days to bring messages and to give help or protection to God's children. We have our Lord's own word for it that the *children* have angels who devote themselves specially to caring for them in this world. Then we learn from the Old Testament that they encamp around the Lord's people and shield them from danger. In the Hebrews we are told that they are ministering spirits for the heirs of salvation. It is very pleasant to think that these celestial messengers are ever hovering about us, whispering in our ears suggestions of duty or warnings of danger, coming between us and many an assault of the evil one, strengthening us in temptation or struggle, guiding us, and when we die carrying our souls away to glory.

Arise and go . . . unto the way . . . from Jerusalem unto Gaza; the same is desert. Philip was doing a great work where he was. He was preaching to multitudes, and many were converted. It seemed a very strange thing that he must leave all these crowds and this successful work and go away down along a lonely road. What could there be for him to do there? There were no towns or villages on that road, and there was nobody there to whom he could preach. Yet he did as he was bidden. Ships are sometimes sent out in war times with sealed orders, not knowing their destination or duty until they reach a certain point. Many of God's servants are sent out in the same way, not knowing why they are led in certain paths until by-and-bye they find some blessed work to do.

Behold, a man of Ethiopia. . . . The Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. Now he had found his work. His sealed orders were opened. It was to explain a text of Scripture to this black prince that he had been taken away from his active missionary duties and sent away down here. But why should he leave the crowds to preach to one man? One answer is, that individual souls are dear to God, and are never forgotten by him in the crowds. Another answer is, that here was a man from "the uttermost parts," from a great heathen country, and if he had the gospel himself he would carry it back to his own land; thus a great work might spring—if traditions may be trusted, *did* spring—from Philip's errand along this desert road. We never can know what is most important in the work we do; perhaps more may come from a five minutes' casual talk with some one, when we think we are wasting our time, than from a sermon preached to a thousand people. The true thing is to put ourselves into God's hands to do whatever he may send us to do.

Philip ran thither to him. A great many Christians are afraid to speak to others about their souls, but Philip showed no hesitation. The man was a stranger to him; besides he was evidently a man of rank. He was busy reading, too, and might not care to be interrupted. Yet when Philip was bidden to go and join the chariot he promptly obeyed. He was ready for whatever work the Lord would give him. No doubt God's Spirit often tells us also to go and speak to this one or that one. Many of us are very good, too, at making excuses. But suppose Philip had excused himself from speaking to this man, what an opportunity would he have lost! No doubt God brings us across others' paths many times because he wants us to help them in some way or deliver some message to them. Let us be quick always to follow every guiding providence and to listen to every divine impulse in our hearts. The destiny of other souls may depend upon it, and by failing we may let slip golden opportunities.

Understandest thou what thou readest? . . . How can I except some one shall guide me? Now we begin to see why Philip was sent away down along this lonely road. Here was a soul crying out for light, and God heard the cry and took his servant away from the crowd and sent him to answer it. The suggestion is that God always knows where there is a soul anywhere, longing for salvation, and in some way satisfies the longing. The great blessings always come in this world to those who are seeking for them. "Blessed are they that hunger . . . for they shall be filled."

Philip . . . beginning from this scripture, preached unto him Jesus. A number of years since the story was told of an enthusiastic researcher of art who found a clue to a valuable portrait of Dante. He had reason to believe that it was on the wall of a room used for rubbish. He cleaned out the apartment and began to experiment on the wall. He removed bits of the whitewashing and outer coats of plastering, and at last came upon the surface where the picture had been painted. He then carefully stripped off the washings and coatings, disclosing at length to view the portrait of the sad, thoughtful face of the great Tuscan poet, painted by Giotto. So the picture of Jesus lay in this ancient prophecy, in all its beauty and glory, but the Ethiopian prince could not see it until the evangelist had stripped off the veils and coverings, when it burst upon him

in all its tenderness and grace. That is the Sabbath-school teacher's work—to show Jesus in the Scripture to the pupils who bend with eager interest over the holy page.

The eunuch saith, Behold, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? He had seen Jesus in the scripture, the whole truth had burst upon him, he had accepted him promptly as his personal Saviour, and now was eager at once to seal his acceptance by being baptized, and thus enrolled among Christ's open and confessed followers. This is an example for every one who hears of Christ; for the hearing of him is not like the hearing of any other person. We may learn the story of Stephen or of Paul or of Luther or of Livingstone, yet the knowledge brings no new obligation or duty, save as the example may be inspiring. But the hearing about Jesus brings both obligation and duty. We have a relation to him; we owe something to him. He is our Saviour, and we must accept him or perish in our sins. He is our Lord, and we must begin at once to obey him. The moment the vision of Jesus is opened to any soul there should first be instant acceptance, and then at the earliest possible moment there should be confession and enrollment among his followers.

He went on his way rejoicing. He did not give up his journey and decide to go back among the other Christians, because he was now a believer. He went on his way to his own country, and probably continued in his place as the queen's minister; but he had a new secret of joy in his heart. There are two lessons here. One is that a new born Christian is not to give up his business or pursuit in life, because he has given himself to Christ. Of course if he is a rumseller, or an actor, or is engaged in any wrong occupation, he cannot "go on his way," but must give it up. But if one's occupation is right he is to stick to it and carry Christ with him into it. A carpenter when converted is to continue a carpenter—with Christ. So of all lawful pursuits. See 1 Cor. 7: 20–24. The other thought suggested here is that Christ gives joy. He went on his way *rejoicing*. Some people think religion will rob them of joy. It did not have that effect on this man. Life was all changed after he had received Christ. He continued on his way, but his heart was full of song. He was like one of those clocks, with a music-box hidden in their bosom, that play a sweet tune each time they strike the hour, ticking away and making music at the same time. The Christian goes on in his work day by day, but while he works his heart sings, and the songs make the way shorter and the burdens lighter for him, while at the same time they give cheer to others on whose ears they fall.

LESSON POINTS.

1. God sends his servants wherever he wants them to labor. v. 26.
2. Sometimes preaching to one soul may be more important than to a crowd. v. 26.
3. We should always be ready to work for Christ wherever he directs. v. 27.
4. God arranges the meetings of his servants with those to whom they have errands. v. 27.
5. A good way to pass the time when traveling—reading the Bible. v. 28.
6. When we are eager to know what the truth is God will soon send us light. v. 29.
7. We need a guide in studying God's word; preachers and teachers can guide us, but the Holy Spirit is the infallible guide. vs. 30, 31.
8. Christ is in all the Scripture if we can only see him. vs. 32–35.
9. As soon as the sinner finds Jesus he should confess him. v. 36.
10. Faith in Christ and confession of him give joy to the heart. v. 39.
11. When the believer finds Christ he can go on without the human guide. v. 39.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

To-day you are to teach one of the most delightful and impressive lessons in the New Testament. In this simple story you have the clearest account of

THE SAVIOUR { SOUGHT. vs. 26–31.
FOUND. vs. 32–35.
CONFESSED. vs. 36–40.

In a word, it is *immediate salvation through Jesus*. What lesson could be more desirable for your class? Even this truth will be nothing unless God's Spirit carry it home. Steep your preparation in prayer, faith and love. Earnestly and affectionately bring this immediate salvation through Jesus to every scholar to-day.

LINE OF APPROACH.—After calling for last Sabbath's title and golden text you need no introduction outside of the lesson. Begin by asking—Who was Philip? What offices did he hold? Acts 6: 5; 21: 8. Where had he been preaching? With what results? Where was he commanded to go? Point out the probable road on the map. Who brought the message? Why should Philip leave off preaching to crowds in Samaria to go to a desert road? Where will we ever be most useful? How are Christian workers now to decide where to labor and what to do? (Prayer for God's guidance, cherishing a willingness to be guided anywhere or to do anything;

study of God's word, submitting our minds to it; humble study of the leadings of God's providence, and listening to the Spirit's voice within.) Beware of mistaking our impulses for those of the Spirit. Refer to God's guidance of Peter to Cornelius (Acts 10), and of Paul. Acts 22: 21; 13: 2; 16: 6, 9, 10; 18: 9, 10. Narrate incidents of God's guidance in Christian work in your experience or observation. For a change, I would then announce my outline as given above. Have the class turn to the verses directed. Drill them on the outline.

THE SAVIOUR SOUGHT.—Whom did Philip meet? Point out Ethiopia. Where had this man been? What was he now doing? What was the ancient custom as to reading? Why do you think he was seeking salvation? Look carefully at vs. 27, 28, 30, 31. Why should any one seek salvation in the Scriptures. Recite John 5: 39. Who guided Philip to the chariot? How did God's providence, God's Spirit, God's word and God's minister work together here? Why are they all necessary? How did Philip begin the conversation? What spirit did the Ethiopian show in his reply? Whom will God guide? Ps. 25: 9; Matt. 18: 4. Read also Rom. 10: 14. Where will sincere seekers for salvation be found? v. 27. What will they read? How will they treat God's ministers and teachers? Why is true penitence humble and teachable?

THE SAVIOUR FOUND. vs. 32–35.—Prove that this Ethiopian found the Saviour. What was his difficulty? How would you answer the question in v. 34? Prove that this passage speaks of Jesus. What is it to "preach Jesus?" 1 Cor. 1: 23, 24; 2: 2. Compare Luke 24: 27.

THE SAVIOUR CONFESSED. vs. 36–40.—What must we do to be saved by Jesus? Mark 16: 16; Acts 2: 41; 16: 33; Rom. 10: 9. What is meant by "believing in thine heart?" What is faith in Jesus Christ? *Do you believe on Christ?* What is it to confess the Lord Jesus? Why is this necessary? What should all who confess Christ do? 2 Tim. 2: 19; Ps. 97: 10. What is baptism? To whom is baptism to be administered?

Points to be assigned for study and report Sabbath, April 15th:

Carefully announce the next lesson—Acts 9: 1–18—*Saul's Conversion.* Speak a moment on its importance.

1. Saul's history and education previous to his conversion. See Conybeare and Howson's "Life and Epistles of St. Paul." Chapter II.
2. The three accounts of Saul's conversion. Acts 9: 1–18; 22: 1–21; 26: 1–23.
3. The miraculous vision of the Saviour.
4. Oneness of Christ and his people.
5. Likeness and difference between Saul's conversion and that of sinners now.
6. Journey from Jerusalem to Damascus. Conybeare and Howson. Chapter III.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Object Illustration.—A leaf torn irregularly, the jagged edges apparent. Show part of it. Let class discuss it; the probability that there is more of it somewhere, etc. Then supply the other half. Show the class that the jagged edges fit perfectly. Lead them to see that the fact of the two pieces fitting together is proof that they belong to each other.

Blackboard Illustration.—A large Bible, open to Isaiah 53.

The Lesson Story.—This road leads from Jerusalem down here to a place named Gaza. This mark is for a carriage, or chariot, as it was called, which passed along this road. A rich man sat in the carriage reading. Back here in Jerusalem is a mark for that minister who baptized Simon. His name is Philip. God's Spirit spoke to him, told him to go through this lonely road down to Gaza. Philip couldn't think why he should leave his work and go down through that desert place, but he obeyed. As he was walking along he saw this carriage, and the Spirit whispered to him to go close to it. He heard the man in the carriage reading. He was reading this chapter. (Point to blackboard.) One verse he read was one of our golden texts last quarter. It commences, "He was led—" Who can say it? Philip said to the man, "Do you understand what you read?" And the man replied that he could not, unless some one would explain it. "Who is it," said he, "who was led as a lamb to the slaughter?" Scholars, who was it?

That is the answer Philip gave, and he told him all about Jesus; how everything that the prophet Isaiah foretold had come to pass in Jesus. The man could see that Jesus was like the other part of that leaf I showed you. Isaiah's story was not finished until Jesus came and lived it, and then his life fitted right in. The rich man was so sure of this that he gave himself right away to Jesus, and Philip baptized him.

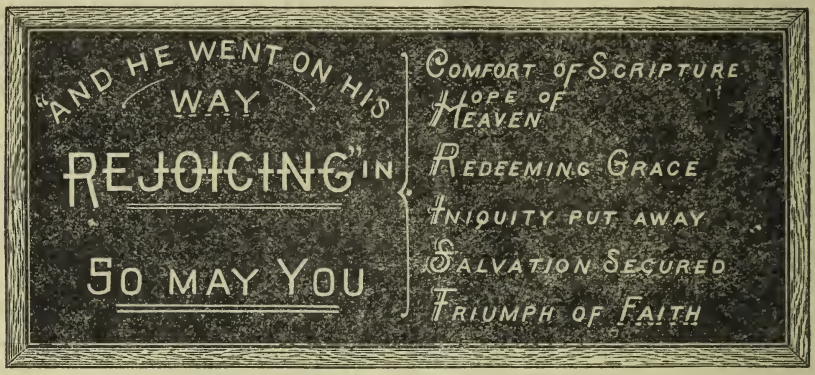
The above is a suggestion of the way in which the lesson may be taught to very little children. With those old enough to study—and at seven the average child can study a little if encouraged—the teacher should put the story into questions.

Special Point.—The effect of all this on the rich man, as shown in the golden text: "He went on his way rejoicing." The story of Jesus brings joy, if the heart accepts it. These children know much about Jesus; know more than that rich man did; know that the leaf of the Old Testament and the life described in the New fit together. Have they decided to be his servants? Can you help them to see what it is to accept him and follow him?

Second Point.—God's Spirit told Philip just what to do. He will tell me just what to do if I ask him, and am careful to follow his voice.

The recitation about the Holy Spirit, found on *Westminster Primary Leaf*, may be properly interwoven in the teaching of this lesson.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



SUGGESTIONS.—Place upon the board previous to the opening of the school (and exposed during the study of the lesson), the sentence, "And he went on his way rejoicing," as in diagram. The object of the lesson from the desk will be to show what caused the rejoicing on the part of the eunuch. Note first his earnest study of the Scriptures, and his anxious inquiry after the truth; then the unfolding of the truth as Philip preached Jesus to him. This must surely have been a comfort to him. So it is fair to assume "He went on his way rejoicing" in the comfort he had received. Print "In comfort of Scripture," as in diagram. Bring out the accompanying thoughts in their order until the acrostic is worked out. Step by step Philip led the inquirer from the "Comfort of Scripture" to the "Triumph of faith," viz., to *Christ*, in whom "he went on his way rejoicing." At the close of the lesson sing an appropriate hymn, during which let superintendent print in lower left corner of board, "So may YOU," and urge every one to accept Christ as the only source of true joy.

Lesson III. **SAUL'S CONVERSION.** **April 15th, 1883.**

Acts 9: 1–18. Memorize vs. 1–6.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized."—Acts 9: 18.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 9: 1–18.....*Saul's Conversion.*
T. Acts 22: 1–16.....*Paul's Defence.*
W. 1 Cor. 15: 1–10.....*"Seen of Me Also."*
Th. 2 Cor. 5: 14–21.....*In Christ a New Creature.*
F. Phil. 3: 1–14.....*All Things but Loss.*
S. Eph. 2: 1–10.....*Saved by Grace.*
S. 1 Tim. 1: 1–17.....*The Chief of Sinners.*

TOPIC.

The Power of Divine Grace.

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Meeting with Christ. vs. 1–9. **2. The Ministry of Ananias.** vs. 10–18.

Time.—A. D. 37, about one year after the last lesson. **Place.**—Near Damascus and in that city.

Catechism.—Q. 14. *What is sin?* A. Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 951: "Stand up, stand up for Jesus." Other hymns, 492, 496, 498, 859.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—The conversion of Saul was one of the great events in the history of the Church. He is first mentioned in connection with Stephen's martyrdom. He continued to be a fierce persecutor until the moment of his conversion. There are two other accounts of this event, given by Paul himself, one in his address to the mob at Jerusalem (Acts 22: 1–11), and the other in his address before Agrippa. Chap. 26: 8–18.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

1 And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, [Acts 8: 3; Gal. 1: 13; 1 Tim. 1: 13.]

2 And desired of him letters to Da-mas'cus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Je-ru'sa-lem.

3 And as he journeyed, he came near Da-mas'cus; and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: [Acts 22: 6; 26: 12; 1 Cor. 5: 18.]

4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? [Matt. 25: 40, 45.]

5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: *it is* hard for thee to kick against the pricks. [Acts 5: 39; 2 Cor. 5: 17; Gal. 6: 15.]

6 And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. [Luke 3: 10; Acts 16: 30.]

7 And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. [Dan. 10: 7; Acts 22: 9; 26: 13.

8 And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought *him* into Da-mas'cus.

9 And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.

10 ¶ And there was a certain disciple at Da-mas'cus, named An-a-ni'as; and to him said the Lord in a vision, An-a-ni'as. And he said, Behold, *I am here,* Lord. [Acts 22: 12.]

11 And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Ju'das for *one* called Saul, of Tar'sus: for, behold, he prayeth, [Acts 21: 39; 22: 3.]

12 And hath seen in a vision a man named An-a-ni'as coming in and putting *his* hand on him, that he might receive his sight.

13 Then An-a-ni'as answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Je-ru'sa-lem: [1 Tim. 1: 13.]

14 And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. [1 Cor. 1: 2; 2 Tim. 2: 22.]

15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gen'tiles, and kings, and the children of Is'ra-el: [Rom. 1: 1; Eph. 3: 7, 8; Gal. 2: 7, 8.]

16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. [2 Cor. 11: 23.]

17 And An-a-ni'as went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, *even* Je'sus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. [Acts 2: 22; 12: 13; 13: 52.]

18 And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.

REVISED TEXT.

1 But Saul, yet breathing threatening and
slaughter against the disciples of the Lord,
2 went unto the high priest, and asked of him
letters to Damascus unto the synagogues,
that if he found any that were of the Way,
whether men or women, he might bring them
3 bound to Jerusalem. And as he journeyed,
it came to pass that he drew nigh unto Da-
mascus: and suddenly there shone round
4 about him a light out of heaven: and he fell
upon the earth, and heard a voice saying
unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou
5 me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord?
And he *said*, I am Jesus whom thou perse-
6 cutest: but rise, and enter into the city, and
it shall be told thee what thou must do.
7 And the men that journeyed with him stood
speechless, hearing the voice, but beholding
8 no man. And Saul arose from the earth;
and when his eyes were opened, he saw
nothing; and they led him by the hand, and
9 brought him into Damascus. And he was
three days without sight, and did neither eat
nor drink.
10 Now there was a certain disciple at Da-
mascus, named Ananias; and the Lord said
unto him in a vision, Ananias. And he said,
11 Behold, I *am here*, Lord. And the Lord
said unto him, Arise, and go to the street
which is called Straight, and inquire in the
house of Judas for one named Saul, a man
12 of Tarsus: for behold, he prayeth; and he
hath seen a man named Ananias coming in,
and laying his hands on him, that he might re-
13 ceive his sight. But Ananias answered,
Lord, I have heard from many of this man,
how much evil he did to thy saints at Jerusa-
14 lem: and here he hath authority from the
chief priests to bind all that call upon thy
15 name. But the Lord said unto him, Go thy
way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to
bear my name before the Gentiles and kings,
16 and the children of Israel: for I will shew
him how many things he must suffer for my
17 name's sake. And Ananias departed, and
entered into the house; and laying his hands
on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, *even*
Jesus, who appeared unto thee in the way

which thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with
18 the Holy Ghost. And straightway there fell from his eyes as it were scales, and he received his sight; and he arose and was baptized.

1 *And Saul.* Revised Version: *But* Saul, marking a contrast with the earnest preaching of Philip. Chap. 8: 40. The first mention of Saul was in chap. 7: 58, as a participant in the martyrdom of Stephen. He is mentioned again in chap. 8: 1, 3, as having consented to the death of Stephen, and then as subsequently having laid waste the Church. He was evidently a most bitter and relentless persecutor. How long time had elapsed since the death of Stephen we cannot tell from the record; probably several months. During this time the persecution had gone on with great fierceness, with Saul as its leading spirit. *Yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter.* The words indicate the most intense bitterness in Saul's heart. Compare chap. 22: 4; 26: 10. *Went unto the high priest.* He was *ex officio* president of the Sanhedrim, which had control in all such matters. See chaps. 22: 5; 26: 12, where we learn that the letters were from the elders and the chief priests, that is, probably from the Sanhedrim itself, through the high priest.

2 *Letters to Damascus.* Letters to the rulers of the synagogues authorizing him to search for Christians and bring them away. The question how there came to be Christians in Damascus, may be answered by saying that probably some of the converts on the day of Pentecost were from that city and afterward returned; or that some of those driven away from Jerusalem by persecution (chap. 8: 1, 4) may have gone to Damascus, preaching the gospel there. For history and description of this city, see the Bible dictionaries. The distance from Jerusalem is variously stated at 120 to 160 miles to the north-east. It is probably the oldest city in the world, having been founded according to Josephus by Uz, great-grandson of Noah. It has a present population of above 150,000. *The synagogues.* There were no doubt a number of these, perhaps thirty or forty, as it is supposed there were not less than 40,000 Jews residing in Damascus at that time. *Of this way.* Of this religion, *i. e.*, any Jews who had become believers in Christ. See also chap. 19: 9, 23; 24: 22. The Christians still worshiped in the synagogues with the other Jews, not having separated from them. *Men or women.* The including of women in this persecution shows its cruel fierceness. See also chap. 8: 3; 22: 4. *Unto Jerusalem.* To be tried there before the Sanhedrim, which alone could pronounce the death sentence.

3 *As he journeyed.* The time necessary for making this journey would be five or six days. He may have gone by the Roman road, by way of Neapolis and Scythopolis; or by the Petra road, through Jericho and Heshbon; or by the Egyptian caravan track, which passed north of the Sea of Galilee. *He came near Damascus.* He was allowed to go on until he had nearly completed his journey before he was arrested. *Suddenly there shined.* We gather further facts from the other two accounts of this occurrence given by Paul himself in chaps. 22 and 26. The time was about noon, and the sun's light was at its brightest; yet this great light shone above the brightness of the sun. Paul's companions saw it as well as himself. It was not any natural phenomenon, like lightning. It was not a mere vision, but an actual occurrence. It was nothing less than the appearance to the persecutor of the glorified Jesus. This is evident from the words addressed to Saul: "Why persecutest thou *me?*" Also from what Ananias said to him subsequently (v. 17); from the words of Barnabas (v. 27); and from Paul's own references to the fact that he had seen Jesus. Chap. 22: 14; 1 Cor. 9: 1; 15: 8.

4 *He fell to the earth.* Probably from the beast he was riding. Whether he fell involuntarily, overpowered by the glory of the appearance, or through terror, or whether he voluntarily prostrated himself, is not clearly indicated. He does not seem to have lost his calm presence of mind as he would have done in terror. Those who accompanied him also fell to the ground. *Heard a voice.* In the Hebrew tongue. (26: 14.) *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* The repetition of the name indicated the earnestness of the speaker, and the solemn importance of what was to be spoken to him. The voice was heard by his companions, though the words were not understood by them. v. 7; chap. 22: 9. The question implies a grieved or wronged feeling: "Why?" It will be noticed also that the wrong was personal to Christ: "Why persecutest thou *me?*" His bitter hatred was not against the disciples, but against Jesus himself. Then, every wrong done to a disciple is done to Christ himself. For doctrinal and practical suggestions, see Illustrative Notes.

5 *Who art thou, Lord?* He not only heard the voice but saw the glorious form of him that spoke. This is evident from the references already given under v. 3, and from v. 7, where we are told that those who were with him heard the voice, but did *not* see any man, and from chap. 26: 16, where the Lord speaks of having *appeared* to him. He saw the form before him, but did not yield allegiance to him until he

knew certainly who he was. Compare Josh. 5: 13. *I am Jesus.* He declares himself not as the Son of God, or the Messiah, but by his lowly human name. In chaps. 22 and 26 the answer is, "I am Jesus of Nazareth." He would leave no doubt in Saul's mind regarding his identity as the one whose name he so bitterly hated. *It is hard.* These words are omitted in the Revised Version, as they lack manuscript authority. In chap. 26: 14, however, they are genuine. The expression was proverbial in classical writers. The reference is to the goad, an iron-pointed rod or pole, eight or ten feet in length, which was used instead of a whip in driving oxen. Kicking against this sharp instrument only injured the animal. The expression implies that Saul was only resisting and fighting against God in his mad course of persecution, and the suggestion to him was that such resistance was not only vain but that it could only result in injury to himself. It is supposed by some that there had been promptings, misgivings and doubts started already in the persecutor's mind by the memory of Stephen's face, words and prayer, and by the daily spectacle of the faith of the persecuted believers gladly suffering for Christ's sake.

6 *He trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* These words are omitted in the Revised Version, not having manuscript authority. There is no statement, therefore, in the Scripture to the effect that he *trembled and was astonished*, for neither of the three accounts says so. But the question, "What wilt thou have me to do?" though not in the text here, is given in chap. 22: 10, and therefore belongs to the narrative of the conversion. The question shows a recognition of Jesus as his Lord, and his surrender to him.

7 *The men . . . stood.* According to chap. 26: 14 they fell to the ground. "Stood" here refers not to their posture, but to their sudden stopping and to their condition of amazement or awe. *Hearing . . . but seeing no man.* In chap. 22: 9 Paul says they did *not* hear the voice, *i. e.*, did not understand the words, as Paul himself did. They saw also the light, but Paul alone saw Jesus.

8 *He saw no man.* Revised Version: *Saw nothing*, *i. e.*, was blind. The glory of the light had blinded his eyes. It is supposed that his eyes suffered ever after from a painful disease caused by this dazzling splendor. See Acts 23: 5, where he could not recognize the high priest; Gal. 4: 13–15, where his friends would have given him their own eyes if they could, and Gal. 6: 11, where he speaks of the "large letters," in which he had written the epistle. It is supposed that his "thorn in the flesh" (2 Cor. 12: 7) was disease or dimness in his eyes.

9 *Neither did eat nor drink.* No doubt he spent the time in exercises of repentance, devotion and prayer.

10 *A certain disciple . . . Ananias.* Nothing is known of Ananias beyond what we have here and in chap. 22: 12. Tradition says he became bishop of Damascus and a martyr. He may have been one of the Pentecostal converts, or he may have heard the gospel first from some of the disciples driven from Jerusalem by the persecution. *The Lord.* Jesus. See vs. 13, 14, 17.

11 *The street . . . called Straight.* The principal thoroughfare of the city, running from gate to gate. It was a mile in length and a hundred feet in width, divided into three avenues by Corinthian columns. Tradition still shows the house of Judas, and also on a narrow lane the house of Ananias. *Judas.* Supposed by some to have kept an inn, at which Saul stopped when he entered the city. *Tarsus.* The capital of Cilicia, on the river Cydnus. See Bible Dictionary, or "Life of St. Paul." *Behold, he prayeth.* Mentioned perhaps to help to assure Ananias that Saul was a changed man.

12 *Hath seen . . . a man.* Saul had not previously known Ananias, but had seen him in a vision, coming in and doing just what the Lord now bade Ananias to do. He was thus prepared to receive the messenger.

13, 14 *I have heard . . . how much evil.* He was amazed to hear Saul's name mentioned in this way, and was not ready at first to undertake the commission. News had reached the believers in Damascus of Saul's errand to their city, and they were probably now waiting in dread expectation for him to begin his terrible work. *Thy saints.* The first time this name is applied to believers. It is significant, meaning *holy ones.*

15 *He is a chosen vessel unto me.* Literally, *A vessel of election.* That is, one selected by Christ for the purpose indicated. The figure of a vessel is suggestive. *To bear my name.* Instead of being a destroyer of Christ's name he was to carry it to men who did not yet know it. *Gentiles.* His great work was to be an apostle to the Gentiles. Gal. 1: 16. *Kings.* See chap. 26: 1, 13; 2 Tim. 4: 17. *The children of Israel.* Although he was the apostle to the Gentiles, he always offered the gospel first to the Jews in any place where he preached.

16 *How great things he must suffer.* He was to be a witness for Christ in this way as well as by preaching. See chaps. 20: 23, 25; 21: 11; 2 Cor. 11: 23–28.

17 *Went his way.* No longer doubting. *Putting his hands on him.* Carrying out what Saul had seen in vision. v. 12. *Brother Saul.* He recognized him as no longer a persecutor but a fellow-believer. *That appeared unto thee in the way.* Showing that Saul had seen Jesus in the light. *That thou mightest . . . be filled with the Holy Ghost.* Two blessings were given through Ananias—the restoration of sight and the filling with the Holy Ghost.

18 *There fell . . . scales.* Either the actual falling from his eyes of some films which had grown over them, or more likely referring to a sensation like as if scales fell off. *Arose and was baptized.* At once, apparently, and by Ananias. The fact that Saul was thus baptized, though his conversion was so remarkable, shows the importance of this ordinance and of the public confession connected with it.

[On the work of Ananias, as illustrative of the human part in conversion, see article on another page by the Rev. Chas. A. Dickey, D.D.]

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

Saul, yet breathing threatening and slaughter against the disciples. This is his description when he started on his famous journey to Damascus. It is well to study it closely as a background of the picture we find at the close of the lesson. The Lord is able to take any sort of natural man and make out of him a glorious instrument. John Bunyan and John Newton are examples of the same truth, and there are many more. This shows the marvelous grace of Christ as well as his power. Then it shows also that we should never despair of the conversion of the worst enemies of Christ. The worst infidel of to-day may yet become a preacher of the blessed gospel which he now so violently opposes, and of the Saviour whom now he so wickedly blasphemes.

He . . . heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? Every word here is emphatic. "*Why?*" What could be the reason? What cause had Jesus ever given for such treatment? If he had been a despot or a tyrant when on the earth; if he had gone about burning towns and pillaging and desolating homes, crushing the weak and the poor, and causing pain and poverty and sorrow, there would have been some excuse for Saul's animosity. But he had gone about doing good, scattering blessings, healing, comforting, lifting up, helping, teaching. "*Why* this treatment?" "Why persecutest *thou* me?" The question became personal. He had to stand face to face with the glorified Christ and answer why he, Saul, was his enemy. This personal relation of every human soul to Christ is a very startling thought. We are not lost sight of in any crowd. We must each stand before Christ as individuals and settle our own relation to him. "Why persecutest thou *me?*" He had never lifted a hand against Christ. It is not likely that he ever saw him. This persecution Saul had been carrying on had not touched Christ. Ah! but whatever touched any of his followers touched him. Christ identifies himself so closely with his own people that he feels every pain, every wrong, every cruelty toward any of them as personal to himself. Parents can understand this. If any one strikes my child he strikes me. A husband can understand it. If any one injures his wife the injury touches him. These close human relationships help us to understand how dear believers are to Christ, and how well defended they are. This truth teaches us also to be most careful how we treat others lest we be found lifting up our hand against Christ in the person of some of his lowly followers.

Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Here is a case of immediate surrender to Christ. He had not believed Jesus to be the Messiah. He had supposed him to be but an ordinary man, perhaps self-deceived, perhaps a deceiver. He had supposed that he was dead, and that the belief of his followers in his resurrection was either a delusion on their part or a conspiracy. Now, however, he saw Jesus for himself, saw him living and glorified; heard from his own lips who he was. Before this plain appearance all doubt vanished. He saw that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. And at once he accepted him and yielded to him, transferring his allegiance to him and asking for direction. This second question presents also several emphatic points. "*What* wilt thou have me to do?" Every disciple must do something; every one has a mission. "What wilt *thou?*" Christ has the sole right to command us and give us our work. We get our work from him. "What wilt thou have *me* to do?" Duties are individual. Each one's work is personal. Every one's life is a plan of God. "What wilt thou have me *to do?*" It has been remarked that he showed the same eagerness of zeal that many young converts show, in wanting *to do* something right away, while there was something *to be done* in him first. See v. 16.

Arise and go to the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one named Saul. This remarkable verse shows how intimately acquainted our Lord is with all the circumstances of our lives. He knows our

names and the street and the number of the house in which we live or are stopping, and just what we are doing. We need never fear that we are forgotten or overlooked by him in the crowd, or that he has too many things to do at any moment to attend to our needs. Especially if we are seeking light and peace we may be sure that he keeps his eye upon us and will not fail to send help.

Behold, he prayeth. When men pray on the earth God knows it. A little child sat musing on her mother's knee, and she said to herself: "When I begin to say my prayers, God says to the angels, 'Keep quiet; I hear a noise.' And when they ask 'What noise?' he answers, 'A little girl's noise.' Then all the angels stop their singing and playing on their harps till I say Amen." The child's sweet fancy is not far from the truth. Although God does not need to stop the angels' songs, he does hear every "little girl's noise," and listens till she says Amen. He knows when any one is praying anywhere on this crowded earth.

Lord, I have heard . . . of this man how much evil he did. It is hard for us to believe that a very wicked man has truly been converted. We are apt to doubt his profession. We need to be very careful at this point lest we refuse Christian sympathy and help to one whom Christ wants us to help in starting in his new life.

He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name. Every word here is rich with meaning. He is a "*vessel*"—nothing more. We are nothing in ourselves; we have nothing in ourselves to give to men; we are only vessels to carry that which God may give us. "A *chosen* vessel." He had been chosen from the beginning for the work to which he was now called. See Gal. 1: 15. He spent years as a bitter enemy of Christ, but he was still the Lord's chosen vessel, waiting only the appointed time to be called into service. "*To bear my name.*" That is what God wants us to do in this world, not to carry our own wisdom, our own sympathy and love, our own help, to men, but to carry his name, the messages of his grace and love, the bread from his table.

Ananias . . . laying his hands on him said, Brother Saul, . . . Jesus . . . hath sent me. God often uses his human servants to answer men's prayers. He likes to send blessings to distressed souls through human hands. We should always be ready to impart comfort or strength or to give help or joy to other souls, for it may be that God has sent us to them for this very purpose. We should give a cordial welcome and prompt brotherly friendship to every new convert. He may never need our help so much again as just at the beginning. A hand of friendship now may lead him into the light; that hand withheld may leave him to walk long in darkness.

LESSON POINTS.

1. The fact that one is an enemy of Christ to-day is no proof that he may not to-morrow be a devout Christian. v. 1.

2. Conversions differ in their manner. Compare Saul's and that of the man of Ethiopia.

3. When a sinner meets Christ he sees himself also in the glorious light and all his sin and guilt. vs. 4, 5.

4. Note the wondrous grace of Christ as seen in his taking this persecutor as an object of mercy, and in his gentleness toward him in all this story. v. 4; 1 Tim. 1: 16.

5. Christ's oneness with his people is so complete that he feels all their wrongs as his own. vs. 4, 5.

6. Note Christ's intimate knowledge of both his enemies and his friends. vs. 4, 5, 10, 11.

7. It is always hard to fight against God. v. 5.

8. True conversion is full and hearty surrender to Christ. v. 6.

9. The Lord uses human hands to help in saving souls. v. 10. (For illustration see John 11: 44.)

10. Prayer is an evidence of conversion. v. 11.

11. We must be careful not to doubt the conversion of a sinner, lest we refuse to help a penitent soul that God has chosen. v. 13.

12. Christ has a plan for every one's life. v. 15.

13. We should be ready always to give a hand of true fellowship to young converts. v. 17.

14. Conversion is a passage from darkness to light. v. 18.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

Saul's conversion is the grandest individual epoch in church history. Its effects are widening still after eighteen centuries, and ever will endure.

Begin with a review-glance at Philip and the Ethiopian, Philip's journey, the circumstances of the Ethiopian's conversion and baptism. Then ask, Whose conversion and baptism do we study to-day? Whose journey do we trace? Whither? Point out the probable course on the map. Call for report on the journey assigned last Sabbath. Then give a bird's-eye view of the lesson on paper pad or slate or blackboard.

Saul's Conversion { *From Mad Persecution.* vs. 1, 2.
By the Glorified Jesus. vs. 3–7.
Completed through Ananias. vs. 8–18. }

I. FROM MAD PERSECUTION. vs. 1, 2.

Paul afterward said (Acts 26: 11), "Being

exceeding mad against them I persecuted them, even unto strange cities." Call for all facts known in Saul's history previous to his conversion. See "Westminster Normal Outlines," Middle Course. Chap. VII. You will be obliged to pass rapidly over this to save time for the story of his conversion. Where was Saul born? Of what tribe was he? Rom. 11: 1; Phil. 3: 5. Of what sect were his parents? Acts 23: 6. What Roman privilege had his father possessed? Acts 22: 28. How did the Jews train their children? Deut. 6: 6–9. What trade did Saul learn? Acts 18: 3. Where did Saul finish his education? Under whom? Acts 22: 3. What was his thought toward Christ? Acts 26: 9, 11. Read descriptions of his persecution in chaps. 9: 1, 2; 22: 5; 8: 3. With what authority was he armed? 26: 12. Picture one of his raids on Christians. A humble home in Jerusalem; midnight; door broken in; father, sons, and even mother and daughters arrested (8: 3; 9: 2; 22: 4); dragged into synagogues. Saul tries to make them blaspheme Jesus. Acts 26: 11. If they will not, off he hurries them to prison or to death. 22: 4, 19; 26: 10. Was Saul conscientious in all this? Read again Acts 26: 9; 22: 3; Gal. 1: 14; Phil. 3: 6. Prove that in spite of his conscientiousness he was sinning. 1 Tim. 1: 13, 16.

II. By the Glorified Jesus. vs. 3–7.

1. Picture the scene of Saul's company approaching Damascus? What hour was it? What were Saul's thoughts and feelings? Describe the flash of light, the fall to the earth, the terror, the amazement, the confession, the bewilderment of Saul's companions.

2. *The Overwhelming Vision.*—Do not attempt to enlarge on this. Let no one explain away the miraculous character of this sight of the glorified Jesus by Saul. It was no mental impression merely, like a vision in a trance or ecstacy. Saul saw Jesus with his bodily eyes. Heard Jesus with his bodily ears. Explain the conversation between Jesus and Saul. In what way does Jesus appear to every sinner at his conversion? John 16: 14, 15. What is the difference between this and Jesus' appearance to Saul at his conversion? In what are the two appearances alike? Have you ever seen Jesus with your soul?

III. Completed through Ananias. vs. 8–18.

Draw from the class the facts of Saul's blindness; the contrast between his intended and his actual entrance into Damascus; his fasting and praying. You will have little time to give to the interesting two-fold vision—part to Saul, part to Ananias. The fear of Ananias and Christ's encouraging words are worthy of earnest study. One question should not be omitted: *Why did Jesus select a humble private Christian, Ananias, to minister to Saul?* (See article by Dr. Dickey.) Reserve a little time for this question. What is the most important lesson which comes to your mind from Saul's conversion? Let each give that which seems to him most useful? What was Paul's great lesson? 1 Tim. 1: 13–16.

Points in the lesson for April 22d to be assigned:

In giving out next lesson, stir up as you best can an interest in its study during the week—

1. Work for young converts.
2. Wall windows in ancient cities.
3. Care for young converts by the Church.
4. History of Barnabas.
5. Saul's three years in Arabia. Gal. 1: 18. See Conybeare and Howson. Chapter III.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Central Topic.—The contrast in Saul's character.

The extreme length of the lesson and the absorbing interest of the story, make it unnecessary, possibly unwise, to use much object illustration. Let the blackboard work be very simple. A mark in the sin-color for Saul. Review former lesson, letting class call him to mind as a willing witnesser of Stephen's death. Here we meet him again. What is his business? Perhaps a piece of brown paper with something like the following written on it may help the children to understand his errand to Damascus:

> "I give this man power to bind in chains and bring to Jerusalem all people whom he finds who are followers of one Jesus.
> "Signed, High Priest."

Make an outline map, locating Jerusalem and Damascus. Especially give a little description of the beautiful street named Straight, and make a square for the house of Judas. You are now ready for the details of the story. Encourage the children to give the particulars in clear, terse language. Remember, he was near Damascus when the bright light arrested him. Make a mark for him near that city, still using the sin-color. As you get from the children the sentence, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" make a red line, leading upward, to stand for prayer. Saul's first prayer to Jesus, whose disciples he was persecuting. Also, at this point, cover the sin-color with white. Why? Saul is already a sinner saved, because he has shown that he is ready to obey Jesus; therefore God will not look upon him as a sinner any more,

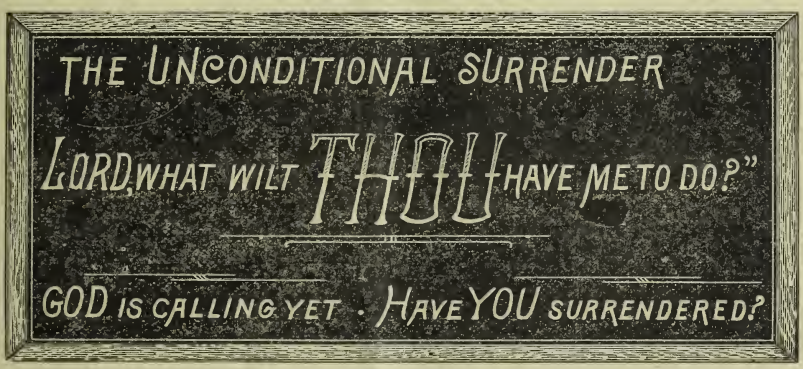
but for Jesus' sake will forgive him. The rest of the story the teacher will probably have to tell. It can be made intensely interesting. Imagine the rest of the journey, Saul having to grope along in darkness. Imagine him spending three days alone, eating nothing, thinking, praying. Then take the class with you to the house of Ananias. He knows about Saul, is afraid of him, has heard that he has come to destroy all Christians; but here comes a message from God: "Ananias, go down to Straight street, to Judas' house, and ask for Saul, for behold he prayeth." Wonderful news this. Too good for Ananias to believe. He waits to talk about it, but God tells him to go. Follow him there. Imagine him, trembling a little perhaps, asking for that dreadful Saul; yet he calls him when he sees him, "Brother Saul," and through Ananias God gives Saul back his sight. I hardly know of a story which can be made more fascinating to the children than this. The question is, what to do with it after it is told? And here teachers will differ. If you dwell on the contrast between Saul persecuting and Saul praying, you have material enough. The application is obvious. A habitually naughty child, after he has begun to pray in earnest, will show it in his life. Tommy who learns to pray, will not be the Tommy whose word could not be trusted. Praying Jimmy will not be called "fighting Jimmy" any more.

Perhaps you will wish to make central the fact that when Saul ill-treated Christians, Jesus said he was ill-treating him. A very little child once had this lesson so carefully taught her that when on one occasion, having become angry, she slapped her little brother, who was a sweet child, younger than herself, she wept bitterly at night, and told her mamma that she had slapped Jesus. It is an important lesson to impress. "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these," etc., would be the Bible verse to teach. But it may be you will want to dwell on the words of Saul's first prayer. What will Jesus have the children do? He answered Saul, he will answer them. Often he sends their memories to some Bible verse, and says, "Do that."

The golden text may be linked to the lesson by teaching that none truly have sight until they learn to see Jesus as their Saviour. There are still several ways in which the primary teacher might secure golden truth from it. Each must choose a portion; but be careful not to try to impress too many lessons at once.

The *Westminster Primary Leaf* holds principally to the central thought as set down at the head of this paper.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



SUGGESTIONS.—The proud Pharisee and persecutor of the Church, on his way to Damascus, is arrested by the power of divine grace and surrenders to the Lord Jesus Christ. The surrender is unconditional. "*Lord, what wilt* THOU have me to do?" The lesson to be impressed is plain. Christ meets us in the way, not in any such burst of light as Saul saw, but just as really. It is against *him* that we are fighting if we are still impenitent. Our duty is to yield to him, to yield *at once;* to yield *unconditionally;* to yield *unreservedly*, and to put ourselves at once under his commands. God is calling yet to sinners everywhere, and it is wise to surrender to him. Become his friend and enter his service, and do so at once. We must not wait for some wonderful revelation before becoming Christians. God's invitations and warnings are against delaying.

Directions for Coloring.—"Lord what wilt thou, etc.," white, the word *thou* shaded heavily with orange; the upper and lower lines orange shaded with green.

Lesson IV. **SAUL PREACHING CHRIST.** April 22d, 1883.

Acts 9: 19-31. Memorize vs. 20-22.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"He which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed."—Gal. 1: 23.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 9: 19-31.....*Saul's Early Ministry.*
T. Gal. 1: 11-24.....*Paul Preaching.*
W. Ps. 40: 1-17.....*Righteousness Preached.*
Th. 2 Cor. 11: 24-33.....*Paul in Peril.*
F. Rom. 1: 1-17.....*Not Ashamed of the Gospel.*
S. 1 Cor. 3: 1-23.....*The True Foundation.*
S. Col. 2: 6-23.....*Complete in Christ.*

TOPIC.

The Convert's Early Experience.

LESSON PLAN.

1. Amazed Hearers. vs. 19-22. **2. Conspiring Enemies.** vs. 23-25. **3. Distrustful Believers.** vs. 26-31.

Time.—A. D. 37-40. **Places.**—Damascus—Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 15. *What was the sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created?* A. The sin, whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created, was their eating the forbidden fruit.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 640: "Blow ye the trumpet, blow." Other hymns, 603, 621, 625, 951.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—In the last lesson we studied the narrative of Saul's wonderful conversion; in this we see how he proved the sincerity and genuineness of his conversion by immediately testifying in behalf of the Jesus whose name and followers he had sought so fiercely to destroy. He drew upon himself the bitter hatred of his former friends, and was compelled to leave Damascus, whence he went into Arabia.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

19 And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Da-mas'cus. [Acts 26: 20.]

20 And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. [Acts 8: 37.]

21 But all that heard *him* were amazed, and said, Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Je-ru'sa-lem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests? [Acts 8: 3; Gal. 1: 13-23.]

22 But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Da-mas'cus, proving that this is very Christ. [Acts 18: 28.]

23 ¶ And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him: [2 Cor. 11: 26.]

24 But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him: [2 Cor. 11: 32.]

25 Then the disciples took him by night, and let *him* down by the wall in a basket. [Josh. 2: 15; 1 Sam. 19: 12.]

26 And when Saul was come to Je-ru'salem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. [Acts 22: 17; Gal. 1: 17, 18.]

27 But Bar'na-bas took him, and brought *him* to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Da-mas'cus in the name of Je'sus. [Acts 4: 36; 9: 20-22; 13: 2.]

28 And he was with them coming in and going out at Je-ru'salem. [Gal. 1: 18.]

29 And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Je'sus, and disputed against the Gre'cians: but they went about to slay him. [Acts 6: 1; 11: 20; 2 Cor. 11: 26.]

30 *Which* when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Cæs-a-re'a, and sent him forth to Tar'sus.

31 Then had the churches rest throughout all Ju-dæ'a and Gal'i-lee and Sa-ma'ri-a, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied. [Acts 8: 1.]

REVISED TEXT.

19 And he took food and was strengthened.
And he was certain days with the disciples
20 which were at Damascus. And straightway
in the synagogues he proclaimed Jesus, that
21 he is the Son of God. And all that heard
him were amazed, and said, Is not this he
that in Jerusalem made havock of them
which called on this name? and he had
come hither for this intent, that he might
bring them bound before the chief priests.
22 But Saul increased the more in strength, and
confounded the Jews which dwelt at Da-
mascus, proving that this is the Christ.
23 And when many days were fulfilled, the
24 Jews took counsel together to kill him: but
their plot became known to Saul. And they
watched the gates also day and night that
25 they might kill him: but his disciples took
him by night, and let him down through the
wall, lowering him in a basket.
26 And when he was come to Jerusalem, he as-
sayed to join himself to the disciples: and they
were all afraid of him, not believing that he
27 was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and
brought him to the apostles, and declared
unto them how he had seen the Lord in the

way, and that he had spoken to him, and
how at Damascus he had preached boldly in
28 the name of Jesus. And he was with them
29 going in and going out at Jerusalem, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord: and he spake and disputed against the Grecian Jews;
30 but they went about to kill him. And when the brethren knew it, they brought him down to Cæsarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus.
31 So the church throughout all Judæa and Galilee and Samaria had peace, being edified; and, walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, was multiplied.

19 *Certain days.* Perhaps but a short time. *With the disciples.* It is probable that there were many believers in Damascus. The fact that Saul had come so far on his errand of persecution implies this. His staying with them these days would satisfy them that he was truly converted.

20 *Straightway he preached Christ.* Immediately, as soon as he had been baptized and had received the Holy Ghost. He had set out to Damascus with letters to the officers of the synagogues, authorizing him to arrest all believers in Christ; but he appears now in the synagogues as himself a believer in Christ, and proclaiming Christ's Messiahship to all.

21 *All . . . were amazed.* His former bitterness against Jesus was well known, and his sudden conversion caused great astonishment.

22 *Saul increased the more.* He grew in grace. He became more and more earnest and powerful as a preacher. See Eph. 3: 16–19. *Confounding the Jews.* Presenting arguments which they could not answer. *Proving.* From their Scriptures, comparing prophecies.

23 *After that many days were fulfilled.* In Gal. 1: 17, 18, Paul mentions other facts. He did not go up to Jerusalem at once, but went into Arabia and returned again to Damascus, and then after three years went up to Jerusalem. It is probable then that immediately after his conversion he remained for a few days at Damascus, preaching Jesus in the synagogues; that he then went to Arabia, where he remained for some time; that he then returned to Damascus and again preached in the synagogues, being finally driven away by the attempts on his life. The full time from his conversion until he went to Jerusalem was three years; *i. e.*, according to the mode of reckoning time then common, at least one full year, with fractions of two others. *The Jews took counsel.* Conspired to assassinate him.

24 *Laying await.* Revised Version: *Plot. They watched the gates.* The governor or ethnarch assisted the Jews, furnishing soldiers to guard the gates to prevent his escape. See 2 Cor. 11: 32.

25 *Then the disciples took him.* Revised Version: *His* disciples, *i. e.*, converts made by his preaching. See 2 Cor. 11: 33 for Paul's own description of this incident. It was in a basket made of rope woven together that he was let down; and it was *through a window* that he was lowered. It was probably through a window of a house built on the city wall, the window projecting beyond the wall.

26 *When Saul was come to Jerusalem.* See Gal. 1: 18, where he tells us that the object of his visit was to see Peter, though for what purpose he does not state. From Acts 22: 17–21 we infer that he wanted to preach at Jerusalem, to help to undo some of the evil he had wrought there in former days; but this he was not permitted to do. *He assayed to join himself to the disciples.* He wished to be received as a fellow disciple. *They were all afraid of him.* With their recollections of his former cruel persecutions yet fresh in mind they could not believe that he was truly converted, but thought he must be a hypocrite, or perhaps only feigning to be a Christian in order to destroy them.

27 *Barnabas.* See Acts 4: 36, 37. He was from Cyprus, not far from Cilicia, Saul's home. He may have known Saul personally; at least he had become acquainted with the facts of Saul's conversion, and was convinced that he was truly a disciple. *Brought him to the apostles.* Gal. 1: 19. He was ready to vouch for him.

28 *Was with them.* Fifteen days. Gal. 1: 18. *Coming in and going out.* Implying intimate fellowship after Barnabas had presented him.

29 *Disputed against the Grecians.* Revised Version: *Grecian Jews.* The same class with whom Stephen had contended, thus taking up Stephen's unfinished work. *But they went about to slay him.* Plotting secretly to assassinate him.

30 *Which when the brethren knew.* Learning of the feeling against him and the wicked purpose of the Jews, they quietly took him away. It was probably at the same time that Paul received the divine command to depart. Chap. 22: 17–21. *To Cæsarea.* On the Mediterranean Sea, forty-seven miles north-west from Jerusalem. *To Tarsus.* Either by sea or along the coast. This was his own native place. See Gal. 1: 21. There he remained till summoned by Barnabas (chap. 11: 25, 26) to Antioch to preach there. We have no record of his work in and about Tarsus.

31 *Then had the churches rest.* Rest from persecution, since the great leader of the persecution was now himself a Christian. There was

another reason also for this rest. The Jews were terribly excited at this time by the demand of Caligula that his statue should be set up in the temple, and that he should be received as a god as elsewhere in the Roman Empire. This drew off the thoughts of the Jewish rulers for the time from the Christians, and thus contributed to the "rest" which the Church enjoyed.

Were edified. Built up; continued to grow in grace and spiritual life. *Walking . . . were multiplied. Edified* refers to the inner spiritual growth of the believers; and *multiplied* to the increase of the numbers of the members in the churches. *Fear of the Lord.* Reverence and love, leading to obedience. *Comfort of the Holy Ghost.* Enjoying his continual presence and help.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

He was certain days with the disciples. That was not the way he meant to pass his time in Damascus. He intended to search out all the believers in the city and drag them off to Jerusalem for trial, and perhaps for death. He intended to begin a fierce and unrelenting persecution against the disciples. Instead of this, however, we find him here "with the disciples" in close and loving fellowship. He came hating them; he stays loving them and forming close friendships with them. He came to destroy; he stays to help. This shows what the grace of God can do, what one look at Jesus can do.

Straightway in the synagogues he proclaimed Jesus. Here is an example for all young converts. They should at once begin to testify for Christ. They should immediately show where they stand. It is better for themselves, for by boldly confessing Jesus before the world they cut themselves loose from all entanglements. A young sailor was converted at the Mariners' Bethel, New York. One evening at the close of a service he came to the minister in charge with a large card and asked him if he would write something on it for him. "You can do it better than I can,' he said. The minister took the card and asked, "What shall I write?" "Put on it," said the young seaman, "'I love Jesus—Do you?' Make it large and plain." When the words were written the minister asked him what he was going to do with the card. "I go to sea to-morrow," he replied, "and I am going to tack this on my bunk before I sail, and then they will all know at once where I stand." He did the right thing. He took his true place at first, and there was no question after that as to where he stood. A Christian who has not come out boldly is always entangled by his old associations. He had better cut all entanglements by coming clear out at first. This is the true way, too, to honor Christ. As soon as he has saved us and we have given ourselves to him, we should begin to serve him and work for him. There was another strong impulse in Saul's case. He had been a bitter persecutor. He had done all he could to destroy the cause of Christ. Now he felt an irresistible desire to correct and undo the evil he had wrought. Still another motive in the same direction is our duty to others. We have found Christ ourselves, and we should seek at once to have others receive the same blessing.

Is not this he that . . . made havoc of them that called on this name? Yes, the same man. Yet it is no wonder the people could scarcely believe it. Surely it was a marvellous transformation. It would indeed be far less strange if we saw a lion changed into the gentleness and harmlessness of a lamb. We must not fail to ask how this transformation was wrought. Was it the result merely of Saul's own meditations and reflections on the way to Damascus? Was it caused by a lightning flash which stunned and blinded him and threw him from his horse, thus frightening him? Was it effected by the talk he had with Ananias and his earnest words in the house of Judas? Was he won over by the disciples into whose company he had fallen? The simple answer to the question is that he met Jesus in the way and was thoroughly convinced that he was the Messiah, and at once accepted him as such; and that he received the Holy Ghost when Ananias visited him. The change was wrought therefore by seeing Christ, believing on him and being filled with the Holy Spirit. It was as much a divine work as was the creation of Adam. This same power is working in Christianity wherever it goes. That is what gives such triumphs to the gospel everywhere.

Saul increased the more in strength. This is another point to be marked in the history of this young convert. He seemed very earnest at first, but he *grew* in grace. He became stronger—stronger in faith, stronger in purpose, stronger in work and argument, and stronger in influence. The same should be true of every young Christian. No matter how well he starts, his course should be like "the shining light, that shineth more and more, unto the perfect day." Faithfulness is good in a Christian, but progress is better. There are too many people who enter the Church and never get past their starting point. Babies are very sweet and beautiful, but we would not want them always to remain babies. Yet a good many Christians remain "babes" all their life. See Eph. 4: 13–15 for a description of what should and should not be

the history of every Christian life. Saul is an example of the right kind of life. He *grew.*

The Jews took counsel together to kill him. The world does not like earnestness. It *has* killed many of its best and most earnest men, and has persecuted many more. So long as a man moves on quietly and takes no decided stand, and does not have any opinions of his own, or if he has does not press them with any particular ardor, the world will let him live in peace, and will pat him on the back and call him "good fellow." But let him grow earnest and begin to think for himself, and then put emphasis into his utterances, and begin to work with zeal and intensity and enthusiasm, and the world wants to kill him. It is a great deal easier and safer just to live quietly and never speak out and never grow enthusiastic. Whether it is the *better* way is another question.

He assayed to join himself to the disciples; and they were all afraid of him. A bad name clings to a man for a long time. It is almost impossible to outgrow it. One's past life throws a shadow over one, from which it is hard to escape. It takes a good many years sometimes of faithful life and service to win back the confidence which has been forfeited by a very brief period of wrong living.

But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. Here we have an illustration of the office and the value of true Christian friendship. Saul yet lay under suspicion among those who had known him in his former days as a fierce enemy of Christianity. Barnabas knew that he was now a sincere Christian and ought to be no longer under suspicion, and he became his friend, speaking manly words for him and winning for him the confidence of the other believers. It was a noble and beautiful act, and shows us what we should be ready to do on every similar occasion. How much help it was to Saul we can easily understand. Many a young Christian needs just such a friend as Barnabas was to Saul. Most of us have known others who were unjustly under suspicion, who were suffering from some past error, or who were misunderstood. Have we spoken the few brave words needed to set them in proper light? It is very easy to fall into the current that sets against another, or to keep quiet even when we know the person is unjustly blamed; but it is not the Christian way. The way Barnabas did is the Christian way.

LESSON POINTS.

1. The young convert chooses Christ's disciples as his companions and friends. v. 19.

2. He immediately confesses Christ in public and begins to try to win others to him. v. 20.

3. He shows the proofs of entire change of heart and transformation of life. v. 21.

4. He is a growing Christian, increasing in knowledge and power. v. 22.

5. He is called to endure enmity and persecution for Christ's sake. v. 23.

[The above points are suggestive of what the early Christian life of every young convert should show.]

6. It is very hard to live down a wicked life, or to get clear of a bad name. v. 26.

7. We should be ready to speak a manly word for one whom we know to be under unjust suspicion. v. 27.

8. We see what true Christian friendship can do for one unjustly blamed. v. 28.

9. The Lord raises up the chief persecutor to carry on the work the dead witness had begun. v. 29, with chap. 6.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

Take time for a *thorough* review of the last lesson. In to-day's lesson you have

THE MODEL CONVERT.

In 1 Cor. 11: 1 Paul writes: "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." Are there some young converts in your class? Make the entire lesson helpful to them. Have in your mind and on your paper pad—not to be exhibited to the class before or during the lesson—but to be your guide during your teaching, and at the end of the lesson to be shown to the class, this outline—

THE MODEL CONVERT
- *Communing with Christians.* v. 19.
- *Testifying for Jesus.* v. 20.
- *Bearing Suspicion.* vs. 21, 26.
- *Growing in Knowledge and Courage.* v. 22.
- *Enduring Danger for Christ.* vs. 23–25.
- *Honoring Church Leaders.* vs. 27, 28.
- *Disputing Patiently with Enemies.* v. 29.
- *Submitting to Christ's Word.* v. 29, 30; Acts 22: 21.

Question on and illustrate each of these eight points; thus, or in some other way—

I. On what errand had Saul come to Damascus? How did he expect to treat Christ's disciples there? How did he in fact treat them? On what accounts is Christian fellowship helpful to a young Christian? Illustrate this. His heart is encouraged by sympathy, his faith and

love are increased. How should experienced Christians treat young converts? 1 Thess. 2: 7, 8; John 21: 15.

II. V. 20. What kind of preaching was this of Saul? Was it the preaching of an apostle or a minister? Or was it simply that testimony for Jesus which every Christian should give? I think the latter. All believers are to strive to bring others to him. Ps. 40: 9, 10; Isa. 43: 10; Matt. 5: 14–16; Acts 8: 4; Rev. 22: 17. What did Saul tell concerning Jesus? How did he know that Jesus is the Son of God? See v. 5. How do you know that? What motive had Saul for preaching Christ? 2 Cor. 5: 14; 1 Tim. 1: 15. What would you do for a man who had rescued you from a burning hotel or from drowning? How shall we show our gratitude to Jesus? What effect will the young convert's testimony have on others? What effect will it have on himself? How soon should a young Christian work for Jesus?

III. What suspicion did Saul suffer? How are some converts now tried in the same way? Illustrate this. Draw from the class facts showing that notorious sinners, even when converted, are not trusted at once.

IV. V. 22. Show by questions and illustrations that as Saul grew so *all converts* will grow if they continue in fellowship with Christians.

V. Vs. 23–25. What danger threatened Saul? Describe ancient city walls and windows in them. See Freeman's "Hand-book of Bible Manners and Customs," No. 871. After such a vision of Jesus, why should Saul fly from danger? Matt. 10: 23. Of what was this danger the beginning? Read 2 Cor. 11: 23–33. How does this illustrate Acts 9: 16? What dangers must we endure for Christ's cause?

VI. Vs. 27, 28. Why did Saul desire to see Jerusalem again? Gal. 1: 18.

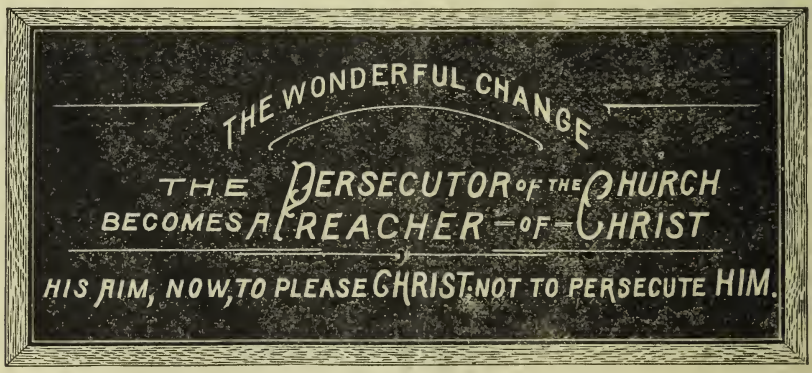
VII. V. 29. With what class of Jews did Saul dispute? Who before him had disputed with the same? Acts 6: 9.

VIII. Vs. 29, 30; Acts 22: 21. What occasioned Saul's sudden departure to Tarsus. vs. 29, 30. What could Saul do for Christ in Tarsus? Luke 8: 39. How do you know this was ordered by the Lord? Acts 22: 21. When should a good soldier retreat? *Have the class copy your outline.*

Points in the lesson for Sabbath, April 29th, to be assigned to special scholars:

1. Geographical references in the lesson.
2. The apostles' supervision of all the churches.
3. Woman's work in the early Church, giving a list of references from the Gospels, Acts and the Epistles.
4. Woman's work in the Church to-day.
5. Differences between the miracles of Christ and those of the apostles.
6. Luther's prayer for Melancthon at Weimar in 1541. See MacCracken's "Leaders of the Church Universal," page 287.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



SUGGESTIONS.—To show the wonderful change in the man whom God arrested and who had surrendered unconditionally to the Lord Jesus Christ. Before conversion *oppression*, after conversion *obedience*. Once the persecutor of the Church; now gladly entering upon his sufferings for the Church. "Old things are passed away." Preaching Christ, he increases in strength. "Behold the power of divine grace. It converts the ravening wolf, first of all, into a peaceful lamb, and then into a faithful shepherd. It first breaks off the point of the persecutor's menacing spear, and then converts the latter into the shepherd's crook."

Directions as to Coloring.—"The wonderful change," yellow shaded with pearl; the lower line ("His aim, etc.,") orange; the two centre lines white, shaded with light blue.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The Teacher before her Class.—This square which I make on the board stands for a synagogue. What is a synagogue? Here is a mark for the preacher. Do you know his name? (Here review last lesson carefully.)

Do you remember a lesson which we had about a leaf torn in two? (Show leaf thus torn.) What did we learn from it? Well, here is Saul doing much the same thing that Philip did; taking the description of the Saviour as he found it in the Old Testament, and showing the people that it fitted the story of Jesus' life, just as these parts of a leaf fit together, proving to you that they are one leaf.

How astonished the people were. They said: "Is not this the man who came here to bind all the people who loved Jesus? And now he is telling us to love him!" Do you know what else was said? (Lead class to answer in the words of the golden text.)

How did Saul show that he was a changed man? How did the Jews show on which side they were? See, I am making a line right through this church; people sitting side by side, looking much alike, yet here comes this line separating them. Some on one side, some on the other. Some for Jesus, some against him. Did you learn the verse on your leaf that begins—

"If you love me, Jesus said,
You must show it."

Let us recite it now. What is there in our lesson about a basket? Let us all look at the picture on our pink lesson papers. What is going on here? (Question to draw out the minutest detail.)

When Saul was safe in Jerusalem, what was the first thing he did to show that he was a very different man from the one who went from there to Damascus?

How did the disciples act toward him? What do you think made them so afraid of him? That reminds me of a story: There was once a little boy who was always doing something to tease and frighten those who were younger than himself. They were all afraid of him. One night his mamma talked with him about this habit, told him how sad it made her, and he thought about it a good while, and decided to give up the naughty habit. The very next morning he met a little bit of a boy, who was crying because he was afraid to cross the log to get to the other side of a stream where his sister was. Charlie, the boy who had made up his mind to reform, offered to carry him across, but the little fellow was afraid of him; was sure he would be tumbled into the stream, and cried harder than ever. Whose fault do you think it was that the children were afraid of this boy? (Develop the fact that both Saul and the child were suffering the fruits of former sins.)

Suppose this synagogue was a picture of our church, and this line ran right through our class room, and all on the right were friends of Jesus, and all on the left were his enemies, try to think on which side you would be.

Now let us all try to think of ways in which we might have shown people to-day that we were friends of Jesus. Have you each had a chance to do this? How many can tell me of one way? (By this question, and others growing out of it, lead class to realize in what little ways they can witness for Jesus.)

The above is only a hint of the colloquial method of presenting this lesson.

Lesson V. **PETER WORKING MIRACLES.** April 29th, 1883.

Acts 9: 32–43. Memorize vs. 32–35.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Jesus Christ maketh thee whole."—Acts 9: 34.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 9: 32–43....*Peter Working Miracles.*
T. Prov. 31: 10–31...*"Her Own Works Praise Her."*
W. 2 Kings 4: 18–37. *The Shunammite's Son.*
Th. Matt. 9: 18–38...*Jairus's Daughter.*
F. Luke 7: 1–18....*The Widow's Son Raised.*
S. John 11: 1–25 ...*Lazarus Restored.*
S. 1 Cor. 15: 12–23. *The Resurrection.*

TOPIC.

Christ the Giver of Health and Life.

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Healing of Æneas. vs. 32–35. **2. The Mourning for Dorcas.** vs. 36–39. **3. Her Restoration to Life.** vs. 40–43.

Time.—Probably about A. D. 40. **Places.**—Lydda and Joppa.

Catechism.—Q. 16. *Did all mankind fall in Adam's first transgression?* A. The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself, but for his posterity; all mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him, in his first transgression.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 200: "Jesus, engrave it on my heart." Other hymns, 290, 305, 320.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—During the persecution Peter had remained at Jerusalem. Chap. 8: 1. After this he made a tour of the churches. It cannot be definitely settled from the narrative here whether this tour was made before Saul's visit to Peter at Jerusalem or afterwards; probably it was before, and the historian now goes back to bring up the story of Peter's work which he had dropped at chap. 8: 14–25. The incidents recorded in this lesson passage, and the record following, to chap. 11: 18, belong to this tour of Peter among the churches.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

32 ¶ And it came to pass, as Pe'ter passed throughout all *quarters*, he came down also to the saints which dwelt at Lyd'da. [Gal. 2: 7–9; Rom. 1: 7.]

33 And there he found a certain man named Æ'ne-as, which had kept his bed eight years, and was sick of the palsy.

34 And Pe'ter said unto him, Æ'ne-as, Je'sus Christ maketh thee whole: arise, and make thy bed. And he arose immediately. [Acts 4: 10.]

35 And all that dwelt at Lyd'da and Sa'ron saw him, and turned to the Lord. [Isa. 31: 6; Lam. 3: 40.]

36 ¶ Now there was at Jop'pa a certain disciple named Tab'i-tha, which by interpretation is called Dor'cas: this woman was full of good works and alms-deeds which she did. [Eph. 2: 10; Phil. 1: 11; Col. 1: 10.]

37 And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid *her* in an upper chamber.

38 And forasmuch as Lyd'da was nigh to Jop'pa, and the disciples had heard that Pe'ter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring *him* that he would not delay to come to them. [2 Kings 4: 22–30.]

39 Then Pe'ter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dor'cas made, while she was with them. [Prov. 10: 7; 1 Thess. 4: 13.]

40 But Pe'ter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning *him* to the body said, Tab'i-tha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Pe'ter, she sat up. [Luke 8: 54.]

41 And he gave her *his* hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive. [Mark 1: 31; Ps. 146: 9.]

42 And it was known throughout all Jop'pa; and many believed in the Lord. [John 11: 45.]

43 And it came to pass, that he tarried many days in Jop'pa with one Si'mon a tanner.

REVISED TEXT.

32 And it came to pass, as Peter went throughout all parts, he came down also to the saints
33 which dwelt at Lydda. And there he found a certain man named Æneas, which had kept his bed eight years; for he was palsied.
34 And Peter said unto him, Æneas, Jesus Christ healeth thee: arise, and make thy
35 bed. And straightway he arose. And all that dwelt at Lydda and in Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord.
36 Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good
37 works and almsdeeds which she did. And it came to pass in those days, that she fell sick, and died: and when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper chamber.
38 And as Lydda was nigh unto Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men unto him, intreating him, Delay not to
39 come on unto us. And Peter arose and went with them. And when he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas
40 made, while she was with them. But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning to the body, he said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes;
41 and when she saw Peter, she sat up. And he gave her his hand, and raised her up; and calling the saints and widows, he pre-
42 sented her alive. And it became known throughout all Joppa: and many believed
43 on the Lord. And it came to pass, that he abode many days in Joppa with one Simon a tanner.

32 *Throughout all quarters.* Revised Version: *All parts.* He paid an apostolic visit to all the points at which there were disciples. It was not a missionary tour, but a visit to the Christians at different places, no doubt to confirm and strengthen them. *The saints.* See notes on v. 13, Lesson of April 15th. *At Lydda.* A town of considerable note in history. It was known as Lod in Old Testament records. 1 Chron. 8: 12; Ezra 2: 33; Neh. 7: 37; 11: 35. It was about eighteen miles northwest from Jerusalem. It was at one time a great seat of learning, having seventy Jewish schools. It subsequently became quite prominent as a Christian centre. It was the birth-place and also the place of burial of St. George, the so-called patron saint of England. The modern Ludd, or Lidd, is but a village, distinguished only for the ruins of a magnificent church erected in honor of St. George.

33 *Æneas.* Probably a Grecian Jew, and one of "the saints." *Eight years . . . palsy.* The case had been of such long standing, and was of such a nature, that there can be no doubt of the miraculous character of the healing.

34 *Peter said.* There seems to have been no request for healing. The case is similar to that

at the beautiful gate. Chap. 3: 4. *Jesus Christ maketh thee whole.* Observe how he withdraws himself from view and honors Christ. Compare this healing with the miracles wrought by Christ himself: "Take up thy bed and walk;" "I say unto thee, arise;" "Lazarus, come forth;" "Be opened." Christ spoke in his own name; the apostle healed only in Christ's name, or as here, simply announced what Christ was about to do. *Make thy bed.* For eight years he had lain helpless *upon* his bed; now he is commanded to arise and do that which had so long of necessity been done for him. *He arose immediately.* This showed that he had been instantly healed, and his full strength restored. His rising showed that his lower limbs were strong again; his spreading his bed showed that he could use his hands and arms.

35 *Saron.* Sharon, a level and very fruitful plain, in the midst of which Lydda stood. *Saw him and turned.* They saw the man after he had been restored, and were so impressed by the evidence of miraculous healing that they believed on Christ.

36 *At Joppa.* It is now called Jaffa, and is a very ancient place. It has been the seaport of Jerusalem ever since the days of Solomon, when the timber for the temple was landed there. It is associated also with Jonah's marine exploit. It was prominent in the wars of the Maccabees and in the Crusades. It is now a flourishing town. *Tabitha . . . Dorcas.* Aramaic and Greek for the same name, which means "gazelle," the gazelle being in the East a favorite type of personal beauty. Dorcas is the first woman named in the Acts after Sapphira, and in her the stain there left on woman's name is burned out. *Full of good works and almsdeeds.* The words mean that she abounded in acts of kindness. Notice, it is good *works*, not good *words*. She did not give money, merely, but she wrought with her own hands. *Which she did.* Was in the habit of doing. There is here an incidental proof that there was no "community of goods" at Joppa, for then there would have been no need of almsdeeds.

37 *Whom when they had washed, they laid her.* It is probable that the burial was delayed until Peter could arrive, as ordinarily interment took place very soon after death.

38 *Nigh to Joppa.* About nine or ten miles. *Desiring him.* It is much stronger in the Revised Version. They had heard, no doubt, of the mighty works the Lord had wrought through his hands, but just what they hoped him to do for them we cannot tell.

39 *All the widows stood by him weeping.* There seems to be an absence of professional mourners and their clamorous noises, and the sorrow here was genuine. It seems reasonable to infer that Christian faith had already wrought a change in this regard, and that Christ's followers, knowing the true nature of death, had learned to regard it with greater calmness. See 1 Thess. 4: 13–18. *Showing the coats and garments.* These were widows she had befriended, who had been blessed by her almsdeeds. "Coats" were the inner garments, or tunics, loose shirts, reaching to the knees; "garments" were the outer coverings, large, loose cloaks, worn by day and used by night as a covering. The behavior of these widows shows their gratitude and their sense of loss.

40, 41 *Put them all forth.* After his Master's example. Mark 5: 40. He wished to be undisturbed by the crowd, that he might pray in secret. See also 1 Kings 17: 19, 23; 2 Kings 4: 33. *Kneeled down and prayed.* Showing his entire dependence upon God. Note the contrast here also with the manner in which Jesus raised the dead, *without offering prayer. Tabitha, arise.* He does not here refer to the name of Christ, as in the healing of Æneas, but evidently in his prayer he had received the assurance of answer. Besides, there were no others present, and the need was not the same for formal use of Christ's name. *She opened her eyes.* Chrysostom says: "Observe how he, as it were, awakes her out of sleep; first she opened her eyes; then, upon seeing Peter, she sat up; then, from his hands she received strength." *Saints and widows.* The former were the believers, her friends and companions; the latter were those whom she had helped.

43 *Many days.* A long time. Joppa was a large city, and Peter no doubt preached the gospel there. *Simon a tanner.* The tanner's trade was, among the stricter Jews, regarded as a defiling occupation. It was even considered cause for divorce if a man, after marriage, entered it. Peter's staying with this man showed that the severities of Judaism were no longer held in high esteem by him.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

He found a certain man . . , which had kept his bed eight years. Such a picture as this should make those of us who have good health very grateful to God for the rich blessing. It is one that we are not apt to appreciate, until we lose it. Seeing another in such helpless condition should make us thankful that we enjoy health.

Jesus Christ healeth thee; arise and make thy

bed. Here is a model for all Christian workers. Peter himself could not heal this paralytic; we cannot heal any sinner. Jesus, though in heaven, was still present, and working, on the earth, and had all power; he is just as really present now, and as ready to work in giving life to spiritual paralytics as he was then. We have a right to say to every unsaved one we meet, "Jesus Christ healeth thee;" then to say, "Arise." If the sinner believes what we say to him, and obeys, the strength will be given.

There was . . . a certain disciple named . . . Dorcas. The first thing to notice about this woman is that she was a disciple. She had accepted Christ as her Saviour and he had given her life. She was living in him by faith, and he was living in her by his Spirit, shedding abroad in her heart the love of God. This is the starting point for all who would learn any lesson from Dorcas. There is no use trying to imitate her good works unless we imitate her in discipleship.

This woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did. We must be careful to spell "works" with a "k;" a good many people spell it with a "d," which is not the right way, for there is a great difference between good works and good words. John has something to say about this in his first Epistle (3; 18). So has James in his Epistle (2: 15, 16). Another commendable thing in this portrait of Dorcas is that she "*did*" the good works and almsdeeds, and did them *herself.* A great many people *intend* to do just as much as Dorcas did, yet never actually do anything; their benevolence evaporates in idle, empty sentiment. Then she did her good works with her own hands, instead of through some committee or some charity organization. The advantage of this latter feature was that she gave part of herself with everything she gave to a poor person. The hearts of the poor were warmed by her love and sympathy, while their bodies were warmed by the garments she made for them. She consecrated her needle to Christ, and every stitch left a blessing.

All the widows stood by him weeping. Their sorrow was very great. They had never known what Dorcas was worth to them until they had lost her. "The odor of the costly ointment filled the house, when the vessel in which it lay concealed was broken." That is very often the way. We do not know our blessings until they are gone. Many a ministering angel walks through this world for years, doing good to many, blessing a home or a neighborhood, and yet receives scarcely even a word of grateful thanks or appreciation. Then when she is gone straightway everybody discovers that she was an angel, and enough kind things are said about her coffin to have cheered all her weary days. Yet this tribute, late though it came, was a beautiful one. There can be no more eloquent eulogy of a departed life than the tears of the poor, the needy and the suffering flowing about the coffin and the grave. It is a great thing to live so as to be truly missed.

Showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them. The world builds monuments to celebrate the name and perpetuate the memory of the great. Dorcas built her own monument with her needle. This may be a good place to inquire what we are doing in this world that people will show or talk about, or have to keep as blessings when we are dead. What are we doing to make anybody happier, or better, or so give comfort, cheer or hope? Would anybody really miss us if we were to be called away to-night?

He gave her his hand and raised her up. There is that helping hand of Peter's again. It is always helping somebody to rise. This is a great lesson to learn. There are many people that need a little help when they start in a new life. There are some who are down who would have risen long ago if any one had given them a strong helping hand. We can do nothing better than "lend a hand" to those who are just trying to arise from spiritual death.

He presented her alive.—And she is living yet, still stitching away. Not that very same woman; she has been hundreds of years in heaven, and probably there are no poor there for whom to make garments; but she has set countless thousands of her sister-women at work, and they are stitching away in thousands of church parlors all over the Christian world, making coats and garments for those who need them. Her needle is flying in the fingers of every Christian woman who sews for the poor.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Like our Master, we should go about doing good. v. 32.

2. Wherever we go we will find somebody that needs our help in some way. v. 33.

3. It is the mission of every Christian to carry Christ to those who are suffering. v. 34.

4. We should hide ourselves and let Christ work through us. v. 34.

5. There are no "evidences of Christianity" that so impress the world as lives changed by the power of Christ. v. 35.

6. The person best known and best remembered now of all that ever lived in Joppa is Dorcas; yet in her lifetime she was only a quiet female missionary. v. 36.

7. The first thing for young women to copy in Dorcas is her discipleship. v. 36.

8. True discipleship will always show itself in the life; it cannot be hid. v. 36.

9. The most beautiful and useful life is not exempt from death. v. 37.

10. When there is trouble or sorrow it is well to send for God's minister. v. 38.

11. It is a great thing to live so as to be missed and wept. v. 39.

12. The best remembrances of a departed life are the things done during life. v. 39.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

You are to view Æneas, a bed-ridden paralytic, suddenly and miraculously made whole by the divine Healer. You are then to go to the house of mourning, hear the wailing of the saints and widows over the beloved remains of Dorcas, the gazelle, beautiful in good works.

How Approach these Scenes.

1. Give a review of the month's lessons. 2. Draw out the condition of the Church and its growth at this time. v. 31. 3. Describe a general inspecting an army, and Peter visiting the churches in Judea, Samaria and Galilee. 4. Have your own private outline—

Jesus Christ Restores { *Health to the Sick.* vs. 32–35. / *Life to the Dead.* vs. 36–43.

I. Æneas Healed. vs. 32–35.

What cases of long-continued sickness have you seen? What makes such cases so sad? What was Æneas' disease? Describe palsy. Put on your paper pad—

Æneas { Helpless, / Hopeless, / Healed.

Describe the helplessness of Æneas. His hopelessness. Who made Æneas whole? How does this illustrate Matt. 10: 8; Mark 16: 18–20; Acts 1: 1? Why did Peter mention himself as the instrument? How should we speak of our works for Christ? 1 Cor. 15: 10. In what particulars does Æneas' disease represent the condition of the unconverted? In what respects are these helpless? In what respects hopeless? What were the results of Æneas cure? What are the results when one sinner repenteth?

II. Dorcas Restored to Life. vs. 36–43.

Make the scene and all the facts vivid. Joppa, with its gardens and orchards. The one woman around whom the hearts of the Church were knit—Dorcas. What is the meaning of "was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did?" Not only her hands sewed, but her heart and soul was in her blessed work. Why should heart go with hand in deeds of charity? How would the poor speak of her? Read Job 29: 11–13. What effect would the news of her sickness have on all the city? On the widows and fatherless? What has God promised to those who consider the poor? Ps. 41: 1, 2. In what respects was Dorcas a model woman? What did women do for Jesus while he was in the world? Describe woman's work to-day in foreign missions, home missions, temperance, hospitals, homes, Sabbath-schools, tract societies. What different works are the women carrying on *in your* church?

What effect had Dorcas' death? Why did they send for Peter? What did they show him? What is the Christian woman's best eulogy? Describe the restoration of Tabitha. In what respects is the restoration of Dorcas an image of the awakening of dead sinners?

1. The Church grieves for them.

2. As Peter prayed, so God's servants pray for sinners.

3. God's words sound, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead."

4. The dead soul awakes.

5. The converted sinner is presented unto the saints.

6. As the result of his conversion many believe on the Lord.

Show your outline at the end.

Points in the lesson for May 3d, 1883, to be assigned:

1. Jewish prejudice against Gentiles.

2. Feelings of Jewish Christians towards the Gentiles.

3. Prophecies in the Old Testament that Christ should be the Saviour of all nations.

4. Teachings of the Gospel that Christianity is for all nations.

5. The proper temper for hearing God's word.

6. Why was Peter chosen to open the door to the Gentiles?

7. A summary of the history in Acts 10: 1–29.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Peter again. The children will be interested to hear more of him. Introduce the lesson by talking about sick people. How sad it is to spend day after day in bed. Don't be afraid of hearing little experiences of the children's own. Make a horizontal line to represent Æneas. How long had he been sick? If the children know, mark the number of years which they give you. If they do not know, lead them gradually up to it; thus, "one year, two years,

three years," etc. Dwell on the sick man's utter helplessness; he could use neither hands nor feet. Make a mark for Peter, who came to see him. Ask the class what direction he gave. Mark the sick man's instant obedience. Ask the scholars what effect this had on the people. Erase the horizontal mark, and make an upright one for Æneas. Make a square for Dorcas' house in Joppa. Describe what was going on there. Imagine the conversation about sending messengers for Peter. Follow them as they hasten to him. In short, give free rein to your imaginative and descriptive powers in order to make this entire scene as vivid as possible.

The object which you have in view in thus presenting these scenes to your children must be vividly before your mind: *The Power of Jesus.* Impress the fact that Peter did nothing in his own name. The two miracles afford lessons on two forms of power. Helpless hands and feet cured in a moment, and even a lifeless body obedient to his word.

I consider it especially fortunate when we have lessons which repeat and emphasize some important truth taught a short time before. Teachers will recall the fact that on the last Sabbath in January we had a lesson about "The Healing Power," which may be used in illustrating this one, and the hymns and recitations taught at that time may be appropriately recalled.

Labor to leave two thoughts on all hearts. 1. The cured man instantly used his feet and his arms in obedience to Peter's command. If God has cured any little child in your class, his feet and hands should be obeying Jesus in all that they do. 2. The last golden text of the year was: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." If he had power over death *then*, he has *now*. Your scholars will all die, but they will all hear the voice of Jesus bidding them to live. They need not, then, be afraid of death. Only impress upon their hearts the need of living so that they will be glad to hear his voice.

Miss Havergal's consecration hymn, which is so beautiful that every teacher desires to have her children know it, fits this lesson, especially the lines found on the *Westminster Primary Leaf.*

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

SUGGESTIONS.—Since the charms and the charity of Dorcas will probably be leading lessons in the class, particularly in classes made up of the girls, I will present the above to impress important lessons in the life of this noble woman. She was a church member, aiming at a high standard of piety. "Widows and orphans are in want within sound of our Sabbath bells." Notice, Dorcas was commended for the almsdeeds "*which she did*," not for those she thought of or was going to do *to-morrow or next week.* After impressing the lessons suggested, print the word IMITATE just before the acrostic, and apply it. Of course her restoration to life and the healing of Æneas were miracles caused by the power of Christ, Peter being used as the instrument. The news soon spread, "and many believed in the Lord." This thought will not be omitted by the superintendent. If preferred, the following may be printed in bold letters on the board and exposed during the entire session of the school—

"JESUS CHRIST MAKETH THEE WHOLE,"

or may be used as an introductory lesson, and the diagram above used as a closing lesson.

Directions for Coloring.—The acrostic, "Dorcas," in bold letters, orange shaded with red; the rest in various plain colors that will stand out well on the black ground; "Jesus Christ maketh the whole," green shaded with yellow.

THE WESTMINSTER TEACHER.

VOL. XI. MAY, 1883. No. 5.

—We publish in this number the full schedule of lessons adopted by the International Lesson Committee for 1884.

—Particular attention is called to the advertisement on the last page of cheap Sabbath-school libraries, prepared by the Board of Publication. The books have been selected with great care.

—The matter of home study is still receiving attention, and new efforts are making in many places to secure it. One of the best plans adopted is the distribution of lesson-papers with questions, to which answers are to be written by the scholars, the papers then to be returned to the teacher. The plan is working well, and will no doubt become more general.

—Many of our readers are acquainted with Rev. F. N. Peloubet, through his annual volumes of Select Notes on the International Lessons, and will be prepared to read with special interest his article in this number. The article of Rev. D. Schley Schaff will attract attention as bearing on the history we are now studying. The leading editorial gathers up the points in the character of Barnabas.

—Rev. Dr. S. E. Wishard writes as follows in the *Herald and Presbyter* of the Board's Chicago Depository: Our Presbyterian House, No. 137 Wabash avenue, West Side, between Madison and Monroe, is in full operation. Mr. Whiting, the manager of the establishment, is not only ready to serve our Sabbath-schools, pastors and all others who want good books, but he is doing it. The business of the house has steadily increased from the day it was opened. Mr. Whiting makes a specialty of two things (while taking care of all other lines of the business). He keeps every book on missions that ought to be in private and Sabbath-school libraries. He supplies also full lines of Sabbath-school lesson helps for teachers. Ministers and elders coming to the city will find here headquarters for everything that is needed for congregational and Sabbath-school libraries.

—The attention of teachers is again called to the importance of being familiar with the lesson-help the scholars use, so that the questions asked may be such as they are prepared to answer. Not that the teacher should take the lesson leaf or quarterly into the class and ask the questions from it—that is a lazy way of teaching that no wide-awake teacher will dream of for a moment; but he may study the help used in his class, and so prepare his own lesson and questions that the scholar may have an opportunity to recite what he has learned. It is not promotive of diligence in home study when a pupil studies his lesson each week, using the help placed in his hand, and not to be asked such questions as he has prepared himself to answer. It is not necessary that the questions asked be in the identical words of those in the lesson-leaf or quarterly, but that they be such as shall call out the facts and suggestions which the scholar has gathered in his study.

A Good Man.

ONE of the finest characters in the history of the apostolic church is that of Barnabas. He is one of the men to whom full justice has not been done by Bible students. His portrait is drawn in bright color in one single phrase. "He was a good man," writes the historian. This is not an empty eulogy, for the Bible never pays compliments. It is an inspired characterization of the man. No higher eulogy could be paid to any one. It may be worth our while to take some pains to find out the kind of person the Holy Spirit eulogizes as "a good man."

The first mention of Barnabas shows him parting with his land and giving the proceeds to be used among the poor. Here at the very beginning his goodness shines out. He was thoroughly unselfish. With him, to be a Christian meant the consecration of his money as well as his life. He understood that love for Christ meant also love for all who bear the image of Christ. His religion was not of the sentimental kind but was intensely practical. His goodness was of a sort that *did* good to others, and was not content with *being* good.

The next mention of Barnabas presents him in

another favorable light. The young persecutor, Saul, returned to Jerusalem after his conversion, and tried to join himself to the disciples; but they were all afraid of him and would not believe that he was truly a Christian. It is hard to get away from one's past. The memory of an evil life clings long even after one repents. It is not strange, therefore, that the Christians at Jerusalem were afraid of this fierce persecutor now claiming to be turned Christian.

Yet we can readily see what harm to Saul himself might have come from this reception by the believers in the mother Church. There is no time when a convert needs so much to find sympathy, confidence and true brotherly help in other Christians, as when he has just begun his Christian life. Saul expected to find all this in the apostles and believers at Jerusalem, but he found instead suspicion, distrust, fear and the cold withdrawal of the hands whose warm clasp and strong support he had hoped to receive. Had no one come forward as a true brother, who can tell what might have been the result? But just at this point we find Barnabas ready with his good offices. In some way he knew that Saul was truly converted, and he stepped forward and vouched for him, thus gaining for him at once the confidence of all the church.

This was a very noble thing to do and in making up our estimate of this man's "goodness" we must not leave out the element which here appears. There are a great many people in this world who are misunderstood. There are some in similar case with Saul. Their past life has been wrong, and when they turn to the Lord their old neighbors refuse to believe that they are sincere, and will not accept them as brethren. It is very hard to continue in faithful discipleship in the face of suspicion and coldness. This is the time for just such manly, noble friendship as Barnabas showed to Saul. We preach the wideness of God's mercy. We declare that *Christ* opens his arms wide and receives the guiltiest to the closest love. Why then should not *we* receive them too? What Christ hath cleansed shall we call common or unclean? It is the part of true, generous Christian friendship to come forward at such a time, and take by the hand any one, whatever his past life may have been, who gives reasonable evidence of conversion and renewal of heart.

Another mention of Barnabas, a little later, gives us still other glimpses of his genuine goodness of heart. Word had reached Jerusalem from Antioch that the gospel was winning great victories there. The apostles decided to send some one of experience and wisdom to give direction to the work, and Barnabas was chosen for this important and responsible duty. The words that describe his feelings and his course when he arrived at Antioch, disclose a very fine phase of his character. When he saw the grace of God there he was glad. A pastor is expected to be made glad when he sees souls turning to the Lord in his own parish, the fruits of his own ministry. A teacher is naturally glad when the pupils of his own class are converted. But how is it when it is our neighbor's parish in which the great work is going on; or when it is the class across the aisle from ours that shows the power of the divine presence in penitence, earnest inquiry and conversion?

A little while after this there is another bit of the history of Barnabas which reveals the same unselfish generosity. He remained at Antioch and conducted the work there. Seeing the need at length of more help he went to seek Saul, who was engaged somewhere in the quiet country, and brought him to the great city to labor there. He made no account of the fact that Saul would soon outshine him if he brought him, and that he himself would soon have to take a second place. This large-hearted spirit of Barnabas toward Saul is one of the fairest lines in his portrait.

But no human life is perfect. Once only in the roll of ages has there lived a perfect man. Barnabas' goodness has a spot. A sharp quarrel occurred between him and Paul with reference to Mark. It has been the fashion to assume that Paul was innocent, and that all the blame belonged to Barnabas. Is this true? Was not Paul's fault really the greater? It is human to err; it is divine both to forgive and to give another a chance. Was not the conduct of Barnabas on Mark's behalf just what Christ would have done in the same circumstances? It is just what he did with Peter. All quarreling is wrong; no doubt both did wrong; but Paul's error surely was the greater.

Thus the character of Barnabas shines out in fair and lovely lines. "He was a good man," and goodness is finer and better than greatness. Greatness is only a laurel wreath, which fades in a little while; but goodness is an immortal crown that shall never be dimmed.

The source of this goodness was not in the man himself, in his natural qualities, but is laid bare in the statement that he was "full of the Holy Ghost and of faith." A gardener found a bit of fragrant clay and asked whence its perfume came. "One laid me on a rose," was the answer. It had lain on a rose, and the fragrance of the flower had gone all through the clay. The way to have the perfume of real goodness is to lie on the bosom of Jesus so habitually that the sweetness of his spirit shall flow through all our nature.

Woman in the Early Church.

BY REV. D. SCHLEY SCHAFF.

ONE of the conspicuous benefits accruing to mankind from the diffusion of Christianity has been the elevation of woman. Wherever the gospel is carried she is emancipated from social inferiority and introduced into a new realm of aims and activity. In the group nearest to Christ during his earthly life were women. The sisters of Bethany were among his most intimate friends. Women accompanied him from Galilee (Luke 23: 49), stood in the shadow of the cross, and were among the first to welcome him after the resurrection. This devotion to the founder of Christianity was the response to the honor he put upon womanhood. As he sat on the rim of Jacob's well he entered with the woman of Samaria into one of the most refreshing and profound conversations of the New Testament. He showed his respect for motherhood when he laid his hands on the children and pronounced upon the poor widow and her who anointed his head with the contents of the alabaster vase the finest eulogies that ever passed his lips.

The early Church, in this as in other respects, caught the spirit of its founder. The Apostle Paul illustrates the relation of the Church to Christ by the relation of the wife to the husband, and the Acts of the Apostles has frequent reference to woman's activity in the Church. It is a significant fact that on the very first page of this earliest manual of church history a prominent allusion is made to Christian women. In speaking of the first meeting of the apostles after the ascension in the upper room at Jerusalem, the historian states that "the women and Mary the mother of Jesus and his brethren" were present. Acts 1: 14. This prominent mention was a pledge of the position woman was to hold in the Church, and it will be noticed that she is named before the Lord's brethren.

Throughout the Acts of the Apostles, Christian women are mentioned prominently and spoken of with respect. Many of the early disciples were of this class, and as if to emphasize their equality before the gospel, it is distinctly stated that those who were added to the Lord were both men and women. Acts 5: 14; 8: 12; 17; 12. The houses of Mary at Jerusalem (Acts 12: 12) and Lydia at Philippi were chosen by the Christians as places of prayer. On the river side at Philippi Paul "spake unto the women." Others are singled out and mentioned by name as among the first converts. The woman named Damaris was one of those who heard Paul at Athens and believed the gospel. The name of Lydia is preserved, while the name of the gaoler at Philippi it was not thought necessary to record. Women were also regarded as heirs of the responsibilities of the gospel. Although not torn from the position assigned them by nature, the distinction of male and female in this regard was likewise abolished. Men and women became co-laborers with Christ and with one another. The Acts gives an account of three characters, Lydia, Dorcas and Priscilla, who may be taken as illustrations of the activity of women under the Christian system. Lydia, to whom was accorded the high dignity of being the first fruits of Paul's ministry in Europe is a model of modest reserve, Christian influence in the home circle and hospitality to the brethren. Acts 16: 15, 40. Dorcas is a representative of charitable offices among the needy. She was active in "good works and almsdeeds." Acts 9: 36, 39. Her name has been a more prominent legacy to the Church than the garments she made. The third woman, Priscilla, represents still another kind of Christian influence and activity. She is particularly referred to as having had a prominent part in instructing Apollos more perfectly in the way of God (Acts 18: 26), and the fact is not without meaning that her name precedes that of her husband.

These three characters afford an illustration of the Christian activity of the Apostolic Church, and indicate the three lines along which women may continue to exert their influence, in the domestic circle, by charitable offices, and by Christian instruction.

The position of woman in the Old Testament was higher than that accorded by any of the nations of antiquity. But even the Jews in later times fell into the usual habit of depreciating her, and the apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus says "the badness of men is better than the goodness of women." Hillel, the great rabbi, would have permitted divorce on the trivial ground of a wife's failure to cook the dinner well. In the Oriental monarchies polygamy has always prevailed, and woman has been relegated to a condition of seclusion and base inferiority. In Greece, in the age when art and literature were achieving their highest triumphs, the foremost type of woman was a courtesan, Aspasia.

This was the conception of womanhood which Christianity found. It remained for it to emancipate woman from social servitude, and to urge and illustrate a noble ideal of woman. Through its influence the names of Mary, Lydia and Priscilla have become immortal at the side of Peter, Paul and Apollos. In art, as in fact, the type of its regenerating potency is Mary Magdalene, and the ideal of female beauty is Raphael's Madonnas, whose faces rivet the en-

chanted eye by their pure, serene and heavenly expression.

In the annals of the centuries following the deaths of the apostles appear the shining names of Monica, the mother of Augustine, and women like Blandina and Perpetua, whose heroic constancy has attracted the reverence of succeeding ages, and secured for them a martyr's death. Tertullian, in the latter part of the second century, could well exclaim as he wrote of Christian women, "What heathen will suffer his wife to go about from one street to another to the houses of strangers, to the meanest hovels, indeed to visit the brethren . . . to steal away to the dungeon to kiss the martyr's chain," etc. In these modern days those first Christian women have had their representatives in Florence Nightingale, Mrs. Fry and others, and those nameless women who are carrying the spirit of the gospel to the women of heathen lands. Their examples at once challenge the admiration of mankind, and remind it of its perpetual obligation to the Christian system.

Some Ways of Working.

BY THE REV. F. N. PELOUBET.

IN a late number of one of the children's magazines there was told a story of a lion, who was a music teacher, but who was greatly complained of because he had but one tone to his voice, and always sang the same note. Soon after, on his travels, he met and ate the cow that lowed, who had eaten the pig that squealed, who had eaten the dog that barked, who had eaten the cat that mewed, who had eaten the rat that squeaked, and henceforth he had the voices of all these animals, and never afterwards was complaint made of the monotony of his voice.

This story is a parable for Sabbath-schools. Those which live by themselves, whose leaders study no others' ways of working, and use no new methods, become monotonous and tame. They should go about and see and absorb whatever is good in the methods of others.

In the hope of giving a suggestion to other workers, I have been requested to give a brief description of the Sunday-school of the First Congregational Church in Natick, Mass. The school numbers about 660 members, with an average attendance on pleasant Sabbaths last year of 367. The school is divided into four departments. The infant, or junior department, meets of necessity by itself in the ladies' parlors. It is separated into classes, and about half the time is spent in class work, and half in general exercises.

The main school is arranged in three departments—the intermediate, the senior and the Bible class, which meet in separate rooms, but opening together, so that the opening and closing exercises are common to all. The intermediate department was formed a little more than a year ago for two reasons. First, because the younger scholars cannot easily occupy so long a time with the regular lessons as the older ones. And secondly, there are certain things which every child ought to know by heart, as the catechism and creed of the church, the order of the books of the Bible, general facts about the Bible as a book, about Bible geography and chronology, and choice passages of Scripture. A year's experiment with the whole school proved that this drill was not wholly acceptable to the older scholars, especially of the Bible-classes, who preferred to continue longer the discussion of the lesson. Accordingly now while the main school has forty minutes for the study of the lesson, at the close of thirty minutes the windows between the intermediate and senior departments are quietly closed and ten minutes are spent in the above drill. These scholars usually locate the *place* of the day's lesson on a large map, and the *time* on a large chronological chart. They know the books of the Bible, in their order, and various facts about the Bible as a book. They have learned some Scripture geography. They can repeat some choice passages of Scripture. They have learned the creed of the church, with some proof texts.

Another peculiarity is the method of appointing the teachers for the older classes. Every teacher's time expires at the close of the year, and a new selection is made. Whenever a class wishes to retain its teacher another year the superintendent is notified to this effect a few weeks before the reorganization of the school, and if it seems wise to him that teacher is retained. All other teachers are "resigned," and on the day of reorganization the classes, in consultation with the superintendent, or some one whom he appoints, choose their teachers for the coming year. I do not know how this plan originated, nor did it at first strike me favorably, but after seventeen years' observation I have seen nothing but good resulting. It sifts the teachers, and brings into activity the best talent in the church. It is certainly an easy method of getting rid of poor or ill-adapted teachers, instead of the usual plan, where members of a class gradually leave the teacher. And the better teachers, if they fail in one class, usually find another to which they are better adapted, and remain there.

After experiencing many difficulties in obtaining good *substitute teachers*, we have secured the best results by the following plan: The whole

matter is placed in charge of the assistant superintendent, who during the opening exercises notes what classes are without teachers, and arranges as to the persons who shall fill the vacant places. He has a list of persons who have agreed to act as substitutes on certain definite Sabbaths. One class agrees to furnish one teacher every Sabbath, and appoints the person a week beforehand. Thus we have substitute teachers who have studied the lesson with a view to teaching.

A word may be said concerning the relation of the Sabbath-school to the church. This union of church and school is recognized in two ways. First, the pastor of the church is ex-officio the *president* of the Sabbath-school, and is the highest officer in it. Of course he leaves the management of all the details to the superintendent. But he is the recognized head, presides at the annual meetings, has the right to advise, and is one of the board of executive officers. Second, the superintendent, though chosen by the school, as those most interested, and most likely to choose the best man for the place, must be confirmed by vote of the church.

This school is but an ordinary village school, with all needed appliances, but with the utmost simplicity of methods, with nothing for show, but with an earnest desire for the salvation and religious culture of the scholars; hence it is that there is so little to describe that is novel in our ways of working.

Our Sabbath-School Work.

BY THE REV. J. A. WORDEN, D D.

WE sometimes glory in the fact that so many millions of children attend the Sabbath-school. Bnt do we realize that there are more than 9,000,000 of youth in the United States *outside of all our Sabbath-schools?* What is our Presbyterian Church doing through its Board of Publication to reach these millions of neglected children?

1. Its colporteurs, within the last eight years, have *visited about* 12,000 *schools*, and in various ways helped and encouraged them. They have also *organized over* 700 *new schools* in places before entirely destitute. To-day these pioneers are laboring in the vast fields of Southern California, Texas, Montana, Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, the Indian Territory, Missouri, Michigan, Kentucky, Tennessee, and other States and Territories. Read this extract from a letter of one of these colporteurs toiling in Nebraska: "I have been driving over the sand-hills to-day. Yesterday I organized two Sabbath-schools, and had a third organization arranged for, but a funeral prevented it. I think this third school will be organized next Sabbath. I believe these three schools will be the foundations of as many Presbyterian churches."

Lack of space prevents my giving still more interesting facts concerning our Sabbath-school mission work among the Indians (which I have seen for myself), and among the Spaniards, Mexicans, and others. Is there any cause in the world which appeals more powerfully to Sabbath-school workers and scholars for their prayers and contributions than that of the 9,000,000 of children in our own land who are without any church or any Sabbath-school, and without any instruction in the way of salvation through a crucified Redeemer?

2. Hundreds of needy mission and other Presbyterian Sabbath-schools are every year appealing to this Board, and *through it to you*, to send them lesson helps, papers and library books. The Board sends thousands of dollars worth of grants to such schools every year. It has sent such grants to Alaska, to Oregon, to Idaho, to Utah, to New Mexico, to Arizona, to nearly every State and Territory of the Union. And it stands ready and anxious to send still more numerous grants, if the means are furnished it for doing so. It might in the next twelve months, if furnished with the means, send to needy and most deserving Sabbath-school workers ten times the amount sent in any past year.

3. The entire Sabbath-school work of the Presbyterian Church has been made by the General Assembly dependent for its support on the Missionary Fund of the Board of Publication. The General Assembly itself appeals to every Sabbath-school for a liberal contribution for this work. The Assembly of 1882 unanimously adopted the following resolution:

"That pastors and sessions be earnestly requested to maintain a careful supervision of the objects for which collections are made in the Sabbath-schools, and to secure their contributions to our own benevolent causes, *giving due prominence to the Sabbath-school work of this Board.*" Not one dollar of such contributions goes to the business or publishing work of the Board. Every dime is sacredly devoted to missionary work.

Whether you are a pastor or a superintendent, please consult at once with your session on receiving this request. With them DECIDE CONSCIENTIOUSLY, what YOUR Sabbath-school ought to do for this noble mission work.

The cry of 9,000,000 of neglected children in our own land is, "WHAT MAN CARETH FOR OUR SOULS?"

P. S.—Direct checks, drafts, post-office money orders, etc., to Mr. Samuel D. Powel, Treasurer, No. 1334 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

LESSONS AND GOLDEN TEXTS FOR 1884.

NOTE.—For the next three years in this course of Bible study, the lessons from the Historical, Prophetic, and Poetical Books of the Old Testament, and those from the Acts and the Epistles in the New Testament, will be arranged, so far as may be, in chronological order.

Studies in the Acts and the Epistles.

First Quarter.

Lesson 1. Jan. 6.—THE CONFERENCE AT JERUSALEM. Acts 15: 1-11. *Commit vs.* 8-11. GOLDEN TEXT: We believe, that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved, even as they. Acts 15:11.

2. Jan. 13.—HEARING AND DOING. Jas. 1:16-27. *Commit vs.* 22-25. GOLDEN TEXT: Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only. Jas. 1:22.

3. Jan. 20.—THE POWER OF THE TONGUE. Jas. 3: 1-18. *Commit vs.* 2-5. GOLDEN TEXT: By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned. Matt. 12:37.

4. Jan. 27.—LIVING AS IN GOD'S SIGHT. Jas. 4: 7-17. *Commit vs.* 13-15. GOLDEN TEXT: Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up. Jas. 4:10.

5. Feb. 3.—PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY. Acts 15:35-41, and 16:1-10. *Commit vs.* 9, 10. GOLDEN TEXT: Come over into Macedonia, and help us. Acts 16:9.

6. Feb. 10.—THE CONVERSION OF LYDIA. Acts 16: 11-24. *Commit vs.* 13-15. GOLDEN TEXT: Whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. Acts 16:14.

7. Feb. 17.—THE CONVERSION OF THE JAILER. Acts 16:25-40. *Commit vs.* 29-34. GOLDEN TEXT: Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. Acts 16:31.

8. Feb. 24.—THESSALONIANS AND BEREANS. Acts 17: 1-14. *Commit vs.* 2-4. GOLDEN TEXT: These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Acts 17:11.

9. March 2.—PAUL AT ATHENS. Acts 17: 22-34. *Commit vs.* 29-31. GOLDEN TEXT: In him we live, and move, and have our being. Acts 17:28.

10. March 9.—PAUL AT CORINTH. Acts 18: 1-17. *Commit vs.* 9-11. GOLDEN TEXT: I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee, to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city. Acts 18:10.

11. March 16.—THE COMING OF THE LORD. 1 Thess. 4: 13-18, and 5: 1-8. *Commit vs.* 14-17. GOLDEN TEXT: For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 1 Thess. 4:14.

12. March 23.—CHRISTIAN DILIGENCE. 2 Thess. 3:1-18. *Commit vs.* 1-5. GOLDEN TEXT: Be not weary in well doing. 2 Thess. 3:13.

13. March 30.—REVIEW; or, Missionary, Temperance, or other Lesson selected by the school.

Second Quarter.

Lesson 1. April 6.—PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY. Acts 18: 23-28, and 19: 1-7. *Commit vs.* 24-26. GOLDEN TEXT: And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them. Acts 19:6.

2. April 13.—PAUL AT EPHESUS. Acts 19: 8-22. *Commit vs.* 8-10. GOLDEN TEXT: And many that believed came, and confessed, and showed their deeds. Acts 19:18.

3. April 20.—PAUL'S PREACHING. 1 Cor. 1: 17-31. *Commit vs.* 17-19. GOLDEN TEXT: We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness. 1 Cor. 1:23.

4. April 27.—ABSTINENCE FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS. 1 Cor. 8: 1-13. *Commit vs.* 10-13. GOLDEN TEXT: If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth. 1 Cor. 8:13.

5. May 4.—CHRISTIAN LOVE. 1 Cor. 13: 1-13. *Commit vs.* 11-13. GOLDEN TEXT: Love is the fulfilling of the law. Rom. 13:10.

6. May 11.—VICTORY OVER DEATH. 1 Cor. 15: 50-58. *Commit vs.* 55-58. GOLDEN TEXT: Death is swallowed up in victory. 1 Cor. 15:54.

7. May 18.—THE UPROAR AT EPHESUS. Acts 19:23-41, and 20:1, 2. *Commit vs.* 38-40. GOLDEN TEXT: Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? Ps. 2:1.

8. May 25.—LIBERAL GIVING. 2 Cor. 9: 1-15. *Commit vs.* 6-8. GOLDEN TEXT: God loveth a cheerful giver. 2 Cor. 9:7.

9. June 1.—CHRISTIAN LIBERTY. Gal. 4: 1-16. *Commit vs.* 4-6. GOLDEN TEXT: Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. Gal. 5:1.

10. June 8.—JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH. Rom. 3: 19-31. *Commit vs.* 24-26. GOLDEN TEXT: Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. 5: 1.

11. June 15.—THE BLESSEDNESS OF BELIEVERS. Rom. 8: 28-39. *Commit vs.* 37-39. GOLDEN TEXT: We know that all things work together for good, to them that love God. Rom. 8: 28.

12. June 22.—OBEDIENCE TO LAW. Rom. 13: 1-10. *Commit vs.* 7-10. GOLDEN TEXT: Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. Rom. 13: 1.

13. June 29.—REVIEW; or, Missionary, Temperance, or other Lesson selected by the school.

Three Months with David and the Psalms.

Third Quarter.

Lesson 1. July 6.—DAVID KING OVER ALL ISRAEL. 2 Sam. 5: 1-12. *Commit vs.* 10-12. GOLDEN TEXT: I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him. Ps. 89: 20.

2. July 13.—THE ARK IN THE HOUSE. 2 Sam. 6: 1-12. *Commit vs.* 11, 12. GOLDEN TEXT: He blesseth the habitation of the just. Prov. 3: 33.

3. July 20.—GOD'S COVENANT WITH DAVID. 2 Sam. 7: 1-16. *Commit vs.* 13-16. GOLDEN TEXT: Thy throne shall be established forever. 2 Sam. 7: 16.

4. July 27.—KINDNESS TO JONATHAN'S SON. 2 Sam. 9: 1-13. *Commit vs.* 6, 7. GOLDEN TEXT: Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not. Prov. 27: 10.

5. Aug. 3.—DAVID'S REPENTANCE. Ps. 51: 1-19. *Commit vs.* 9-12. GOLDEN TEXT: My sin is ever before me. Ps. 51: 3.

6. Aug. 10.—ABSALOM'S REBELLION. 2 Sam. 15: 1-14. *Commit vs.* 4-6. GOLDEN TEXT: Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. Ex. 20: 12.

7. Aug. 17.—ABSALOM'S DEATH. 2 Sam. 18: 24-33. *Commit vs.* 32, 33. GOLDEN TEXT: Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death. Mark 7: 10.

8. Aug. 24.—THE PLAGUE STAYED. 2 Sam. 24: 15-25. *Commit vs.* 24, 25. GOLDEN TEXT: So the Lord was entreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel. 2 Sam. 24: 25.

9. Aug. 31.—GOD'S WORKS AND WORD. Ps. 19: 1-14. *Commit vs.* 7-11. GOLDEN TEXT: Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name. Ps. 138: 2.

10. Sept. 7.—CONFIDENCE IN GOD. Ps. 27: 1-14. *Commit vs.* 4, 5. GOLDEN TEXT: The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? Ps. 27: 1.

11. Sept. 14.—WAITING FOR THE LORD. Ps. 40: 1-17. *Commit vs.* 1-4. GOLDEN TEXT: I delight to do thy will, O my God. Ps. 40: 8.

12. Sept. 21.—A SONG OF PRAISE. Ps. 103: 1-22. *Commit vs.* 1-5. GOLDEN TEXT: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. Ps. 103: 2.

13. Sept. 28.—Review; or, Missionary, Temperance, or other Lesson selected by the school.

Three Months with Solomon and the Books of Wisdom.

Fourth Quarter.

Lesson 1. Oct. 5.—SOLOMON'S SUCCEEDING DAVID. 1 Kings 1: 22-35. *Commit vs.* 28-30. GOLDEN TEXT: And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind. 1 Chron. 28: 9.

2. Oct. 12.—DAVID'S CHARGE TO SOLOMON. 1 Chron. 22: 6-19. *Commit vs.* 17-19. GOLDEN TEXT: Arise, therefore, and be doing, and the Lord be with thee. 1 Chron. 22: 16.

3. Oct. 19.—SOLOMON'S CHOICE. 1 Kings 3: 5-15. *Commit vs.* 9, 10. GOLDEN TEXT: Wisdom is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom. Prov. 4: 7.

4. Oct. 26.—THE TEMPLE BUILT. 1 Kings 6: 1-14. *Commit vs.* 11-13. GOLDEN TEXT: Mine house shall be called an house of prayer. Isa. 56: 7.

5. Nov. 2.—THE TEMPLE DEDICATED. 1 Kings 8: 22-36. *Commit vs.* 22-24. GOLDEN TEXT: Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee. 1 Kings 8: 27.

6. Nov. 9.—THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON. 1 Kings 10: 1-13. *Commit vs.* 8, 9. GOLDEN TEXT: Behold, a greater than Solomon is here. Matt. 12: 42.

7. Nov. 16.—SOLOMON'S SIN. 1 Kings 11: 4-13. *Commit vs.* 9, 10. GOLDEN TEXT: Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. Prov. 4: 23.

8. Nov. 23.—PROVERBS OF SOLOMON. Prov. 1: 1-16. *Commit vs.* 8-10. GOLDEN TEXT: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. Prov. 1: 7.

9. Nov. 30.—TRUE WISDOM. Prov. 8: 1-17. *Commit vs.* 10, 11. GOLDEN TEXT: I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me. Prov. 8: 17.

10. Dec. 7.—DRUNKENNESS. Prov. 23: 29-35. *Commit vs.* 29-32. GOLDEN TEXT: Be not among winebibbers. Prov. 23: 20.

11. Dec. 14.—VANITY OF WORLDLY PLEASURE. Eccles. 2: 1-13. *Commit vs.* 10, 11. GOLDEN TEXT: Wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness. Eccles. 2: 13.

12. Dec. 21.—THE CREATOR REMEMBERED. Eccles. 12: 1-14. *Commit vs.* 13, 14. GOLDEN TEXT: Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth. Eccles. 12: 1.

13. Dec. 28.—REVIEW; or, Missionary, Temperance, or other Lesson selected by the school.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

SECOND QUARTER.

1. April 1.—Simon the Sorcerer. Acts 8 : 14-25.
2. April 8.—Philip and the Ethiopian. Acts 8 : 26-40.
3. April 15.—Saul's Conversion. Acts 9 : 1-18.
4. April 22.—Saul Preaching Christ. Acts 9 : 19-31.
5. April 29.—Peter Working Miracles. Acts 9 : 32-42.
6. May 6.—**Peter Preaching to the Gentiles** Acts 10 : 30-44.
7. May 13.—**The Spread of the Gospel.** Acts 11 : 19-30.
8. May 20.—**Herod and Peter,** Acts 12 : 1-17.
9. May 27.—**Paul and Barnabas in Cyprus.** Acts 13 : 1-12.
10. June 3.—At Antioch. Acts 13 : 13-16 and 43-52.
11. June 10.—At Iconium and Lystra. Acts 14 : 1-18.
12. June 17.—End of First Missionary Journey. Acts 14 : 19-28.
13. June 24.—Review.

Lesson VI. PETER PREACHING TO THE GENTILES. May 6th, 1883.

Acts 10 : 30-44. Memorize vs. 42-44.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"On the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost." —Acts 10 : 45.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 10 : 1-12.....*Cornelius and Peter.*
T. Acts 10 : 23-44.....*Preaching to the Gentiles.*
W. Matt. 8 : 5-11.....*A Centurion's Faith.*
Th. Isa. 42 : 1-12.....*Light to the Gentiles.*
F. John 10 : 1-16.....*The One Fold.*
S. Eph. 2 : 11-22.....*Gentiles Brought Nigh.*
S. Acts 11 : 1-18.....*Peter's Rehearsal.*

TOPIC.

The Gospel for the World.

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Centurion's Vision. vs. 30-33. **2. The Gospel for all Nations.** vs. 34, 35. **3. Christ's Life Mission.** vs. 36-44.

Time.—Probably about A. D. 40, soon after the last lesson. **Place.**—*Cæsarea*, on the Mediterranean coast, in the house of Cornelius, a Roman centurion.

Catechism.—Q. 17. *Into what estate did the fall bring mankind?* A. The fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 645: "From Greenland's icy mountains." Other hymns, 492, 493, 613, 625.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

INTRODUCTORY.—Our last lesson left Peter at Joppa, where he remained "many days." At Cæsarea, thirty or thirty-five miles north of Joppa, on the coast, lived Cornelius, a Roman centurion. While he was engaged in protracted devotion, earnestly seeking light, an angel appeared to him and told him to send to Joppa for Simon Peter, who would tell him what he ought to do. Meanwhile Peter also was receiving instructions in a vision to prepare him for this message from a Gentile, and when the messengers came, obeying the Spirit's bidding, he went back with them to Cæsarea, and was received by Cornelius with great earnestness.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

30 And Cor-ne'li-us said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, [Acts 1 : 10; Matt. 28 : 3; Mark 16 : 5.]

31 And said, Cor-ne'li-us, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. [Dan. 10 : 12; Heb. 6 : 10.]

32 Send therefore to Jop'pa, and call hither Si'mon, whose surname is Pe'ter; he is lodged in the house of *one* Si'mon a tanner by the sea side: who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee.

33 Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God. [1 Thess. 2 : 13.]

34 ¶ Then Pe'ter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: [Rom. 2 : 11; Gal. 2 : 6; 1 Pet. 1 : 17.]

35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. [Rom. 2 : 13; 1 Cor. 12 : 13; Gal. 3 : 28.]

36 The word which *God* sent unto the children of Is'ra-el, preaching peace by Je'sus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) [Isa. 57 : 9; Col. 1 : 20; Rev. 19 : 16.]

37 That word, *I say,* ye know, which was published throughout all Ju-dæ'a, and began from Gal'i-lee, after the baptism which John preached; [Luke 4: 14.]

38 How God anointed Je'sus of Naz'a-reth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. [Luke 4: 18; Acts 2: 22; Heb. 1: 9.]

39 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Je-ru'sa-lem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: [Acts 2: 32; 5: 30.]

40 Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; [Acts 2: 24.]

41 Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, *even* to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. [Luke 24: 30, 43; John 21: 13.]

42 And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God *to be* the Judge of quick and dead. [Rom. 14: 9; 2 Cor. 5: 10; 2 Tim. 4: 1; Gal. 3: 14.]

43 To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. [Rom. 10: 11; Gal. 3: 22.]

44 ¶ While Pe'ter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. [Acts 4: 31; 8: 15–17.]

REVISED TEXT.

30 And Cornelius said, Four days ago, until
this hour, I was keeping the ninth hour of
prayer in my house; and behold, a man
31 stood before me in bright apparel, and saith,
Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine
alms are had in remembrance in the sight of
32 God. Send therefore to Joppa, and call unto
thee Simon, who is surnamed Peter; he
lodgeth in the house of Simon a tanner, by
33 the sea side. Forthwith therefore I sent to
thee; and thou hast well done that thou art
come. Now therefore we are all here present in the sight of God, to hear all things
that have been commanded thee of the Lord.
34 And Peter opened his mouth, and said,
Of a truth I perceive that God is no re-
35 specter of persons: but in every nation he
that feareth him, and worketh righteousness,
36 is acceptable to him. The word which he
sent unto the children of Israel, preaching
good tidings of peace by Jesus Christ (he is
37 Lord of all)—that saying ye yourselves
know, which was published throughout all
Judæa, beginning from Galilee, after the
38 baptism which John preached; *even* Jesus of
Nazareth, how that God anointed him with
the Holy Ghost and with power: who went
about doing good, and healing all that were
oppressed of the devil; for God was with
39 him. And we are witnesses of all things
which he did both in the country of the
Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom also they
40 slew, hanging him on a tree. Him God
raised up the third day, and gave him to be
41 made manifest, not to all the people, but
unto witnesses that were chosen before of
God, *even* to us, who did eat and drink with
42 him after he rose from the dead. And he
charged us to preach unto the people, and to
testify that this is he which is ordained of
43 God *to be* the Judge of quick and dead. To
him bear all the prophets witness, that
through his name every one that believeth
on him shall receive remission of sins.
44 While Peter yet spake these words, the
Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the
word.

30 *Cornelius.* A number of particulars concerning this man are given in this chapter. See vs. 1, 2, 22. The name Cornelius was distinguished at Rome, and it is probable that he was a true-born Italian. He was a centurion, a captain of a hundred men. Two Roman centurions are honorably mentioned in the Gospels, one stationed at Capernaum (Matt. 8: 1), and the other commanding the soldiers in charge of the crucifixion. Matt. 27: 54. Cornelius was a "devout man," that is, truly religious. He had not formally united himself with the Jewish Church, although it is evident that he was familiar with the Jewish Scriptures, and was a worshiper of the true God. That his life was regulated by the precepts of the word of God is clear from the statement that he "feared God." His family were also instructed in the ways of piety, and his household life was conducted on religious principles. He was a man of prayer, that is, of constant habits of prayer. He was also a generous man, who gave much alms to the poor. See Luke 7: 5. On the question, whether he was a regenerated man previous to this time opinions differ; but he was certainly a most earnest seeker after God, and was very ripe for the reception of the gospel. *Four days ago.* See vs. 3–7, 22; chap. 11: 13, 14, for accounts of this vision. The messengers were two days in going to Joppa and two days in returning. vs. 23, 24. *Until this hour.* See v. 3. The ninth hour, or three o'clock in the afternoon, was one of the stated Jewish hours of prayer. See chap. 3: 1. It is evident that Cornelius had adopted some of the religious customs of the Jews, although he was not a proselyte. (Compare the reading of the Revised Version.) *In my house.* He was engaged in *secret* prayer. *A man stood before me.* An angel (v. 3; 11: 1), wearing the human form.

31 *Thy prayer is heard.* This implies that he had been praying for some definite thing which was now to be granted. His prayer must therefore have been for more light, for fuller knowledge of the truth. *Thine alms are had in remembrance.* In v. 4 his alms are said to have "gone up for a memorial before God." The meaning is that his alms were acceptable in God's sight and would not be forgotten.

32 *Send therefore to Joppa and call hither Simon.* Joppa is a very ancient town. It is mentioned by the Roman historians, Pliny and Strabo, and even centuries before Rome was founded Joshua wrote of it. *The house of one Simon a tanner.* In "The Ride Through Palestine," Dr. Dulles thus describes this interesting house as it is pointed out to modern travelers: "We visited the house pointed out as that of Simon the tanner. It stands by the water-side, and is a solid stone house of two stories, with a square, flat roof looking out over the water. The room on the first floor has been turned into a Moslem place of prayer—a mosque. It is bare and desolate. From the yard you can mount to the housetop, and, though you may be far from sure that this is the house at which the messengers from Cornelius knocked (since the building is a modern one), the narrative will become more real to you. No doubt it was much such a house as this, nor could it have stood far from where this house stands. Certainly, we read the story from the Bible with fresh zest while standing upon that housetop."

33 *Now therefore are we all here.* He was eager to hear what Peter had to say. He knew that his words would bring the fuller light for which he had been longing and praying. See chap. 11: 14. The company in his house was also deeply interested and attentive. *Things that are commanded thee of God.* It was not to Peter merely, but to Peter as coming with a message from God that Cornelius was so attentive.

34 *Peter opened his mouth.* This phrase always denotes that grave and important words are about to be uttered. See Matt. 5: 2. *Of a truth I perceive.* What Cornelius had just related, taken in connection with Peter's own vision, showed him very clearly that the old separating line between Jew and Gentile was now removed. Whatever doubts of this had remained after his vision were now swept away, as he looked upon this reverent Gentile company and heard how God had led Cornelius. *No respecter of persons.* Till now Peter had supposed that the Jews were to be the exclusive recipients of the blessings of grace; now he sees that this distinction is done away and that the Gentiles are to be admitted on equal footing to all the privileges of the gospel. They were not to become Jews, but Christians. See Rom. 2: 11; Eph. 6: 9; Col. 3: 25; James 2: 1, 9.

JAFFA, THE MODERN JOPPA, FROM THE SOUTH.

35 *In every nation.* The emphasis is on

"every." The Jews have no longer any precedence. *He that feareth him and worketh righteousness.* There is no difference on the ground of nationality, but there is a moral test. These words tell us what are the only essentials. To *fear God* embraces all of our duty to God, the recognition of him as our God, and all worship and obedience springing from this recognition. To *work righteousness* includes all duties which we owe to one another. But we must not conclude from this statement that nothing more is necessary for salvation than reverence for God and sincere faithfulness in practical duties. If this were all, there was no need for bringing Peter all the way from Joppa to teach Cornelius. All that Peter asserted here was that the barriers of nationality were broken down, that all nations stood on common ground, that the gospel was for every one who would accept its conditions, whether he was Jew or Gentile. See Acts 15: 9, 11 for a fuller statement of the same truth. *Accepted with him.* Revised Version: *Acceptable to him.* Will be accepted as a Christian if he believes on Christ, regardless of his nationality and without keeping the Mosaic ceremonial law.

36, 37 *The word which God sent.* The gospel message, which came first to the Jews. *Preaching peace.* Revised Version: *Good tidings of peace.* Peace first between God and man, but also between Jew and Gentile (Eph. 2: 15–17); and not merely *proclaiming*, but *making* peace. *He is Lord of all.* Of all men, all nations, not of the Jews only. *That word, I say, ye know.* Cornelius and his friends had some general knowledge of the gospel, for Jesus himself had been near Cæsarea, and his disciples had gone everywhere. Chap. 8: 40.

38 In vs. 38–42 we have the substance of the gospel facts, a true "apostles' creed." *God anointed Jesus.* At the time of his baptism; although some suppose the reference to be primarily to the incarnation. *With power.* As a result of the anointing with the Holy Spirit. *Who went about doing good.* His whole life and work are here described. *Oppressed of the devil.* Probably referring not only to demoniacal possession, but to all suffering caused by Satan. *God was with him.* See John 3: 2; 8: 29; 14: 10. The three persons of the Trinity are named in this verse.

39 *We are witnesses.* We, the apostles. *Whom they slew and hanged.* Referring to his death by crucifixion at the hands of the Jews. Notice the difference in Peter's speaking of this fact to the Jews themselves, as in chap. 2: 23; 3: 14; 4: 10; 5: 30, and here to the Gentiles.

40 *Shewed him openly.* See Revised Version.

41 *Not to all the people.* He never appeared in public at all after his resurrection, but only to his personal friends. *Witnesses chosen before.* Chosen and prepared by previous acquaintance with him to testify positively to his identity, and to the facts of his life, death and resurrection.

42 *Commanded us to preach.* Matt. 23: 19; Acts 1: 8. *Judge of quick (living) and dead.* Including all who have ever lived and all who shall be living when he comes. Christ must be preached not as Saviour only, but also as Judge. See John 5: 22; Acts 17: 31.

43 *All the prophets.* It is not necessary to find predictions of Christ in every one of the prophets; it is enough that the general drift of prophecy was concerning him. *Whosoever believeth.* Gentiles as well as Jews.

44 *While Peter spake.* In chap. 11: 15 he says that as he *began* to speak this divine interruption occurred. *The Holy Ghost fell.* In miraculous manifestation (they spoke with tongues. v. 46). There was also some *visible* manifestation, for in chap. 11: 15 Peter says "the Holy Ghost fell on them, *even as on us*, at the beginning," that is, on the day of Pentecost. This was really therefore the Pentecost of the Gentiles. The outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the Gentiles was the divine seal upon Peter's declaration that the gospel was for all nations.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

Four days ago . . . I was keeping the ninth hour of prayer in my house. When a man begins to pray to God sincerely and earnestly, blessing is not very far off. Wherever there is real spiritual hunger the mouth will soon be filled. The promise is that if we ask we shall receive, if we seek we shall find, if we knock it shall be opened unto us. There is a strong word also in Jeremiah: "Ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." The next best thing to having found God is to be earnestly seeking for him, for "he is a rewarder of all them that diligently seek him." Only get sinners to feel their need and begin to cry to God, and soon they will find blessing.

Behold, a man stood before me in bright apparel. Perhaps the angel had been listening while Cornelius prayed. There is always some one listening at the door when we pray, ready to come in with the answer. We do not know how often the angels are bending over us when we bow low under our burdens and cry to God for help. Then there is Another who is *always*

listening at the door—Christ himself. The Scriptures tell us that God "bends his ear" to hear when any one is praying on the earth, that "his ears are open" to the cries of his children. We do not half understand the blessedness of prayer, how near God is when we talk to him, how deep his interest in us is, nor how quickly and surely he sends the answer.

Thy prayer is heard . . . send therefore to Joppa, and call . . . Peter. Why did not the angel tell Cornelius what he wanted to know? It would seem to us that there was no need to send away so far for a man when there was an angel there. We would suppose that an angel could preach a great deal more eloquently than even an apostle. But the angels do not preach. The gospel must be told by human lips. The angel comes to tell the anxious man, not what to do to be saved, but where to send for a human preacher who will speak to him words whereby he shall be saved. Angels run errands for the heirs of salvation, but only redeemed sinners are commissioned to tell the lost the way of salvation.

Forthwith therefore I sent to thee. He did not lose a moment's time in sending for Peter. He was too eager to wait. Then when Peter came and told him how to be saved he instantly accepted Christ and was promptly baptized. Here is a lesson on the duty of promptness in attending to the interests of the soul. Are you unsaved? Lose not a minute in seeking the Saviour. Call upon God. Open your Bible and ask of it what you must do. Go to God's minister and ask him to make the way plain for you. Then when you learn what to do do it instantly. It is not safe to wait an hour. It is a perilous thing to lie down on your bed over night unsaved. What if you should never awake in this world?

"To-day is yours; to-morrow never yet
On any human being rose or set."

God is no respecter of persons. He never asks to what nation a man belongs, whether he is a Jew or an African or an Indian or an American, whether he is black or white, rich or poor, of high rank or low, of noble form or a little misshapen dwarf, a fine scholar or illiterate. God never shows any favoritism on account of any external conditions. He looks upon the heart and judges men by their character. No royalty or greatness or beauty will count in his sight if the heart be wrong; and no poverty or lowliness or homeliness is a blemish if the heart be right.

In every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him. The way is just as open to God for a Hottentot or a Zulu as for a high-toned Englishman or a proud American; yet it is not open to any one until he gives up his sins and turns his heart to seek God. No man is ready to be saved who does not fear and reverence God, and who is not ready to enter upon a life of holy obedience. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." But let no one say that these words teach salvation without Christ; they teach only that all who come to God in this spirit are acceptable as seekers after salvation.

Through his name every one that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins. Cornelius, good man as he was, prayerful, benevolent and upright, needed Christ, and must accept him as his personal Saviour. There is none other name by which we must be saved. There is no place to bring our sins for pardon and cleansing but to Christ's cross. These are the words which the angel said Peter would speak, whereby this earnest seeker should be saved. Remember how good a man this was, even as the never-flattering Scripture paints him. "Here is a man who possesses all the qualifications of a saint," says Dr. Arnot, "if a saint can grow in the soil of earth, without a seed sent down from heaven. He was devout in spirit, exemplary in the training of his children, beneficent to the poor, and constant in his religious duties. Here is a model man. If any man could be just with God, apart from faith in Christ crucified, surely this is the man. A better specimen of humanity you can nowhere find; yet the word of God treats him as a sinner, and forthwith proceeds to tell him what he must do to be saved. . . . If this man could not appear before the judgment-seat until his sins were blotted out in the blood of the Lamb, how shall we appear with our own sins or our own goodness marked to our account?"

LESSON POINTS.

1. The way to get more light is to live up to what we now have and look to God for a fuller manifestation. v. 30; Ps. 112: 4; John 7: 17.

2. Those who truly seek God and pray to him will find answer and blessing in due time. v. 30.

3. The angels are in this world to serve those who are heirs of salvation. v. 30.

4. Prayers do not go unheard into heaven, nor are good deeds forgotten there. v. 31.

5. God uses human hands to help in saving men. Christ is the only Saviour, but human lips must tell of him; even an angel cannot do it. v. 32.

6. The angels know where to find God's servants—just the town, street and number. v. 32.

7. See the interest Christ takes in a seeking soul; he sends an angel from heaven with a message, and then has an apostle brought thirty or forty miles to speak a few necessary words. vs. 30–32.

8. We are saved by *words*. Compare v. 32 with chap. 11: 14.

9. Those who are seeking after God should never lose a moment in doing what they are commanded to do. v. 33.

10. Those who are sent for or appealed to to direct a seeking soul should never delay a moment in responding. See Peter's example. v. 33.

11. Those who truly seek God will show it in their lives. v. 35.

12. No matter how good the man is that seeks God he must receive Christ as his Saviour. v. 43.

13. The seal of salvation is the gift of the Holy Spirit, who is given to every one who believes. v. 44, with Eph. 4: 30.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

BY THE REV. JAMES A. WORDEN, D.D.

TEST YOURSELF.

1. Have I prayed for light from God's Spirit?

2. Have I accurate knowledge of the two *places*, Cæsarea and Joppa?

3. Have I a clear conception of the two principal *actors* in this chapter?

4. Do I so know all *the facts* contained in this tenth chapter that I can, in simple words of my own, narrate them without leaving out a single particular?

5. Do I grasp *the great design* of this narrative of Peter's reception of Cornelius into the Church?

6. Have I decided in my own mind what is the *central truth* of this lesson? (Is it not the brotherhood of all men in Christ?)

7. Have I made out my outline?

PREACHING TO GENTILES { *The Occasion.* vs. 30–33. / *The Sermon.* vs. 34–44.

If you wish more minutely to sketch the lesson, you can do it thus—

I. THE OCCASION { *The Hearer*— CORNELIUS' CIRCUMSTANCES. vs. 1, 2. CALL. vs. 30–33. / *The Apostle*— PETER PRAYING. vs. 9, 10. PREPARED. vs. 11–29.

II. THE SERMON—*For All and One* { FATHER. vs. 34, 35. / SAVIOUR. vs. 36–43. / SPIRIT. v. 44.

8. Out of all the *practical bearings* of this lesson have I selected precisely those best suited to the needs of my scholars?

9. Have I written out such questions, illustrations and applications as these:

I. WHAT DO YOU KNOW OF CORNELIUS?

1. Was Cornelius a Jew or a Gentile? Of what nation was he? What was a centurion? What other centurions are mentioned in the New Testament? Luke 7: 2; 23: 47; Acts 27: 1, 43, etc. What of Cornelius' alms? Prayers? Family religion? *Illustrate and apply this point* by telling of soldiers who were devoted Christians, *e. g.*, General Havelock, Capt. Hedley Vicars, General Mitchell and General Howard.

2. What vision had Cornelius seen? What did the angel say of his prayers and alms? For whom was he to send? Where was Peter? Why did the angel not tell Cornelius of Jesus?

II. HOW HAD GOD PREPARED PETER TO PREACH TO CORNELIUS?

1. Describe Peter's vision. To whom were the apostles first to preach Jesus? (Acts 1: 8.) Second? Third? Fourth? To whom had they preached thus far?

2. *How did the Jews feel toward the Gentiles?* Read John 4: 9; Acts 10: 28. What were the laws as to the proper food for a Jew? See Leviticus, chap. 11. How did these laws tend to keep Jews separate from the Gentiles? How do they to this day? Was it God's command that Jews should not keep company with or come unto Gentiles? Why were the Jews then unwilling to do so? Why was this a sinful pride?

3. What did the Jews think the Gentiles must do in order to be saved? Become Jews. What did the Jewish Christians think the Gentiles must do in order to be saved? Become Jews first and then become Christians. Acts 15: 1, 5.

4. *How had Peter's vision changed him?* Describe it, and show its meaning.

III. WHAT DID PETER PREACH TO CORNELIUS?

What articles of the Apostles' Creed are found in Peter's sermon? "God the Father Al-

mighty;" "Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord;" "Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried;" "The third day he arose from the dead;" "He shall come to judge the quick and the dead;" "The Holy Ghost;" "The forgiveness of sins." Have the scholars read from the sermon the words which substantially teach each article mentioned. What truths did Peter preach which are not contained in the Apostles' Creed?

IV. How did God Seal Peter's Preaching?

In what way did the Holy Ghost probably manifest himself? Acts 11: 15; 2: 4.

Give prominence to the announcement of the next lesson, on "The Spread of the Gospel." Assign on paper the following:

1. The second centre of the early church—Antioch.

2. The Grecians (Hellenists) and the Greeks—difference in the meaning of the words.

3. Character and labors of Barnabas.

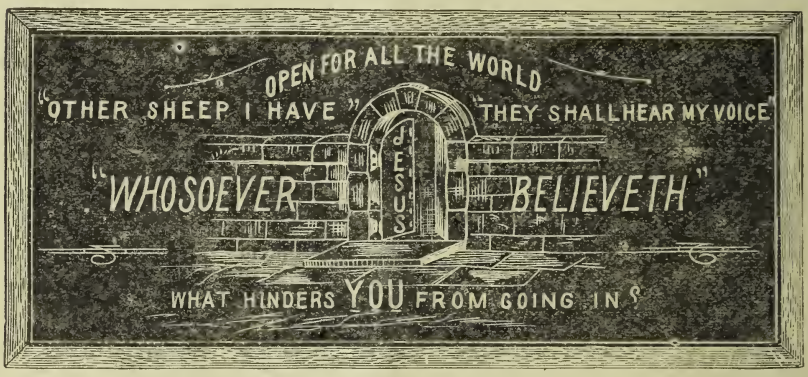
4. The term "Christians." Acts 11: 26; 26: 28; 1 Peter 4: 16.

5. Christian giving—its principles and methods.

Request those to whom these are assigned to present next Sabbath brief statements in writing of the results of their study.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

BY J. HOWARD SEAL.



Suggestions.—A study of Peter's vision (vs. 1-20) will be necessary to a complete understanding of this lesson. It was "a supernatural communication to induce him to preach to the Gentiles." "It is here made evident that the Gentiles may come to Christ direct without passing through Judaism on their way." Verses 34-44 contain a summary of the entire gospel. "God is no respecter of persons." The gospel is for all the world. Jesus is "the way." "Behold I have set before you *an open door*, etc." Rev. 3: 8. "Jesus is the door." John 10: 9. This door is open for all the world. "Other sheep I have . . . they shall hear my voice." John 10: 16; Isa. 49: 6. "If *any* man enter in, etc." John 10: 9. "Whosoever believeth on him shall receive remission of sins." vs. 43. The above diagram will enable the superintendent to impress this thought, and will prove a picture lesson, I think, that will secure attention; or the following may be used—

FORGIVENESS { WITHOUT RESERVE TO THE CHIEF OF SINNERS, OF ALL SINS

"Whosoever Believeth."

If the diagram above is used, after pressing home the truth, make the application, "What hinders YOU from going in?" (Prevents you from being saved.) Is it not unbelief? The door is open now. By-and-bye it will be *shut*.

Directions for Coloring.—Wall and doorway, white; open door, brown; "Open for all the world," orange; "Other sheep I have" and "They shall hear my voice," white shaded with red; "Whosoever believeth," yellow shaded with pink; "Jesus," yellow; "What hinders you from yoing in?" orange.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

BY MRS. G R. ALDEN—"PANSY."

Let the thought given in v. 34 be the one to impress on the children: "God is no respecter of persons." A very simple blackboard outline will help you. Make a small circle. Place the cross in the centre, and fill it with marks to represent the Jews. They believed that the

Saviour was for them alone. Surround it with a much larger circle, having many marks to represent the Gentiles. While at work on this outline, be hearing from class the lesson story. You will have to supply many details not included in the lesson. Let the class live over with you the scenes occurring in the two homes. Make a mark for Peter's stopping place at Joppa *inside* of the Jewish circle, and a mark for the home of Cornelius among the Gentiles. Follow Peter on his mission, and imagine the people gathered to hear the wonderful news. At the proper moment print on the cross the words: "WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH," and extend lines from them that shall reach to the outermost circle of the Gentiles. Individualize some of the marks, thus: "Here is an old man; his head is white, he walks with a cane, he is almost blind. He has but very lately heard of Jesus. But see, the line from the cross touches him. He believes Jesus, gives his heart to him, and Jesus saves him." "This mark stands for a little boy only seven years old." As you point to the mark, tell briefly some story of a child-Christian. Make the illustration so plain that the children will understand what true belief in Jesus is. I suppose you have made this thought plain a hundred times before, but it must be done a thousand times.

THE PROOF OF ACCEPTANCE.

God gave to the Gentiles also the Holy Ghost. Just *how* he came to them you do not know and cannot teach; but be sure to teach that he is given now, even to any child who desires his abiding presence. "Whosoever believeth" is still the open door.

FINAL THOUGHT.—Does a line from those words on the cross touch me, showing me to be his child? Do I so truly believe on him that I am trying all the time to obey him?

Lesson VII. **THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL.** May 13th, 1883.

Acts 11: 19-30. Memorize vs. 21-26.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord."—Acts 11: 21.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 11: 19-30 .. *The Spread of the Gospel.*
T. Rom. 10: 1-17 .. *For Jew and Gentile.*
W. 1 Pet. 4: 12-19 .. *Suffering as Christians.*
Th. Isa. 55: 1-13.... *"Nations shall Run unto Thee."*
F. Gal. 3: 8-29..... *One in Christ.*
S. Rom. 15: 25-33 . *Ministering to the Needy,*
S. John 15: 1-18... *Abiding in Christ.*

TOPIC.

Disciples First Called Christians.

LESSON PLAN.

1. Persecution Scatters the Gospel. vs. 19-21. **2. The Mission of Barnabas.** vs. 22-24. **3. The Growth of the Church.** vs. 25, 26. **4. The Fruit of Godliness.** vs. 27-30.

Time.—Probably about A. D. 40-44. **Place.**—Antioch, the capital of Syria.

Catechism.—Q. 18. *Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?* A. The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell, consists in, the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called original sin; together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 628: "O Lord our God, arise." Other hymns, 44, 620, 634, 636.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—The Gentile believers of Cornelius' household were at once baptized after they had received the Holy Ghost. Peter remained with them certain days, no doubt instructing them in the knowledge of Christ. When he returned to Jerusalem the apostles and brethren blamed him for having violated Jewish rules in abiding and eating with Gentiles. He then recounted to them the whole matter, and when they had heard his statement they held their peace and glorified God, accepting the truth that God had granted to the Gentiles also repentance and life. Our lesson passage takes us back again to the persecution that followed the death of Stephen (chap. 8: 1-4), and follows out our line of the dispersion.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

19 ¶ Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Ste'phen traveled as far as Phe-ni'ce, and Cy'prus, and An'ti-och, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only. [Acts 8: 1.]

20 And some of them were men of Cy'prus and Cy-re'ne, which, when they were come to An'ti-och, spake unto the Gre'cians, preaching the Lord Je'sus. [Acts 6: 1; 9: 29; 1 Cor. 1: 23, 24.]

21 And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and

turned unto the Lord. [Luke 1 : 66; Acts 2 : 47; 9 : 35.]

22 ¶ Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Je-ru'sa-lem: and they sent forth Bar'na-bas, that he should go as far as An'ti-och. [Acts 9 : 37.]

23 Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. [Acts 13 : 43; 14 : 22.]

24 For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord. [Acts 6 : 5; 5 : 14.]

25 Then departed Bar'na-bas to Tar'sus, for to seek Saul. [Acts 9 : 30.]

26 And when he had found him, he brought him unto An'ti-och. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in An'ti-och. [Acts 26 : 28; 1 Pet. 4 : 16.]

27 ¶ And in these days came prophets from Je-ru'sa-lem unto An'ti-och. [Acts 2 : 17; 13 : 1; 15 : 32.]

28 And there stood up one of them named Ag'a-bus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Clau'di-us Cæ'sar. [Acts 21 : 10.]

29 Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judæa: [Rom. 15 : 26; 1 Cor. 16 : 1; 2 Cor. 9 : 1.]

30 Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Bar'na-bas and Saul. [Acts 12 : 25.]

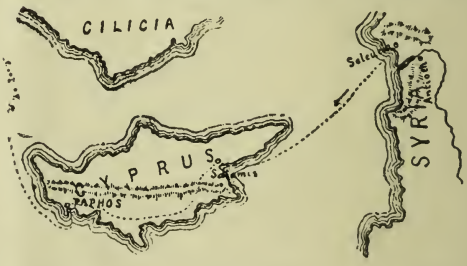
REVISED TEXT.

19 They therefore that were scattered abroad
upon the tribulation that arose about Stephen
travelled as far as Phœnicia, and Cyprus,
and Antioch, speaking the word to none save
20 only to Jews. But there were some of them,
men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they
were come to Antioch, spake unto the Greeks
21 also, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the
hand of the Lord was with them: and a
great number that believed turned unto the
22 Lord. And the report concerning them
came to the ears of the church which was in
Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas as
23 far as Antioch: who, when he was come,
and had seen the grace of God, was glad;
and he exhorted them all, that with purpose
of heart, they would cleave unto the Lord:
24 for he was a good man, and full of the Holy
Ghost and of faith: and much people was
25 added unto the Lord. And he went forth to
26 Tarsus to seek for Saul: and when he had
found him, he brought him unto Antioch.
And it came to pass, that even for a whole
year they were gathered together with the
church, and taught much people; and that
the disciples were called Christians first in
Antioch.

27 Now in these days there came down
28 prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. And
there stood up one of them named Agabus,
and signified by the Spirit that there should
be a great famine over all the world; which
29 came to pass in the days of Claudius. And
the disciples, every man according to his
ability, determined to send relief unto the
30 brethren that dwelt in Judæa: which also
they did, sending it to the elders by the
hand of Barnabas and Saul.

19 *They which were scattered abroad.* See chap. 8 : 1–4. The great persecution which began with Stephen's martyrdom, and in which Saul was the leading spirit, drove the Christians (not including the apostles) from Jerusalem, but the seeming calamity was overruled to the wide diffusion of the gospel. *Phenice.* Phœnicia, a narrow strip of land on the Mediterranean, about one hundred and twenty miles long and with an average breadth of fifteen miles. Tyre and Sidon were its chief cities. Itself a fertile country and rich, its position gave it also great commercial importance. The inhabitants were of Canaanitish origin. Gen. 10 : 15, 19. *Cyprus.* An island in the Mediterranean, one hundred and fifty miles long and fifty wide. It was the birthplace of Barnabas. Its principal cities were Salamis and Paphos. It now belongs to England. *Antioch.* In Syria, thus distinguished from Antioch in Pisidia. Chap. 13 : 14. It was an important city, on the river Orontes, having a population reckoned at above half a million. It was a metropolis of vice, famous for its culture and splendor, and infamous for its abandonment to sensuality and every evil. *Preaching . . . unto the Jews only.* Those who were driven away by persecution declared the gospel wherever they went, but only to the Jews. They had not yet learned that the gospel was for all men.

20 *Some of them.* Of those scattered abroad. *Men of Cyprus and Cyrene.* Natives of these



places. *Cyrene.* A city of Libya on the north coast of Africa. It was opposite Cyprus, with which it was at this time united in one Roman province. There were many Jews in Cyrene, and there was in Jerusalem a Cyrenian synagogue. Chaps. 2 : 10; 6 : 9. See also Matt. 27 : 32; Acts 13 : 1. *The Grecians.* The oldest manuscripts differ here, some of them giving *Hellenists*, or Grecian Jews, others *Greeks, i. e.,*

Gentiles. The Revised Version gives Greeks, and the majority of commentators adopt this reading.

21 *The hand of the Lord was with them.* With those who preached. The hand is the symbol of activity or energy, and the meaning is that the divine power was shown through them, perhaps confirming their words by miracles. See Luke 1: 66; Acts 4: 30; Isa. 53: 1. *Believed and turned.* Believed on Christ Jesus and turned to him.

22 *Tidings of these things.* See Revised Version. It was the report concerning *them, i. e.*, the new converts at Antioch which reached Jerusalem. *The church which was in Jerusalem.* The body of believers there, with the apostles at their head. If these converts at Antioch were Gentiles, it is possible that the sending of this deputation implied some doubt as to the propriety of receiving uncircumcised persons into the Church. It may have been sent, however, only to confirm and instruct the believers there more fully; at least, this was what Barnabas dia when he reached Antioch. *They sent forth Barnabas.* He was from Cyprus (chap. 4: 36), and was probably acquainted with the Cypriotes who were preaching at Antioch. *As far as.* He was to make a tour of all the places where the gospel had been preached between Jerusalem and Antioch.

23 *When he came and had seen.* Whatever doubts or questionings he may have had before, when he came and saw the work in progress and the evidence of divine grace in it, he was satisfied and even made glad. There was no jealousy in his heart when he saw the Gentiles enjoying the blessings of salvation. *He exhorted them.* He found nothing to blame or condemn in the work, and he only exhorted the converts to continue faithful. Barnabas was called the "son of exhortation." (Chap. 4: 36, Revised Version.) *With purpose of heart.* With firm, unwavering principle, with faithful affection. They had begun well; he exhorted them only to persevere in their devoted attachment to Christ.

24 *He was a good man.* This is given as the reason for his rejoicing at what he saw. Some successful Christian workers do not rejoice in the work done by others. Some Jewish Christians no doubt would not have rejoiced at seeing Gentiles converted. Barnabas was a *good* man, above all envy. He rejoiced that souls were saved, and that a great work was going on, though he had had no part in it, and he was glad when he saw sinners brought into the Church, though they were Gentiles. *Good* here means benevolent, candid, of liberal spirit, and large hearted. *Much people was added.* As a result of the visit and exhortation of Barnabas.

25 *To seek Saul.* When Saul left Jerusalem (chap. 9: 30) he went to Tarsus. How long he had now been there or what he had been doing, we cannot tell. Barnabas had introduced him to the apostles (chap. 9: 27); now again, when he saw an opening for a great work in Antioch among the Gentiles, he went and brought Saul for this work. He had probably known him in early life, and he may have known also of the revelation to him (chap. 22: 21) that he was to be the apostle to the Gentiles. Barnabas seems to have been the only one who discerned in the converted persecutor the elements of character which afterward shone so illustriously in him. Both these men appear here in lovely light. Saul is modest and retiring, not putting himself forward, laboring in a quiet obscure corner, till brought out by Barnabas. Barnabas, forgetful of himself, recognizes the abilities of another, and brings him forward, even though he knows that the other will soon eclipse him.

26 *A whole year.* Previous to the errand of love to Jerusalem. Barnabas and Saul labored together in Antioch all this year. *Were called Christians first in Antioch.* There is but little if any doubt that this designation was given as a term of contempt. The converts did not assume it for themselves, for they used such names as disciples, believers, saints, brethren. The Jews did not give it, for they did not confess that Jesus was the Christ; Nazarene would more likely be the term of contempt they would use. It came most probably from the pagan population, and was suggested by the devotion of the believers to Christ. They were such faithful adherents to this person they called Christ, and spoke his name so often in their prayers and hymns and sermons and conversation, that in derision the people began to call them Christians. The name occurs besides in the New Testament only in Acts 26: 28, and 1 Peter 4: 16.

27 *In these days.* While Paul and Barnabas were laboring at Corinth, during the year of their stay there. *Prophets.* Inspired teachers; not necessarily foretellers of future events. See chap. 13: 1; 15: 32; 21: 9.

28 *Agabus.* He appears again, twenty years later. Chap. 21: 10. He "stood up" probably in a public meeting of the church. *By the Spirit.* The prediction he made was given to him by the Holy Spirit. For other instances of special revelations by the Spirit, see chap. 16: 6, 7; 20: 23. *Great dearth.* Famine. *All the world.* Not Judea only, but the whole known world.

Which came to pass. History confirms this statement. During the reign of Claudius Cæsar (41–54 A. D.) a number of extensive famines occurred, as we learn from Tacitus and Suetonius, and also from Josephus. Claudius was emperor when Agabus made this prediction.

29 *Then the disciples.* The believers in Antioch. It is probable that the famine began almost immediately, or was even now beginning, for the words imply that the measures for relief were taken at once. *Every man according to his ability.* Every one gave something; every one gave as he was able. See 1 Cor. 16: 2; 2 Cor. 8: 12. *The brethren . . . in Judæa.* Two names for Christians are used in this verse, "disciples" and "brethren." Antioch was a wealthy city, and the believers in Jerusalem were mostly poor, so that the distress of the famine would fall heavily upon them.

30 *The elders.* This is the first mention of the elders. See also chaps. 14: 23; 15: 6, 22, 23; 20: 17, 28; 21: 18. It is probable the eldership was adopted from the Jewish synagogue. The discussion of this subject is deferred until we come to study the lesson of June 17th (chap. 14: 23).

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

They therefore that were scattered . . . traveled . . . speaking the word. Though driven away from Jerusalem for being believers on Christ their devotion to him was not weakened. They did not learn by their hard experience to keep quiet about their religion, and be only cautious, secret disciples. Persecution made them even bolder and more imprudent. Wherever they went they told everybody about Christ. Thus the persecution, instead of stamping out the fire of Christianity, only scattered the embers everywhere till soon the whole Roman empire was ablaze.

Some of them, men of Cyprus . . . spake . . . preaching the Lord Jesus. There are two things to be noted here. One is, that these were not ministers but laymen. Every Christian ought to be a witness for Christ wherever he goes. There never was a greater mistake made than in thinking that only ordained ministers are to tell others about Christ. Every Christian boy and girl, should speak for Christ every day. The other thing to be noted here is, that it is the Lord Jesus we are to preach. We are to tell people about him, and get them to see him and love him as we do.

The hand of the Lord was with them. Just so far as the hand of the Lord is with us in our Christian work will we have success. The instrument is human, but the power is divine. Men preach, but the hand of the Lord does the real work. Yet both are important. God does not ordinarily convert sinners except through human instruments. "In this work men can do nothing without God; but God will do nothing without men." We must be ready always to do our part, but we must never forget that unless the hand of God is with us nothing will come of our best and most skillful work. It becomes an important question then, How can we live and work so as always to have God's hand with us? Only by having simple faith, by being filled with the Holy Ghost, and living close to him continually.

Who, when he was come, and had seen the grace of God, was glad. It always ought to make a Christian glad to see the work of the Lord succeeding in any place, even though he himself has had no part in it. No finer trait appears in Barnabas than shines out just here. Ministers and teachers and Christian workers usually rejoice when they see evidences of divine blessing in their own work for Christ; but do they always rejoice as earnestly and heartily when they see a good work going on in the class or parish or field of another? We should all study this lovely feature in Barnabas, and seek to copy it into our own lives.

He exhorted them all that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. There are several great words here whose meaning we must dig out. The central one is the word *Lord.* They were now attached to him. Every true Christian is. To be a Christian at all is to be attached personally to Christ, by faith, by love, by loyalty, and by the indwelling of the Spirit. Then they were exhorted to *cleave* to the Lord. They were now attached to him; Barnabas found no fault with them; but they must continue to cleave to him. He knew there were a great many influences to weaken their attachment. The danger against which he warned them was backsliding, the decay of their love for Christ, the chilling of their zeal in his service. It is not enough to begin well in a Christian life; it is continuance, perseverance that proves genuineness. This can be assured only by *cleaving to the Lord.* We must be in him as the branch is in the vine, or as the root of the tree is in the ground. *Purpose* is another important word here. Long ago an old man said of one of his sons: "Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel!" Want of purpose was the trouble, is the trouble with a great many people in modern days. There are plenty of Reubenites in every generation. It takes *purpose* to excel in anything, and none the less in the Christian life. The word *heart* shows that there

can be no cleaving to the Lord if the affections are not enchained. It is not enough to hold on to Christ by the hand, or by the mind, or by the social tastes; we must cleave to him with the heart, must love him.

He was a good man. The Bible never pays compliments. When such a word as this is written of any man on the inspired page he must have been a very superior character indeed. It will be pleasant to gather up the personal incidents of the history of Barnabas, that are recorded, and learn all we can about him. The first we see of him he is selling his property and laying the proceeds at the apostles' feet to be used in relieving the poor. This was a noble act. The next time we see him he is acting as Saul's friend. The apostles could not believe that the fierce persecutor was truly converted, and they would not receive him as a brother. Then Barnabas came with him, introduced him to the apostles, and assured them that he knew him to be sincere, that the Lord had actually appeared to him, and that he had already been preaching boldly. This was a noble thing to do. The next time we see him is in this lesson when he is sent to Antioch. His conduct here is very noble. He is free from jealousy and envy, and rejoices in the work of others. Again we see him putting Saul forward, and this also is a shining act. These are some of the good things we learn about Nicodemus.

The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch. It speaks well for the first believers in that heathen city that such a name was applied to them, even as a scoff. It shows how devoted they must have been to Christ to have suggested to the outside world such a designation. It is well when Christians show such love for their Lord as to attract the notice of the ungodly and even draw ridicule for their loyalty to Jesus.

The disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren. Nothing shines more brightly in all the story of the early Christian Church than the generous liberality of its members. The lessons here on Christian giving should not be overlooked. All true believers belong to one family, and when any of them in one place are in distress the others should seek to give relief. Individual duty in this regard is indicated here in the points, that every one gave something, and that each one gave according to his ability. It would be well if the modern Christian Church would return to these simple principles.

LESSON POINTS.

1. The persecution that was meant to destroy served to spread the gospel and scatter the good seed. v. 19.

2. Laymen as well as ministers—all Christians—ought to proclaim Christ wherever they go. v. 19.

3. Every truly good man rejoices to see souls saved and blessed, whoever may be the instrument. v. 23.

4. A right beginning is not enough; we must cleave to the Lord and be faithful to the end. v. 23.

5. The best eulogy that can be pronounced on any one is that "He was a good man." Goodness is better than greatness. v. 24.

6. Barnabas never did a greater thing than when he found Saul and introduced him to the Church. vs. 25, 26.

7. One mark of a true church is its liberality. There is not much grace in action when a church is stingy. v. 29.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

Next Sabbath you are to teach the inspired account of *the first foreign mission.* You visit the little stream far up the Andes which has grown into the swelling Amazon of Christian missions. In teaching this lesson prepare—

I. LINES OF APPROACH. II. A WORKING OUTLINE. III. PRINCIPAL QUESTIONS. IV. ILLUSTRATIONS. V. APPLICATIONS.

I. LINES OF APPROACH.

1. Bring out either by questions or brief statement that *God miraculously prepared the Church for foreign missions.* What controversy arose concerning Peter's reception of Cornelius into the Church? See 11: 1–3. What is meant by "they that were of the circumcision?" How did they state their complaint against Peter? How did Peter reply to this complaint? 11: 4–17. (Here bring in the review of last lesson.) What was the result of Peter's statements of facts? How is the wisdom of God shown in the choice of Peter as the man to open the door of salvation to the Gentiles?

2. *God's providence directly drove men to the foreign mission field.* What caused the dispersion of the disciples from Jerusalem? What was the result of this dispersion? What did the exiles do as they journeyed? To whom? Why not to Gentiles? Why should we take Christ's work with us when we travel? How can we do this?

II. A WORKING OUTLINE.

I would suggest this as a practical one for the teacher's own use—

THE FIRST FOREIGN { *Mission.* vs. 19–21.
Missionaries. vs. 22–26.
Collection. vs. 27–30.

This skeleton is not to be exhibited until you have clothed it with flesh, and animated it with God's living truth.

III. PRINCIPAL QUESTIONS, combining also illustrations and applications.

THE FIRST FOREIGN MISSION.

1. Describe Antioch.

2. Who were God's instruments in beginning foreign mission work? v. 20. (Unnamed laymen—fugitives from persecuting rage, filled with God's Spirit.) Show that every one in the Church has a work to do for Christ.

3. To whom did these laymen preach? What is the word in the Revised Version? What is the difference between Grecians and Greeks? Why is this preaching to Greeks a remarkable fact? (Never before had any Christian—unmoved by a miracle—preached Christ to Gentiles.) What reason can you see that God chose unknown laymen to inaugurate foreign missions? Why should we desire to reach every creature with Christ's gospel? How do you prove that you desire this?

4. How did the Lord Jesus sanction preaching to the Greeks? Who is meant by "the Lord?" What by "the hand of the Lord?" What was the result of the power of the risen Jesus? How can this power now be obtained?

FIRST FOREIGN MISSIONARIES.

A missionary is one sent to preach Christ. A foreign missionary is one sent to preach Christ to heathens. What did the Jerusalem church do when they heard the tidings from Antioch? How had this church been prepared for such news? (See lines of approach.) Who was Barnabas? Sketch his history and character. How was he qualified to preach in Antioch? v. 24.

1. *What did Barnabas see at Antioch?* How can any man see the grace of God? By seeing its fruits. Prove that God's grace will show itself in the outward life. How did the work among the Greeks impress Barnabas? What does our rejoicing in others' success reveal as to our character? What do envy, jealousy and detraction show?

2. *What exhortation did Barnabas give?* Show that it was precisely what young converts need.

3. *What great worker did Barnabas bring to his help?* Where had Saul been? (He was probably laboring somewhere in Cilicia.) What had Barnabas done for Saul before this? Acts 9: 27.

4. *What was the origin of the term "Christian?"* Show its meaning, and that all who profess to deserve it should adorn it.

FIRST FOREIGN COLLECTION.

Touch upon the benevolence of these Gentile converts. Show that converts at our mission stations in foreign lands often display the same spirit of self-denying giving.

Home studies in the lesson for May 20th:

1. Herod and the Herods.
2. Life and character of the apostle James.
3. Describe Raphael's fresco of the deliverance of Peter from prison.
4. Remarkable answers to prayer in the history of the Church and of individuals.
5. The ministry of the angels. Heb. 1: 14.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Recall the story of Stephen's persecution at Jerusalem. Make on the board a square for the place where it occurred; a mark in the sin-color to stand for it; marks for the disciples standing around powerless to help Stephen. Did God forget them?

Call from class the fact that at this time the disciples of Jesus desired above all things to obey his last command and spread the story of salvation. Make squares that shall stand for the several places mentioned in the lesson—Phenice, Cyprus, Antioch. Erase the marks which represent the disciples. Make them again in these "scattered" places. Tell, or draw from class, the story of what they did in these countries, and the glorious result as embodied in the golden text. Then draw lines from the sin-colored mark, which stands for the persecution, directly to the towns and countries where so many new witnesses for Christ have been made. The design of all this is to show that God made the very thing which was to his people the most dreadful—the means of spreading the gospel where it would not otherwise have spread. Teach the lesson very carefully, guarding against error. It was a wicked thing to kill Stephen, and his murderers will have to answer for it at the judgment, but God made good come out of it for his Church. God is able to do this; but it does not change the character of the bad deeds of bad men.

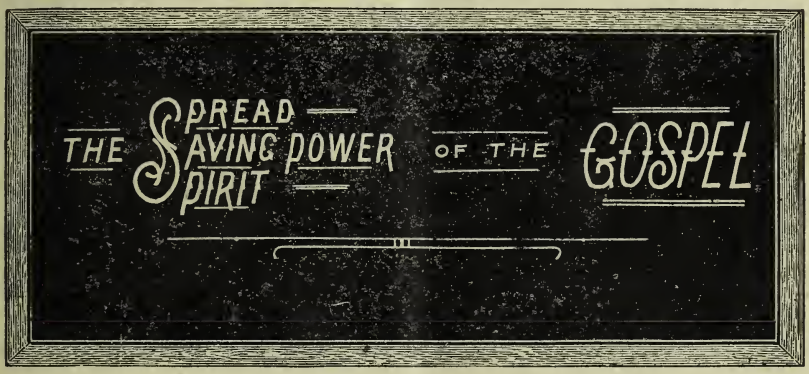
Illustration.—A naughty little girl in a fit of rage once tore her sister's old dolly into bits and threw them into the fire. The little sister was, because of this, given by her father a new and much prettier dolly which she had long wanted. So good came to the little sister out of the evil done by the bad girl; but the naughty child was punished, and deserved to be punished.

In my teaching I have found it necessary to illustrate truths like these by simple stories, plain in all their details.

Explanation of Golden Text.—Tell the story of two children out for a walk with their father. One keeps close to him, steps where he points, follows his directions in all things, and is taken care of. The other keeps at a distance, constantly wanders in forbidden paths, falls into danger. The father's hand may be said to be "with" the first child; and thus taught your class will clearly see the reason why it was not "with" the other one.

Special thought to be developed at the discretion of the teacher: Is the Lord's hand with your children? How do they prove that this is so?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



SUGGESTIONS.—The number of disciples gathered in the little upper room in Jerusalem after Jesus had ascended was one hundred and twenty; the number that believed and were baptized on the day of Pentecost was three thousand. The Lord added daily to the Church. The persecution that had now commenced scattered the *word* and the *workers*. "If you start a fire with a little spark from the flint in the dry grass of the great prairie, the wind will carry it, and it soon spreads to all parts. Wherever there is grass to burn it will go. So the gospel of Jesus. The Church started with a spark from the altar of God, is spreading over all the world, and will not stop until every part is reached." Notice the saving power of the gospel (vs. 20–24), and then the spirit of the gospel. vs. 29, 30. It *saves* and *supports* those in need. You may desire to draw attention, specially, to the character of Barnabas. He was "a good man." When he saw "the grace of God" he was *glad*, not *envious* because others had been the instruments in God's hands, in this section, in bringing souls to Christ. He *helped* the good work, not *hindered* it; exhorted them to "cleave unto the Lord." He was "full of the Holy Ghost." He is a pattern for ministers and superintendents at this day.

It may be preferred by some to bring out the lesson in the following manner:

THE GOSPEL AND ITS
SPIRIT,
POWER,
RICHES,
EFFECT,
ACTIVITY,
DESIRABILITY.

Directions for Coloring.—"Spread," white shaded with red; "Saving power," white shaded with light blue; "Spirit," green shaded with yellow; the capital letter "S," pink shaded with orange; "Gospel," orange shaded with white.

Lesson VIII. **HEROD AND PETER.** May 20th, 1883.

Acts 12: 1–17. Memorize vs. 5–8.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."—Ps. 34: 7.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 12: 1–17.....*Herod and Peter.*
T. Mark 10: 32–45.....*The Baptism of James.*
W. Ps. 34: 1–22.....*Angel Guards.*
Th. Gen. 19: 12–26.....*Lot and the Angels.*
F. Dan. 6: 10–23.....*Daniel Delivered.*
S. James 5: 13–20.....*Effectual Fervent Prayer.*
S. Acts 12: 18–25.....*Herod and the Angel.*

TOPIC.

The Uselessness of Fighting against God.

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Cruelty of Herod. vs. 1–6. **2. The Deliverance of Peter.** vs. 7–11. **3. The Surprise of the Disciples.** vs. 12–17.

Time.—A. D. 44. **Place.**—Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 19. *What is the misery of that estate whereinto man fell?* A. All mankind, by their fall, lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse, and so made liable to all miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 324: "How firm a foundation." **Other** hymns, 62, 45, 25, 369, 953.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—The first words of this lesson fix the date of the occurrences here narrated as "about" the time when Paul and Barnabas were sent on their mission of relief to the Christians at Jerusalem. It was in the spring of A. D. 44. The passover that year was in the first week of April, and James was beheaded just before, while Peter's release was just after, the passover. Paul may have been at Jerusalem, or may still have been on his way from Antioch to Jerusalem.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

1 Now about that time Her'od the king stretched forth *his* hands to vex certain of the church.

2 And he killed James the brother of John with the sword. [Matt. 4: 21; 20: 23.]

3 And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Pe'ter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread.) [Ex. 12: 14, 15; 23: 15.]

4 And when he had apprehended him, he put *him* in prison, and delivered *him* to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people. [John 21: 18.]

5 Pe'ter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him. [2 Cor. 1: 11; Eph. 6: 18; 1 Thess. 5: 17.]

6 And when Her'od would have brought him forth, the same night Pe'ter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison.

7 And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon *him*, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Pe'ter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from *his* hands. [Acts 5: 19; 16: 26.]

8 And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself and bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me.

9 And he went out and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision. [Ps. 126: 1; Acts 70: 3–17; 11: 5.]

10 When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord; and they went out and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him. [Acts 16: 26.]

11 And when Pe'ter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Her'od, and *from* all the expectation of the people of the Jews. [Ps. 34: 7; 33: 18; Dan. 3: 28; Heb. 1: 14.]

12 And when he had considered *the thing*, he came to the house of Ma'ry the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying. [Acts 4: 23; 15: 37.]

13 And as Pe'ter knocked at the door of the the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rho'da.

14 And when she knew Pe'ter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how Pe'ter stood before the gate.

15 And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, It is his angel. [Matt. 18: 10.]

16 But Pe'ter continued knocking: and when they had opened *the door*, and saw him, they were astonished.

17 But he, beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, Go shew these things unto James, and to the brethren. And he departed and went into another place. [Acts 13: 16; 19: 33; 21: 40; Ps. 66: 16.]

REVISED TEXT.

1 Now about that time Herod the king put
forth his hands to afflict certain of the church.
2 And he killed James the brother of John
3 with the sword. And when he saw that it
pleased the Jews he proceeded to seize Peter
also. And *those* were the days of unleavened
4 bread. And when he had taken him, he put
him in prison, and delivered him to four
quaternions of soldiers to guard him; in-
tending after the Passover to bring him forth
5 to the people. Peter therefore was kept in
the prison: but prayer was made earnestly
6 of the church unto God for him. And when
Herod was about to bring him forth, the
same night Peter was sleeping between two
soldiers, bound with two chains: and guards
7 before the door kept the prison. And be-
hold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and
a light shined in the cell: and he smote Pe-
ter on the side, and awoke him, saying, Rise
up quickly. And his chains fell off from
8 his hands. And the angel said unto him,
Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And
he did so. And he saith unto him, Cast thy
9 garment about thee, and follow me. And he
went out and followed; and he wist not that
it was true which was done by the angel, but

10 thought he saw a vision. And when they
were past the first and the second ward, they
came unto the iron gate that leadeth into the
city; which opened to them of its own ac-
cord: and they went out, and passed on
through one street; and straightway the
11 angel departed from him. And when Peter
was come to himself, he said, Now I know
of a truth, that the Lord hath sent forth his
angel and delivered me out of the hand of
Herod, and from all the expectation of the
12 people of the Jews. And when he had con-
sidered *the thing*, he came to the house of
Mary the mother of John whose surname
was Mark; where many were gathered to-
13 gether and were praying. And when he
knocked at the door of the gate, a maid
14 came to answer, named Rhoda. And when
she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the
gate for joy, but ran in, and told that Peter
15 stood before the gate. And they said unto
her, Thou art mad. But she confidently
affirmed that it was even so. And they said,
16 It is his angel. But Peter continued knock-
ing; and when they had opened, they saw
17 him, and were amazed. But he, beckoning
unto them with the hand to hold their peace,
declared unto them how the Lord had
brought him forth out of the prison. And
he said, Tell these things unto James, and to
the brethren. And he departed, and went
to another place.

1 *About that time.* About the time when Barnabas and Saul came from Antioch with relief. *Herod the king.* Herod Agrippa I., grandson of Herod the Great, father of the Agrippa before whom Paul made his defence. Chap. 26. He was brought up in Rome, received from the Emperor Caligula the tetrarchies of Philip and Lysanias, to which Peræa was subsequently added. Claudius, on his accession as Emperor, A. D. 41, added Judea and Samaria to his dominions, and for the last three years of his life his title was that of king. He was an Idumean by birth, a Roman by education, but was ardently attached to the Jewish ceremonial, both from policy and from a sentiment of superstitious reverence which strongly dominated him. *To vex.* Afflict. The rest for the Church (chap. 9: 31) did not last long.

2 *He killed James.* He was one of the three disciples who were specially favored by the Lord. He and his brother had once asked for the first places at the Master's right and left hand, and he was the first to die as a martyr, while John lived the longest to suffer for Christ. See Matt. 20: 23. Nothing is known of the manner of his martyrdom save the bare fact here stated, although legends in great number exist, filling up the bald outline. One of these relates that the accuser of the apostle was so influenced as he witnessed his bearing, and heard his noble confession that he himself became a Christian; and having received forgiveness of James was beheaded with him. *With the sword.* Beheaded him. He is the only one of the apostles whose death is recorded in the Scripture.

3 *Because he saw it pleased the Jews.* He wished to be strong and popular with the Jews, and was ready for any cruelty to gain this end. Note the change in feeling compared with that indicated in chap. 2: 47. *To take Peter also.* To arrest him. *Unleavened bread.* The feast of the Passover, which lasted seven days. During this time capital punishment could not be inflicted.

4 *Four quaternions.* A quaternion consisted of four, so that there were sixteen soldiers, in bands or squads of four each, which took their turns in guarding the prisoner. Two men kept watch outside the door and the other two were inside, attached by chains to the prisoner. *Easter.* The Passover, as in Revised Version. The name Easter was unknown at that time. *To bring him forth.* For public trial and execution.

5 *But prayer was made.* The word "but" indicates that the prayers of the church were set off against the persecutions of Herod. The prayer was earnest and persevering. The object of the prayer was Peter's deliverance (chap. 5: 18–20), but as the time passed, and he was not set free, hope seems to have died in their hearts. v. 15. At the last they probably still prayed for his release, but if this were not God's will, that he might be sustained in the trial of martyrdom.

6 *The same night.* The night before the day fixed for his execution. *Between two soldiers.* And attached to both by chains on his wrists.

7 *The angel.* Correctly *an* angel, "*the* angel" always referring in Scripture to the Angel of the covenant, Christ himself. Here it was a created angel. His brightness filled the cell where Peter lay sleeping. *He smote Peter.* The light did not waken him, he slept so soundly, and the angel smote him to arouse him. *Raised him up.* Revised Version: *Awoke him. His chains fell off* so softly that the sleeping soldiers were not disturbed.

8 *Gird thyself.* There was no haste, and he was to take time to dress himself. As he arose the fetters snapped. This was done for him by the divine power. Then he was to bind on his own girdle and sandals, and throw about him his heavy outer cloak, to protect him from the cold night air.

9 *He went out.* From his cell; the angel went before him and opened the door. *Wist not.* Knew not. Everything had been done so noise-

lessly and rapidly, and the whole seemed so incredible, that Peter thought it must be only a vision.

10 *The first and the second ward.* The first and second sentries, who were stationed one at the door of the prison or cell, and the other probably inside the iron gate that opened to the street. *Through one street.* The angel accompanied him far enough for safety, and then left him. Supernatural help is never given when unnecessary.

11 *When Peter was come to himself.* When he was fully aroused to consciousness, and knew at last that his deliverance was not a dream but a reality. He probably stood some moments, when the angel had left him, still in a maze, until the truth broke clearly upon him that he was actually out of his prison, and that he had been brought out by a living angel. *The expectation.* The Jews were looking forward with eager interest to the promised execution of Peter.

12 *Had considered.* When he had time to collect his thoughts. *The house of Mary.* Mary was aunt to Barnabas. Col. 4: 10. Tradition says that her house was saved from destruction when Jerusalem was overthrown, and was used as a church so late as the fourth century. *Mother of John . . . Mark.* See v. 25; chap. 13: 5; 15: 37. This was the Mark who wrote the second Gospel. In 1 Peter 5: 18, Peter calls him his son, implying that Mark had been converted through his instrumentality. It is supposed also that Peter gave Mark the facts and memories which the latter wrote down in his Gospel. No doubt there was a warm friendship between Peter and Mark at the time of this occurrence, and that this drew the apostle to Mary's house. *Many were gathered together praying.* It was near morning, and they had been praying all night. What the object of their prayers was we know from v. 5.

13 *The door of the gate.* A large gate opened into the court yard, and there was a little wicket door in this gate at which single persons entered. It was at this that Peter knocked. *A damsel . . . Rhoda.* Probably a servant. Rhoda is equivalent to Rose. *Came to hearken.* To answer the call and inquire who was there.

14 *She knew Peter's voice.* This shows that Peter had been a familiar visitor at the house before. Her gladness also indicates that she was deeply interested in Peter's deliverance, and that she was probably a Christian. In proof of Peter's sympathy with servants, see 1 Peter 2: 18–20. *Opened not . . . but ran in.* Her joy was so great, and she was so eager to tell the praying friends inside, that she forgot to open the door.

15 *Thou art mad.* They could not believe that Peter was there, although they had been praying for his release. *It is his angel.* The simplest explanation of these words is that those who said this believed that every one has a particular guardian angel, and that Peter's guardian angel, and not the apostle himself, was at the door. We know that this belief was cherished among the Jews. Our Lord's words in Matt. 18: 10 seem to confirm this belief.

16 *They were astonished.* However much faith they may have had, the way in which their prayer was answered was cause for astonishment. God's ways are always surprises.

17 *Beckoning unto them.* To quiet their excitement and to prevent demonstrations of joy and affection. When they were quiet he told the wonderful story of his release. *Unto James.* The brother of the Lord (Gal. 1: 19) who occupied a prominent position in the church at Jerusalem. Chap. 15: 13. *To another place.* To what place is not known. It is probable that he left the city for a time. Herod died soon after and Peter could then appear again in Jerusalem.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

He killed James. So James got sooner than he expected, and in a way far different from his thought, to his place at the right hand of Jesus. Verily, we do not know what we are asking for when we pray for nearness to Christ or for high places in his kingdom. Yet James has never regretted the path by which he ascended. His work was soon done, but death was no calamity to him, as it only exalted him to his home of glory.

Peter therefore was kept in the prison. And he was kept very securely too. Herod treated him as a dangerous prisoner. Why were such extra precautions necessary to guard such a poor, defenceless man as Peter? Had Herod heard the story of a former imprisonment of this same man, when the doors were miraculously opened and the prisoner released? Did he mean to defy the power of Peter's God when he put double chains on him and kept four armed soldiers on guard about him all the time? So it appears. No doubt the wicked king thought his plan perfectly successful. To-morrow the execution would take place. Men plot against God but he that sits in heaven laughs.

But prayer was made earnestly . . . for him. This was what Peter's friends were doing in his behalf. To Herod's power, and the strength

of his prison walls and chains, and the vigilance of his soldiers, they opposed only the quiet power of earnest, importunate prayer. They made no appeal to political diplomacy, nor did they think of using any force to rescue their friend from prison. They stormed the prison through the gates of prayer. The sequel proves and illustrates the power of prayer. Men talk about the invariableness and unchangeableness of the laws of nature, as if God had no control of affairs in his own universe. We need not give ourselves any trouble about *how* he can answer our prayers—we must leave that to him —but we may as well settle it in our minds once for all that the God to whom we talk in prayer can do whatsoever pleaseth him. He can always find some way to help us or bring deliverance, when we are in trouble. We must not conclude however, that he will always save us from danger, as he saved Peter. No doubt the disciples prayed for James, too, when Herod seized him, and yet he was beheaded. The prayers were answered in a different way; he was supported in the trial of martyrdom, and his release was not through the iron gate into the streets of Jerusalem, but through the gate of pearl into the streets of heaven. If Peter had been executed, who could have said that the prayers of his friends were not answered? God knows how best to answer our requests, and all true prayer submits even its most earnest petitions to the divine will.

An angel of the Lord stood by him. Tarry a moment to think of the ministry of angels. It is a wonderful thought that these good spirits from heaven are continually engaged in sending help to God's people on the earth, that they encamp around the righteous, that they deliver those who are in trial, that they serve the saints in countless ways. They can go anywhere, through closed doors and prison walls. They move noiselessly and unseen. They can fill even a cell with light. They can knock off fetters, and open doors, and lead us out of the worst perils. They are our friends if we are Christ's friends. No doubt they help us continually although we know it not, and preserve us from dangers although we are not aware of it. The most real things in this world are the unseen things.

Follow me; and he went out and followed. That is all we have to do in this world—simply to follow Christ, or the guide he may send to lead us. We have nothing to do with opening the way; our part is only to follow implicitly and unquestioningly, and he will always open the door for us. This lesson is worth heeding. Here is a Christian man in sore perplexity. He cannot free himself. He can see no way out of the entangling circumstances. He is just like Peter that night in his prison, doors bolted, chains on his hands, stern guards encircling him. Is there any way out of such environment? Yes, Christ can lead him out. All that is needed is complete surrender to him, and simple, unquestioning, absolute obedience and childlike following where he leads. Chains fall off when he bids us rise and obey. Prison doors open when we follow him. Our only duty is obedient following; he does all the rest.

Now I know of a truth that the Lord hath sent forth his angel and delivered me. It is not till they are gone that we recognize the angels. While they are with us we do not know them. This is true of many of the blessings God sends us. We do not prize the worth of our best human friends until they have left us. Our very familiarity with them hides from our eyes the excellences of their character and the value of their helpfulness. They grow up alongside of us and grow into our lives so gradually and unconsciously that we do not know how much they are to us, how we lean upon them, how many doors they open for us, how their love brightens our paths. Suddenly they vanish and then we see that they were God's angels. Their plain garb at once appears radiant with glory as they withdraw. A vacant chair is ofttimes the first true revealer of the worth of one whose presence and love have blessed us for years.

A maid . . . named Rhoda. We ought to get a lesson or two for our young girls from this little maid-servant. Her work was lowly—only attending the door, but she had her reward that night. She was the first to know of Peter's release. She seems to have been the only one who had faith enough to believe it was really Peter. Her great gladness shows us that she loved Peter, and no doubt had been praying for his deliverance. There is one thing that every girl should learn from Rhoda—not to let even her joy run away with her wits. A sensible girl would have opened the door as soon as she recognized Peter's voice; but she was so happy that she ran off to tell the good news and left the apostle standing outside shivering in the cold. We should never in our happiness forget the practical duties of the moment.

Peter knocked . . . Rhoda . . . ran in and told that Peter stood before the gate, and they said unto her, "Thou art mad." That is often the way with all of us. When the answers come to our prayers—the very things for which we have been praying, we are surprised, and cannot believe that they have really come. No doubt we ofttimes keep the answers to our prayers standing outside our doors and knocking.

LESSON POINTS.

1. The Bible does not linger over death scenes. It matters not how one dies if he has lived well. v. 2.

2. God answers prayers for the deliverance of his people in different ways; one he brings out of prison at the earthward door, the other he leads out by the heavenward door. vs. 2, 7.

3. Men defy God and think to defeat him by their wisdom and skill. v. 4.

4. A company of praying believers have more power than a king with prisons and soldiers. v. 5.

5. The best place to assault the enemies of the Church is at the altar of prayer. v. 5.

6. God often delays to answer prayers to show more power in the end. v. 6.

7. Christian faith is at peace in the sorest trials. v. 6.

8. There are angels, and they help God's children. v. 7.

9. At the bidding or touch of God chains of iron snap like straws, and iron gates fly open. vs. 7, 8.

10. Our part in deliverance from sin, or from any danger or trial, is obedient following. vs. 9, 10.

11. Miraculous help is never given when it is not required, nor continued beyond need. v. 10.

12. Ofttimes we do not recognize God's angels till they are gone from us. v. 11.

13. Even the answers to our prayers sometimes surprise us. v. 15.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

In teaching this lesson you need—

I. THE LINES OF APPROACH. II. A WORKING PLAN.

I. LINES OF APPROACH.

1. *Herod the king.* Briefly show who he was, his relationship to the Herod mentioned in Matt. 2. Call for reports on the topic, Herod and the Herods, assigned last Sabbath. Draw out, if possible, if not, tell, the motive of Herod Agrippa's cruelty just now. He hung up in the temple the gold chains which Caligula the Emperor had given him. He pretended great zeal for Judaism. Refer to Nero, who set fire to Rome, and then to rid himself of the odium of that act, and to gain the favor of the populace, charged the crime of burning Rome on the Christians and persecuted thousands to death. Herod Agrippa now was the representative enemy of Christ, for he represented Claudius Cæsar, and was supreme ruler of Palestine.

2. *Who was the representative champion of Christ?* Briefly review Peter's career since the ascension.

II. A WORKING PLAN.

THE BATTLE BETWEEN HEROD AND PETER.

1. *The Champions.* What was *Herod?* King of Palestine, favorite of Claudius Cæsar, rich (his income, Josephus says, was annually in our money, over two millions and a half of dollars), proud (see v. 21), popular, educated at Rome. *Peter?* Hated of the Jewish rulers, despised by the Romans, poor (see chap. 3: 6), unlearned. Contrast the history of Herod with Peter's. Contrast the character of Herod with Peter's.

2. *Their forces.* What had *Herod?* Roman army, strong swords and armor, friends, watchful guards, all the chief priests and elders, lawyers, scribes, politicians, courtiers, flatterers, all riches. "The world, the flesh and the devil." *What had Peter?* Poverty, a few humble outcast men and women; not a guard, nor a soldier, friends who could not help him, and THE FATHER, AND THE SON, AND THE HOLY GHOST—all GOOD ANGELS; the word of Christ that he should live to be an old man (John 21: 18) and praying friends. vs. 5, 12.

3. *Their position.* Where was *Herod?* In his royal palace, surrounded by flatterers and guards, feasting on dainties, exulting now in expectation of putting Peter to death in the morning. Where was *Peter?* In an inner prison cell chained to two soldiers, with two others guarding the door on the outside. (Call for report on Raphael's fresco on this scene.) *Sleeping* in peace. Ps. 127: 2; Isa. 26: 3.

4. *Which gained the victory?* Prayer, God, the angel, the Church, triumph over Herod the king, with his Roman soldiers, Jewish Sanhedrim and all the powers of earth. Describe the angel of light in the prison cell; the calmness and ease with which the deliverance is wrought. The amazement of Peter. Describe the all-night prayer meeting. To what place did Peter go when he came to himself? Why would he go there? Bring out all the features of the inspired picture of the surprise of the praying ones. Guard against attributing to them lack of faith. Their surprise and incredulity are merely illustrations of their wonder at the time and manner of receiving an answer to their prayer. Ps. 126: 1.

Having thus set the facts in a framework, APPLY by simple questions:

1. What kind of prayer was offered for Peter? "Without ceasing," i. e., earnest, like that of Jacob at Penuel, wrestling and prevailing with God; "of the Church," i. e., all united; "many

were gathered together praying." What are some of the promises to united, social, persevering prayer?

2. What comfort is there in the fact that angels minister to believers?

3. What encouragement does this lesson give as to praying for ministers, teachers, etc. ?

4. What warning against dictating to God as to manner of answering our prayers? He permitted James to be beheaded. Submission to God's will is an essential element in true prayer.

Points in the lesson for May 27th, to be assigned:

1. Draw a map of Paul's first missionary journey.

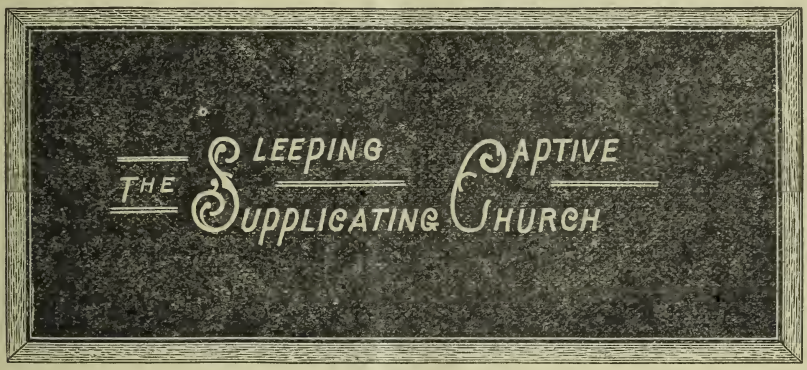
2. In what sense were Barnabas and Saul the first foreign missionaries?

3. Cyprus, especially Salamis and Paphos. See (if possible) Gen. Di Cesnola's Explorations in Cyprus.

4. Derivation of Saul's new name—Paul.

5. How had the dispersion of the Jews prepared the way for the Christian missionaries?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



SUGGESTIONS.—The above outline, neatly placed upon the board, and exposed to view during the entire session, will likely prove helpful to teachers and scholars during the class studies, and will enable the superintendent to fasten the impressions that may have been made. Under the first head everything necessary concerning Peter can be brought out—his arrest, his imprisonment, his expected death and his perfect peace. Under the second the interest of the Church in his welfare, the unceasing supplication to God in his behalf, and the faith of God's children in prayer can be illustrated. It has been said in this connection that "God can refuse nothing to a praying congregation." There is power in united public prayer. It would be better for many a poor prisoner of sin if the Church's prayer meetings were more faithfully attended to-day. Notice the perfect peace of Peter, sweetly and quietly sleeping, no fear of death. The guard kept the prison, but God kept the prisoner. Read Isa. 26: 3; Prov. 3: 23–26. "Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness." Peter was bound by chains, *but he belonged to Christ.* The keepers before the door could not keep God's angel from opening the door. "A light shined in the prison." Messages from heaven are always accompanied with light, Notice also that—

PRAYER { Breaks fetters,
Brings a guide,
Unlocks prison doors.

Pray without ceasing, dear teacher. Your scholars may be sleeping in the prison-house of sin. Your prayers may bring release and the angel of God awake them out of sleep. Notice also, Herod put Peter in prison, *but* he could not keep him there. The lesson is full of thought; study it well and you will have a blessing.

Directions for Coloring.—"Sleeping Captive," white shaded with orange; "Supplicating Church," light blue shaded with yellow.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

It seems almost a waste of words to attempt the giving of "hints" for the teaching of this lesson. The story is in itself so full, and of such peculiar interest to children, that the primary teacher is certainly rich in material.

However, the error of supposing that all the little ones are as familiar with the account as you are yourself, must be guarded against. Bible stories are as a rule so poorly told to children that the vivid details are lacking. If well told they will be full of interest.

Some sort of a prison is indispensable for your

blackboard, with marks for Peter and the soldiers chained to him, also, in the distance, Mary's house, where the people gather to pray. For the rest, study ways of telling the story effectively, make impressive the scene where Peter and the angel come to the great iron gate, closed and barred, and it silently swings on its hinges, no hand touching it. I have in mind a teacher who is planning to have ready for this lesson a paper prison, to pin on the board, so arranged that at the proper moment, by the sudden removal of a pin, the gate will swing open. Indeed, at this writing, I have at my side a small boy, who, out of a lump of clay, has constructed a prison, the gate of which swings open as if by magic, as the story reaches that point. The delight which children have in seeing actual motion in story, can only be understood by those who have witnessed it.

The remainder of the account is equally fascinating. I have seen children held spell-bound over a good description of the astonishment and delight and volubility of Rhoda, when she left Peter knocking, and ran back to tell her doubting companions.

As a sort of object lesson, with which to introduce the narrative, the door of your class-room may be used effectively. Lock it, remove the key, let the class talk familiarly about it until they realize the difficulty of getting out of that door. Then, suppose it were of iron, and guarded by armed soldiers? Finally help them to realize what their surprise would be if the door should suddenly swing back on its hinges.

The practical thought of the lesson seems to me to be—*the Power of Prayer*. To help impress this I would draw a red line, and such as I commonly used in my class to represent prayer, reaching from Mary's house to the prison. After calling attention to it, print on it the words: "Prayer was made—Unto GOD for him."

The golden text presents a different central thought, but it can be joined to the one suggested by teaching that the sending the angel to deliver is God's part. He has promised to do it. But our part is to ASK.

A shrewd little boy with whom I was talking, suggested a thought in connection with this story, which it might be well to bear in mind in teaching the lesson. He said he thought it would not be hard to have as much faith as those folks, and he did not see why God *answered* their prayers, when they were so astonished because they had got what they were praying for, that they could not believe it.

Lesson IX. PAUL AND BARNABAS IN CYPRUS. May 27th, 1883.

Acts 13: 1-12. Memorize vs. 2-4.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."—Acts 13: 2.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 13: 1-12.....*Paul and Barnabas in Cyprus.*
T. Acts 26: 9-21.....*Saul's Mission.*
W. 1 Cor. 12: 4-31....*Apostles, Prophets, Teachers.*
Th. Isa. 42: 1-16.....*The Light of the Gentiles.*
F. Isa. 60: 1-12.....*The Conversion of the Gentiles.*
S. Mark 16: 9-20....*The Apostles' Commission.*
S. Ps. 72: 1-20.....*"Unto the Ends of the Earth."*

TOPIC.

Christian Missions the Work of God.

LESSON PLAN.

1. The First Foreign Missionaries. vs. 1-3.
2. The Sorcerer's Opposition. vs. 4-8.
3. The Sorcerer's Punishment. vs. 9-12.

Time.—A. D. 45. **Places.**—Antioch in Syria, and Salamis and Paphos in the island of Cyprus.

Catechism.—Q. 20. *Did God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery?* A. God, having, out of his mere good pleasure, from all eternity, elected some to everlasting life, did enter into a covenant of grace, to deliver them out of the estate of sin and misery, and to bring them into an estate of salvation, by a Redeemer.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal 643: "The morning light is breaking." Other hymns, 628, 637, 646, 650.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—A few months after the release of Peter, Herod died a terrible death. After having carried relief to the saints at Jerusalem, Paul and Barnabas probably tarried a little while and then returned to Antioch. These are the connecting links between the past and the present lessons. How long after their return they were sent on this missionary tour cannot be positively decided. Conybeare and Howson fix the date as A. D. 48, while Lewin puts it in 45 or 46. Paul and Barnabas are here formally sent forth as the first Christian missionaries to the heathen.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

1 Now there were in the church that was at An'ti-och certain prophets and teachers; as Bar'na-bas, and Sim'e-on that was called Ni'ger, and Lu'ci-us of Cy-re'ne, and Man'-a-en, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. [Acts 11: 27; 15: 25; 4: 36, 37; 9: 27]

2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Bar'na-bas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. [Num. 8: 14; Rom. 1: 1; Matt. 9: 38; 2 Tim. 1: 11.]

3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them, they sent *them* away. [Acts 6: 6.]

4 ¶ So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Se-leu'ci-a; and from thence they sailed to Cy'prus.

5 And when they were at Sal'a-mis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John to *their* minister. [Matt. 10: 6, 7; Acts 13: 46; 12: 25; 15: 37.]

6 And when they had gone through the isle unto Pa'phos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name *was* Bar'-je-sus: [Acts 8: 9.]

7 Which was with the deputy of the country, Ser'gi-us Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Bar'na-bas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God.

8 But El'y-mas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation), withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith. [Ex. 7: 11; 2 Tim. 3: 8.]

9 Then Saul (who also *is called* Paul), filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, [Acts 4: 8; 7: 55.]

10 And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, *thou* child of the devil, *thou* enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? [Matt. 13: 38; John 8: 44.]

11 And now, behold, the hand of the Lord *is* upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. [Ex. 9: 3; Ps. 32: 4.]

12 Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.

REVISED TEXT.

1 Now there were at Antioch, in the church
that was *there*, prophets and teachers, Barna-
bas, and Symeon that was called Niger, and
Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen the foster-
2 brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.
And as they ministered to the Lord, and
fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Bar-
nabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have
3 called them. Then, when they had fasted
and prayed and laid their hands on them,
they sent them away.
4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy
Ghost, went down to Seleucia: and from
5 thence they sailed to Cyprus. And when
they were at Salamis, they proclaimed the
word of God in the synagogues of the Jews:
6 and they had also John as their attendant.
And when they had gone through the whole
island unto Paphos, they found a certain sor-
cerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name
7 was Bar-Jesus; which was with the procon-
sul, Sergius Paulus, a man of understanding.
The same called unto him Barnabas and
Saul, and sought to hear the word of God.
But Elymas, the sorcerer (for so is his name
8 by interpretation), withstood them, seeking
to turn aside the proconsul from the faith.
But Saul, who is also *called* Paul, filled with
10 the Holy Ghost, fastened his eyes on him,
and said, O full of all guile and all villany,
thou son of the devil, thou enemy of all
righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert
11 the right ways of the Lord? And now, be-
hold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and
thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a
season. And immediately there fell on him
a mist and a darkness; and he went about
seeking some to lead him by the hand. Then
12 the proconsul, when he saw what was done,
believed, being astonished at the teaching of
the Lord.

1 *In the church that was at Antioch.* The church whose origin and growth were described in chap. 11: 20–30. This first church of Gentile christendom takes the lead in the movement to send the gospel to other Gentiles. *Prophets and teachers.* It is impossible to define exactly the functions of the several classes of officers in the early Church. The "prophets" were next to the apostles, and enjoyed in a special measure the gift of inspiration. The foretelling of future events was not an essential characteristic of the New Testament prophets, though some of them at times possessed this power. "Teachers" were stated instructors of the Church, less gifted than "prophets." [This whole subject will be treated in a special article, in the June number of the TEACHER.] *Barnabas.* See chaps. 4: 36; 9: 27; 11: 22. The "as" is properly omitted in Revised Version. There were no more than the five named, as the Authorized Version implies. *Simeon called Niger.* Niger means black, and it has been supposed that this Symeon was an African convert. *Lucius.* Nothing is known of him, although it is thought that he may have been the kinsman of St. Paul, to whom he refers in Rom. 16: 21. He was not Luke, the writer of this book, as some have supposed. *Manaen.* The foster-brother of Herod Antipas, the Herod who beheaded John the Baptist. Very frequently persons of high rank associated other children with their own in their play and education, for companionship and incitement. The words seem to imply, however, that Manaen had been nourished at the same breast with Herod, and was his true foster-brother. This gave him

a position of prominence. *Saul.* Up to this time he occupied a subordinate position and is mentioned last.

2 *As they ministered.* While they were engaged in a religious service. *And fasted.* The mention of fasting may indicate that they were engaged in some unusual exercise, in special supplication for some particular object, perhaps seeking guidance in reference to this very matter of their duty to other Gentiles. *The Holy Ghost said.* Perhaps by the mouth of one of the prophets mentioned in v. 1. *Separate me.* For particular service. The divinity of the Holy Ghost is manifest here. He says: "Separate these men for *me* to the work to which *I* have called them."

3 *Fasted and prayed.* These acts of devotion imply that a special service, with solemn exercises, was held for the setting apart of these men to their new work. *Laid their hands on them.* By this formal act the Church not only set them apart, as commanded (v. 2), but made them their representatives as missionaries, pledged themselves to support them, and implored the divine blessing upon them. Notice that though the Holy Spirit chooses and calls men to their work, they are yet to be set apart by the Church in an orderly way. *Sent them away.* There must have been a tender farewell scene when these two beloved ministers were given up and sent away by this church, to carry the tidings of salvation to the heathen.

4. *Seleucia.* On the Mediterranean, near the mouth of the Orontes. It was built by Seleucus Nicator about three hundred years B. C. It was the port of Antioch. Here Paul and Barnabas took ship. *Sailed to Cyprus.* An island in the Mediterranean, about seventy miles from the coast. Barnabas was a native of Cyprus. Chap. 4: 37.

5 *Salamis.* A city on the island, the nearest port to Seleucia. It was afterwards destroyed by an earthquake, but was rebuilt by Constantine and called Constantia. Its remains are yet seen near the modern Famagosta. *The synagogues of the Jews.* At this time one-half the population of Cyprus were Jews, and synagogues were formed wherever there were Jews. *John.* That is John Mark. Chap. 12: 25. *Minister.* Attendant. His duties were probably those of an agent and helper. It has been supposed that he may have baptized the converts, as Paul did not himself, except very rarely, perform this rite.

6 *Paphos.* A city at the western end of the island, a hundred miles from Salamis. This was New Paphos, a few miles north of the Paphos celebrated in the classic poets for the temple of Venus. *A certain sorcerer.* A magician. This was a most superstitious age, and fortune tellers and all manner of wonder-workers abounded everywhere. Even men of distinction, governors and emperors, were wont to turn to them for counsel. (See Conybeare and Howson, chap. V.) It is not surprising, therefore, that the proconsul had this magician as an adviser.

7 *The deputy.* Revised Version, *Proconsul.* The Roman provinces were divided between the emperor and the senate. Those requiring a military force were governed by prefects appointed by the emperor, those of a more peaceful character were governed by proconsuls, appointed by the senate. Formerly Cyprus belonged to the first of these classes, and for a long time it was supposed that Luke had erred in his statement here. But a passage has been found in Dio Cassius, stating that Augustus, 14 A. D., transferred Cyprus to the Senate and that it was subsequently governed by proconsuls. Coins have also been found, of about the date of Paul's visit, having the inscription, "Under Paulus the Proconsul." Thus this title here contains a strong incidental proof of the historical accuracy of the Acts. *A prudent man.* A man of understanding, judicious, intelligent, thoughtful. He was a seeker after the truth. When Paul and Barnabas came he eagerly sought to hear them.

8 *Elymas . . . withstood them.* Unwilling to have his patron listen to the missionaries, knowing that if he did *his* power over the proconsul would be at an end. He probably used false-

hoods about Paul and Barnabas to prejudice Paulus against them.

9 *Saul . . . Paul.* He probably had borne both names from childhood, Saul being a Hebrew, Paul a Roman name. When he entered upon his work as apostle to the Gentiles, he dropped his Hebrew and took his Gentile name. *Filled.* A special filling for the occasion. Paul's burning words were therefore inspired of God.

10 *All subtilty and all mischief.* Revised Version: *All guile and all villany*, falsehood and unscrupulousness. *Child of the devil.* Because of his falseness. John 8: 44. This designation is in striking contrast to his Hebrew name. v. 6. *Enemy of all righteousness.* Showing a character utterly given over to the control of Satan. *To pervert the right ways.* Referring to his perversion of the truths of God from a holy use to a means of evil, as modern spiritists do.

11 *The hand of the Lord.* An emblem of the divine power, here exercised for evil. (See chap. 11: 21 for a different use of the same figure.) *Thou shalt be blind.* This is the first recorded miracle wrought by Paul. It will be noted that the infliction was the same which Paul himself had suffered at the time of his conversion. *For a season.* His blindness was total but temporary. The form of this punishment was appropriate. He was blinding and leading others away from the light and his own eyes were blinded. *A mist and a darkness.* First a mist, as it were, quickly passing into a deep darkness.

12 *Then the deputy . . . believed.* It is generally supposed that his faith was of a saving character, although some think that he did not become a true child of God. *Astonished at the doctrine.* More perhaps at the way these truths were taught, that is, at the manifestation of miraculous power attending the teaching, than at the teaching itself. The works wrought by Paul surpassed anything Elymas had been able to perform.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

There were at Antioch in the church that was there, prophets and teachers. It was in a great and influential city, fitted to be the starting point for the first great foreign missionary enterprise. With the Orontes at its gates, flowing into the Mediterranean, it was in a position to pour the influences of Christianity over all the civilized world. The Church itself was evidently vigorous and powerful, well equipped with ministers and teachers, rich in faith and earnest and whole-hearted in its consecration. Thus, both by providence and by grace, was Antioch prepared to be the birthplace of foreign missions

As they ministered . . . the Holy Ghost said. Those who seek shall find. There seems little doubt that this church was considering very earnestly at this time its duty to the outside world, and was engaged in a special service, imploring guidance. When God wants a great work done he usually puts the thought of it in the hearts of some of his children, and then they begin to pray about it. As they think and pray the burden grows heavier continually, and at last God sends the answer. This passage gathers intense interest from the fact that here we see the very birth of the foreign missionary work of the Church. The apostles and other Christians were very earnest in preaching the gospel, but only to the Jews. The disciples were driven out of Jerusalem and scattered and went everywhere preaching, but to Jews only. The Church at Antioch was the first Gentile church established, and it is a very interesting fact that in this first Gentile church the first effort to carry the gospel to other Gentiles originated.

Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. The Lord has a plan of work for his Church. Foreign missions was no accident. It was not merely the result of the enthusiasm of an earnest church. It was part of God's plan. The part which these two men took in it was no chance part. That, too, was in God's plan. He had chosen and prepared them for that very duty. Every one's work is definitely marked out for him in the great purpose of God. Men are not born and trained just to pick up anything that may fall to their hand as they go through life. There is a particular something which every one was born and trained to do. What it is we may not know, till God puts the work into our hand, but he knows from the first. A successful life is one which does just the work for which it was created—whereunto God calls it. How can we know what our part is in God's plan? Only by submitting ourselves to the divine will at every point, and faithfully doing what he gives day by day. If we do this he will lead us into the work for which he created and redeemed us. Many think that any poor stick is good enough for preaching to the heathen, but God chose the best men for this most difficult work. The best men are needed now for the same work.

Then . . . they sent them away. The church must have loved these men who had been their pastors so long; yet when the Spirit asked for them for this new work, the people did not re-

sist the call. They did not say, "There are heathen here in Antioch; let us get them all saved first." That is the way some people talk in these days. They "don't believe in foreign missions," and they are continually prating about their zeal for home missions, and pointing to the unconverted in our own towns and cities. Surely, if ever there was a time when this plea should have been urged, it was when this first foreign missionary enterprise was talked of. Both fields are important, but the heathen countries must not be compelled to wait till there are no sinners remaining at home. There should be no rivalry between the two great interests. The one receives the best attention, when the other is not neglected. A church that does nothing for foreign missionary work very soon comes to doing nothing for home or any other kind of work.

Elymas . . . withstood them, seeking to turn aside the proconsul from the faith. The devil is at this same sort of work yet. First he comes with pretended wisdom, and offers to guide seeking souls himself, but leads them only farther and farther away from the truth. Then when the voice of true wisdom comes and offers to show them the right way, he interferes and tries to hinder them from listening to or believing what is said. If the devil can only keep human souls from Christ, or can turn them away from the faith after they have heard him, he is satisfied.

The hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind . . . for a season. It was the Lord, not Paul, who inflicted this judgment, for we are told that Paul was specially "filled with the Holy Ghost" when he said this. The punishment itself was to Elymas an outward emblem of his actual spiritual condition. He was really a blind man professing to be a guide to others. So his natural eyes were darkened that he might be made to realize his inner blindness. There was also in his punishment a disclosure of the kind of doom those bring on themselves who shut their eyes to the holy light of truth. He is here warned that the result of such perverse refusal to see, if persisted in, will be total inability to see at all. Dr. Wm. M. Taylor mentions in illustration the account given in Roman history of one who had been proscribed, and who, to save his life, disguised himself by wearing a black patch over one eye, A good while after, when there was no longer any danger, he removed the patch, but in vain, for the sight was gone. So if men stubbornly shut their hearts against the truth, the light that is in them will become darkness. It is a terrible thing to resist the truth of God; it is still worse to try to lead other souls in false paths.

The proconsul, when he saw what was done, believed. So, after all, good came out of the opposition of the sorcerer. It was the manifestation of divine power through the missionaries, in the punishment of Elymas, that led Paulus to believe. This power would not have been manifested had not the sorcerer resisted Paul and Barnabas. Thus God overruled the evil effort of this "son of the devil." He sought to keep the proconsul from believing; but became the means of compelling him to believe. Thus God is always overruling the evil of the world, and making even the wrath of Satan glorify him. It is better sometimes to have opposition when we try to do good. Sergius Paulus probably would not have believed at all, had it not been for the sorcerer's rage and punishment.

LESSON POINTS.

1. The foreign missionary work was born in a living and active church. v. 1.

2. The two names, Manaen and Herod, suggest the different courses taken by men brought up together.

3. When the Lord wants some great work taken up, he first puts it as a burden and a prayer into the heart of some of his people. v. 5.

4. The Holy Spirit personally directs the work, and the workers in Christ's Church. v. 2.

5. "Every one's life is a plan of God;" every one has some definite work assigned. v. 2.

6. Though the Spirit allots the work and chooses the workers, the Church on earth must set them apart and send them forth. vs. 2, 3.

7. The best men of the church were sent out for this missionary work. It should always be so. v. 3.

8. When God truly calls a settled pastor to another work, his congregation should not oppose his going. v. 3.

9. If we cannot be a Paul or a Barnabas, we can be an "attendant" and helper somewhere in God's Church. v. 5.

10. The devil sends his missionaries to the heathen, too, to "guide" inquiring souls, but not into the light. vs. 6, 7.

11. There are even among the heathen many who are not satisfied with paganism, and are eagerly seeking the light. v. 7.

12. The devil resists every effort at interference with his wicked work. v. 8.

13. Those who shut their eyes to the light and seek to blind others will bring blindness upon themselves. v. 11.

14. Even the devil by his opposition helps to send souls to Christ. v. 12.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

In our lessons in the Acts thus far, we have studied the establishment of the Christian Church in its first centre, Jerusalem, with the outward movement through Judea, Samaria, and as far as Antioch. To-day we enter on the second grand division of Acts, in which we have the story of the movement of Christianity from Antioch through Cyprus, etc., to Rome. Our present lesson narrates the beginning of this movement and its experiences in Cyprus.

I. SELF-TEACHING. "Thou, therefore, that teachest another, teachest thou not *thyself?*" Rom. 2: 21.

1. Drill yourself *on the geography*—Antioch, Seleucia, Cyprus, Salamis, Paphos. See Conybeare and Howson, chapter V.

2. On all the *persons* mentioned—Barnabas, Simeon, Niger, etc. (See Westminster Bible Dictionary.)

3. *Historical facts.* "Prophets and teachers were at Antioch." The worship of the church (ministered to the Lord). The fast which accompanied their prayers. The Holy Ghost himself supernaturally began this foreign mission work, ordered the ordination of Barnabas and Saul. The church ordained the missionaries, though they had been divinely called. The church "sent them away," though these men were guided by the Holy Ghost and "sent forth" by him. The journey from Antioch to Seleucia, the sail from Seleucia to Salamis in Cyprus, the travel through the island to Paphos, the opposition of Elymas, his profession, his influence over the deputy, Paul's rebuke of the sorcerer, inflicting blindness. Saul is henceforth called Paul. Why? Sergius Paulus, his office, character, conversion. See Explanatory and Illustrative Notes.

4. *Practical bearings* of these facts on *you* and *your class.*

5. Read missionary biographies, journals and papers for illustrations of motives, methods and incidents of the work.

II. METHODS OF CLASS-TEACHING.

1. *Approach* this lesson in class by a rapid glance at the opening of the door to Gentiles (Lesson VI), and the founding of the Antioch church. Acts 11: 19–26. State the fact that this lesson really contains the history of the beginning of foreign missions.

5. *Choose your outline.* I suggest—

GOD { *Begins.* vs. 1-3. *Guides.* v. 4. *Blesses.* vs. 5-12. } *FOREIGN MISSIONS.*

Put this on your paper, hold it before the class; if the scholars please let them copy it. Cluster around each head all the facts in the verses included, and bring in your illustrations under each head before you pass to the next. Let this question of application underlie all your practical questions; What can you do for foreign missions? Under the first head ask—Who chose Barnabas and Saul to be foreign missionaries? How did he call them? Whom does the Holy Ghost now choose and call to be missionaries? How can any one tell whether the Spirit calls him to this work or not? By praying to God to show him. By being ready to go anywhere for Jesus. By asking the advice of wise Christian friends, etc. To what place did the Spirit direct Barnabas and Saul to go? How can we have God's Spirit to guide us in missionary work? What can we who stay at home do for foreign missions? A little girl, when they were packing a box for a foreign missionary in Syria, brought her Paris doll. When they asked her what she wanted to send the doll for she said: "To 'muse the heathen." Every child can do something.

Under the head of "Blesses," you can call for facts proving God's special blessing on the labors of missionaries to-day, and also how these missionaries are opposed, as Barnabas and Saul were.

Points to be assigned in the lesson of June 3d.

1. Draw a map of the journey, including Cyprus, Perga in Pamphylia, Antioch in Pisidia, indicating mountains, etc.

2. Reading of the Scriptures in the Jewish synagogues.

3. Religious proselytes to Judaism.

4. How is Christian work hindered by jealousy.

5. Old Testament prophecies of the salvation of the Gentiles.

6. Difference between the Jews and the Gentiles in their treatment of the gospel.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The Lesson Taught.—What word am I printing? (Print "CALLED.") What does the word mean? Encourage free expression. I am going to call two little boys to help me. (Call two from among the youngest, giving them some little work to do. Then explain the sense in which they were called, *i. e.*, set apart from the rest, for special service.)

Our lesson is about two men whom God called to do work for him. What is this that I am holding? (Show picture of a ship.) I will make a mark on the board that shall stand for the

ship, and marks for two men who went on it. Teach their names. Here is an island where they went to do their work. (See small map on page 192.) Outline the island, printing its name. Draw a line to represent the course of the ship; then erase the mark that represents it, making it again on the coast of Cyprus. Let the class discuss the probable errand of these messengers,

Outline what shall stand for a synagogue, letting class meantime recall some of the wonderful truths which the men would preach.

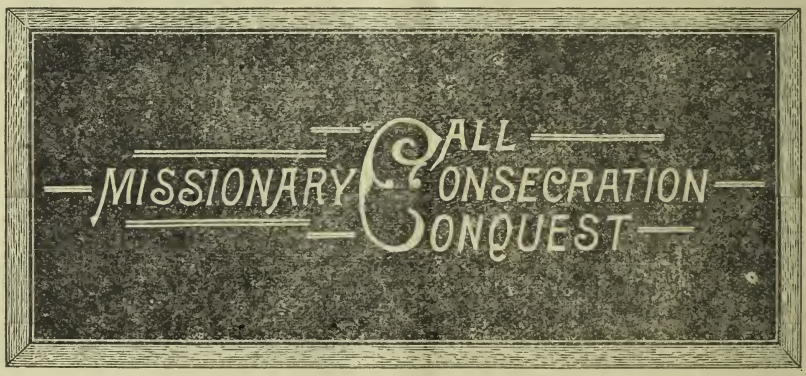
I will make here two hearts to stand for two people whom they met. One heart shall be made with white crayon and one in the sin color, One man "desired to hear the word of God." Which heart is his? Then I will print his name in it. The other tried to keep this man from loving God. Why did I choose the sin color for his heart? (Print his name in the heart.) What name did Paul give this bad man? Having talked this over with class, print the words "Child of the Devil," in the heart. Did you ever think that everybody in this world belonged either to God or to Satan? Does God call people now to work for him? How is it done? This question is designed to aid the teacher in calling from her children the simple story of the Spirit's calls to the heart; each teacher should be sure that her scholars have a clear understanding of the plan of salvation. What work has he called you to do? This affords a chance to set some definite work before the children.

It must constantly be remembered that in trying to present the lesson as taught in class, a great deal is necessarily omitted. The answers of the children, which always stimulate thought, and frequently lead the teacher into new and important channels, are greatly missed. The bare outline is all that can be given here. Let the points to impress be—

1. God's *call* to your children.
2. Only two masters.
3. Plain ways of showing to which one we belong.

Of course the entire lesson is intensely missionary in its nature, and these thoughts come in by way of illustration. Other thoughts also will suggest themselves to the teacher.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD



SUGGESTIONS.—We have in this lesson the second great movement of the early Church. "Previous chapters of the Acts have Jerusalem as the centre, Peter as the principal personage, and Israel as the field of enterprise. Henceforth a Gentile city is to be the centre, Paul the most prominent personage, and the world the field of labor." This is a missionary lesson, and points out very clearly our duty in regard to extending the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are called to the work, and there is a part in it for each one. Are we consecrated to it? Is our heart in it? If so, we shall triumph. Notice Paul's conquest over the sorcerer. "The judgment of the Lord's hand opened a way into the heart of Sergius." The word of God fell on his ears and broke his heart.

—THE BEST MEN.—

SET APART BY THE HOLY GHOST.
SENT FORTH CHURCH.

God works through the Church. Rom. 10: 14. Don't forget your part in it.

Directions for Coloring.—"Missionary," green, shaded with yellow; "Call," white, heavy letters; "Consecration," pink; "Conquest," red, shaded lightly with white.

An open Bible drawn upon the board, with the following texts placed one on each side: John 3: 16; Mark 16: 15, will make a suggestive lesson.

THE WESTMINSTER TEACHER.

VOL. XI. JUNE, 1883. No. 6.

—In July we return in our lessons to the Old Testament, resuming the story of the Israelites at the crossing of the Jordan.

—Particular attention is directed to the page containing notices of the newest books issued by the Board. A number of these are of very special value.

—A well lived life is like a river, widening and deepening as it flows, receiving accessions to its volume from thousands of little rills of experience, gathering something every day that adds to its power.

—The Women's Silk Culture Association, Philadelphia, is doing an excellent work in its effort to awaken an interest in the growing of silk. The object of the association is "to establish on a firm basis an industry that will furnish employment to the women and children of our land."

—The articles in this number are varied, and yet all full of interest. Mr. Woodward, one of our foremost superintendents, begins a series of articles which will have special value to other superintendents. The leading editorial discusses the subject of the officers of the early church, a subject which comes up in the lessons of the month. Other briefer articles have each an interest and value to our readers.

—"By the way," says a correspondent of our Board of Publication, "how far superior your binding is to that of many publishers; it *lasts*, while so many of the new books that come to us have leaves dropping out after two or three readings." This fact is noted by many librarians in our Sabbath-schools. A book must be well bound to stand the use of a succession of young readers.

—Mr. E. Payson Porter, the indefatigable Sabbath-school statistician, has prepared a census of Philadelphia schools, by denominations, according to which there are in the city 148,885 scholars and 15,897 officers and teachers. The four denominations having the largest number of scholars are: Methodist Episcopal, 34,017; Presbyterian, 30,440; Protestant Episcopal, 28,982; Baptist, 20,352. The number received into the churches from the schools during the year was 2,779. The total benevolent and missionary contributions amounted to $65,464.22.

FOR ELDERS.—As elders are to be found in all properly manned Sabbath-schools, we will direct their attention to a little book just published by our Board that is well worth owning and reading. It is "The Elder and his Work," written by David Dickson, one of the best known and most highly esteemed ruling elders of the Free Church of Scotland. He speaks from his own experience, in a racy, easy, practical way, that attracts the reader, and with so much good sense and piety as to instruct and stimulate him. If not an elder yourself order copies for your session, and you will make a good investment.

OUR MAGAZINE.—In a recent number of our WESTMINSTER TEACHER the suggestion was made to its readers that if it was useful to them it might be useful also to others, not then reached by it, and that each subscriber might do a good work by securing for it another subscriber. Whether it was that hint or other causes that have led to the result, we do not know, but we are happy to report to our friends a constant growth in the circulation of the TEACHER that is most encouraging to its editors and publishers. For very flattering words about it, thanks are due to kind friends. It will be the effort of the editors to make it truly and increasingly helpful to its many thousands of readers.

The Officers of the Apostolic Church.

THE subject of the officers of the Apostolic Church ought to be studied in connection with the statement to be found in the lesson for June—"And when they had ordained them *elders* in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed." We propose to answer very briefly the two questions suggested by these words: What were the officers of the Apostolic Church, and what were their respective functions?

1. *The Apostles.*—These were temporary officers. They were (*a*) chosen by Christ himself (Matt. 10: 1–4; Luke 6: 13–16; Acts 1: 24),

for the two-fold purpose of (*b*) testifying to his resurrection, and of (*c*) authoritatively presiding over the founding of the Christian Church among the Jews and Gentiles. To testify that Christ had risen, it was necessary that they confer with the risen Jesus. Authoritatively to establish the new church, or rather a new dispensation of the church, it was necessary that they be endowed with miraculous power. (*a*) All the apostles were chosen by Christ during his lifetime, save Matthias and Paul. That Christ chose Matthias is evident, from Acts 1 : 24; that he chose Paul is just as evident from Acts 9 : 15. (*b*) All the apostles except Paul saw Christ both before his death, and after his resurrection. And Paul at his conversion had revealed to him the risen and glorified Christ, in order that "he might be, with the other apostles, a witness of Christ's resurrection." Acts 9 : 3, 6; 1 : 22. (*c*) All the apostles except Paul were endowed on the day of Pentecost with power to work miracles, and we are expressly told (Acts 28 : 8, 9) that Paul wrought miracles.

If we have correctly stated the qualifications and functions of the apostolic office, it is clear that the office was intended to be temporary; and that the apostles, as such, have not now and never have had successors.

2. *The Elders or Presbyters.*—By giving to the elders the second place, we indicate our conviction that there was no order of bishops in the Apostolic Church above the order of elders. This has always been the contention of the Presbyterian Church. In this contention our Church has been supported by many of the ablest and most learned divines of the Anglican communion. One of the greatest of the prelates of England, now living, Dr. Lightfoot, Bishop of Durham, has presented, with great candor and with rare felicity, the argument for the Presbyterian view, in an article entitled, "The synonyms 'bishop' and 'presbyter.'" The article is to be found in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Philippians (pp. 95, etc.). He begins it with the statement, "It is a fact now generally recognized by theologians of all shades of opinion that in the language of the New Testament the same officer of the Church is called indifferently 'bishop,' and 'elder' or 'presbyter.'" The heads of the argument which Dr. Lightfoot develops in detail are as follows: (1) In Philip. 1: 1, Paul salutes "bishops and deacons." It is incredible that he would recognize only these two offices if there were "presbyters" also. It seems to follow that the bishops were presbyters. (2) In Acts 20: 17, Paul summons to Miletus the presbyters of the Church of Ephesus, yet he addresses them (v. 28) as overseers or bishops (see Revised Version). (3) Peter (1 Peter 5; 12), appealing to the "elders" of the churches addressed by him, in the same sentence urges them to fulfill the office of "bishop" with disinterested zeal. (4) In 1 Tim. 3 Paul tells Timothy what are the qualifications of a bishop, and then adds the qualifications of a deacon. He does not mention presbyters. But in a later chapter (5 : 17–19) he calls these bishops elders. (5) The same identification appears in Paul's Epistle to Titus. Titus 1 : 5–7. (6) Clement of Rome, writing between 90–100, also identifies the two. (7.) This identity is recognized by the Peshito Syriac version. The argument constituted by these considerations seems to us unanswerable. Many defenders of prelacy, feeling its force, represent the diocesan bishop as a *natural development* from the elder of the Apostolic Church, and justify the office on that ground. But it is to be said that development is a dangerous consideration to invoke; for just as the presbyter developed into the diocesan bishop, that bishop developed into the pope. At all events the Scriptures are not against our Church in her contention that elder and bishop are synonyms.

It would seem from 1 Tim. 5 : 17, that two officers were comprised under the single order, "elders;" the office held by these who both "ruled and labored in word and doctrine," and the office held by those who "ruled." These offices survive in our Church, in the bishop or pastor, and in the ruling elder. The functions of these officers, belonging, however, to the same order, are finely stated in our Form of Government, chapters IV. and V.

3. *Deacons.*—The diaconate was established before the eldership. The circumstances which led to the appointment of the first deacons in the Apostolic Church, are too familiar to need statement here. These, with their duties, are clearly set forth in the sixth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

No small amount of the Church's corruption may be traced to its departure from the teachings of the New Testament touching the orders of the church officers. How different from the simple ministries of the New Testament is the hierarchy which was attained in the Western Church by "development" in post-apostolic times," viz: Deacon, presbyter, bishop, metropolitan, patriarch and pope. What a stimulus to ambition is in this hierarchy! What opportunities for corruption! How congruous with sacramentarianism! Though teachers should always make the conversion of their pupils the first aim in teaching, it cannot be out of place for them, as Presbyterian teachers, to set forth

the scriptural character of Presbyterianism, and the scriptural warrant for the offices for which our Church provides in her book of symbols.

[On deaconesses in the early Church, see article by Dr. Schaff in another column.]

The Hymnal in the Sabbath-School.

FROM a veteran in Sabbath-school service, and an elder, Mr. T. B. Stratton, of Millville, N. J., comes the following word of experience as to the uses of the Hymnal of the church in the school:

"Permit me to add my testimony to the many you have already received to the great value and adaptedness of the Presbyterian Hymnal to the use of the Sabbath-school. In my judgment no hymn book has yet been published more substantially adapted to the present needs of the Sabbath-school, and I earnestly hope to see the day when every Presbyterian Sabbath-school within the bounds of our General Assembly will adopt it to the *exclusion* of all others.

"We have used it in our school for the past three months with most gratifying results. The music of the school is better in every respect. Never before during my experience in the school (thirty years) has our singing been so devotional and hearty in praise as now. Those who feared that the younger scholars would regard the Hymnal as too dry and prosy, have entirely dismissed their fears, and are now its most enthusiastic supporters. God has greatly blessed our school in its use."

We believe that this is an example that may well be followed. But for those who, for any reason, cannot or will not do as Millville does, the Board is just publishing its new "Westminster Sabbath-school Hymnal." This fresh book aims to give—both as to hymns and tunes—

1. What our young people can sing.
2. What they will sing.
3. What they ought to sing.

A carefully made selection from the standard hymns of the Church forms the backbone of the book. Among these greatly loved hymns preference has been given to those best in themselves and most worthy of being stored in the memory, and those most readily grasped by the young and best adapted to hearty singing. With these indispensable hymns of the Church there has been mingled a liberal selection, from the many books published for use in "Gospel Meetings" and in the Sabbath-sehool, of hymns and tunes that are deservedly favorites. Original pieces of merit, with others from the modern ecclesiastical music of England and the continent, complete the book, on which neither expense nor labor has been spared.

It is believed that a volume thus prepared will prove sound in its composition, whilst attractive and available for the service of song in the Sabbath-school, and also fitted to use in the chapel and prayer meeting.

To pack as much as possible into the book, without unduly increasing its size and cost, hymns are given without the music, where the tunes to which they are ordinarily sung are familiar and pretty sure to be within reach.

The long experience, the good taste and skill, with the Christian sympathy in the work, of the musical editor, Mr. T. F. Seward, assure us of excellence in that department.

It is confidently expected that the book will be found truly serviceable, and will be used with pleasure as well as with profit. It contains 192 pages, and about two hundred hymns, and will be sold at 35 cents, or $30 per hundred.

An edition with the hymns only, without the tunes, will also be published and sold at a lower rate.

The Words in Italics.

ALL well instructed readers of our English Bible know that the words printed in italics are not, as in other books, the emphatic words. They are words which the translators put in to make the English clear and idiomatic, or to give the true meaning, when they thought that it could not be done by only rendering, word for word, what stands written in the Greek or the Hebrew. No doubt this was necessary in many places. The ways in which words are put together in different languages are so diverse that an absolutely direct translation from one language into another would not be understood by a person knowing only one of them, without some such help from one who knows both. Open your English Bible anywhere, and notice the words printed in italics, and you will see that usually they only connect the other words, so as to express the meaning in the English way, or (as grammarians say) according to the English "idiom." It is right to remember, however, that the translators were not inspired, any more than are the commentators. You may treat the words in italics just as you may the notes in the WESTMINSTER TEACHER. Let them help you to the meaning of the text, if they can, but you must look sharp and judge for yourself, whether they really help you or not.

Generally the words in italics either make the meaning plainer or else they make a sentence which expresses the meaning in better English. But this is not invariably the case. Sometimes they do not make the sentence plainer, but only make it weaker. An example of this is in Ps. 144: 15: "Happy *is that* people, that is in

such a case; *yea*, happy *is that* people whose God *is* the Lord. The little word "*is*," near the end of the verse is the only one of the words in italics that was needed, and if you will read the verse aloud, omitting all the other words in italics, you will see with how much more spirit and force it gives the same sense. Other examples might be given, but you can find them for yourself. We would encourage you to read every Bible verse so attentively that you will see whether the words in italics help you or not. Intelligent Bible students should get accustomed to such careful scrutiny of all human helps to understand God's word written. Only thus can it be made sure that they will help and not hinder. Wide awake reading is as necessary as faithful and conscientious translating and explaining.

These thoughts are also applicable to the Revised Version. The learned men who have given it to us no more claim to be infallible than did those of three hundred years ago. They have made some things in the New Testament plainer than they were in the old version. Other things have been more correctly given. Some critics think that in trying to follow the Greek closely, they at times render it in poorer English. However that may be, as God did not see fit to give us his word by inspired Englishmen or Americans, we want all the help the most learned Englishmen and Americans can give us, to get the true meaning of the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures put into as good English as is possible. If we cannot read the Greek, the study of both versions will enable us to satisfy ourselves more perfectly as to the true meaning. This is the reason why we print both in the WESTMINSTER TEACHER. Somebody has wisely said that "the *meaning* of the Bible *is* the Bible." All that God requires of us is to get its meaning as correctly and fully as we can, and then obey that meaning.

Scarcity of Religious Books.

IN my work of carrying the books of the Board of Publication from house to house, says the colporteur in Southern California, I have found hundreds of families in which there were no religious books of any kind. The children are suffered to grow up without any Christian training. They often have no knowledge of God or of Christian duty. Their moral natures perish by neglect, or are poisoned by reading novels or infidel literature. How important to place in such families good books, full of interest and instruction, in order to cultivate a taste for what is pure and good, and to counteract the pernicious effect of the trash that is read. I distribute tracts, and sell all the books I can, but many who desire our books are too poor to buy. To a limited extent I supply them gratuitously; but the missionary fund of the Board is not rich enough to enable me to supply all who need our books. If the Board had more missionary money, it would not be obliged to curtail so much the free distribution of its publications, and every family without Christian books could be supplied. Destitute Sabbath-schools could be more numerously furnished with pure and useful works, fitted to elevate and bless all who read them. If our people could only realize how much good our Board is doing, and how much more it might do, if it had a full treasury, they would surely contribute more liberally to its funds. If all the churches would help, the Board's treasury would be full. Will not every one help a little?

I. The Superintendent's Preparation.

BY R. W. WOODWARD.

AMONG the characteristics which mark this wide awake, active, bustling age in which we live, none is more pronounced than this, that its standards of requirement are lifted far above those of any preceding age. The Church to-day demands of *her* workers, that they come up to the full exercise of all their powers and capabilities, in the service they render to Christ and his cause. It is very gratifying to note in how great a degree this demand is recognized and responded to by her pastors, Sabbath-school superintendents and teachers. It is encouraging also to believe that the individual cases are rare indeed where any, from lack of will, fall short in the things that go to make teaching, example and influence as effective as they should be.

But while a large measure of success is attainable by all, only comparatively few seem to achieve it. Here and there are found, some in one department and some in another, those who have been able to mark out lines for themselves, and by the blessing of Him who has led and guided them, have met with a success which has surprised themselves. The secret of all true success, in every field of Christian activity, is faithful effort. So my brother superintendent, however you may have given way to discouragement from apparent inability to do what some have done, let this thought give you new courage, that God is always ready to strengthen human weakness, and bless human effort, when the earnest desire to advance his cause is joined to a faith that continually trusts and works,

and works and trusts again. Have a purpose to accomplish something; hold firmly to it, and resting in God's willingness and power to aid you, "study to show yourself approved unto God a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." Let this purpose too be a definite one. Determine that the fact of your occupying the post of superintendent, shall lead you to become in the fullest sense a consecrated man. Then let this consecration, so far as your part of it is concerned, be so entire that all your abilities, affections and faculties shall be devoted to helping the young forward and upward, and stimulating your fellow workers to a nobler and more efficient service. Concentrate your energies on your work. Remember that while the right spirit is of the first importance, right methods are also necessary. Some one has wisely said: "Plan out your work—then work out your plan." Never let your work fail from lack of preparation in its details.

Select as early in the week as possible the truths you wish to impress upon the school. Emphasize them in your teachers' meeting. Select such hymns as will help to awaken or to foster these truths. Determine which particular verses you will have the school sing. Know too, as early as possible, just what Scripture passage you are going to read to or with the school.

From your own experience, reading, or observation, or from that of others, select one or two illustrations to be used in fixing in the mind and heart of the scholars some of the salient points of the lesson, at the giving out of a hymn, or before, after or during the reading of the Scriptures. Be careful, however, to say but little, that the words you use may have the more weight. Do not let the school become tired of the sound of your voice, if you wish your usefulness to remain unimpaired. As the time you are to occupy in the opening or closing services of the school must necessarily be brief, it is all the more important that you should know beforehand, as far as possible, just what you want to do and say, and whether you can reasonably expect to do it in the time at your disposal. Be very conscientious in your use of time during the session of the school. By such prearrangement of your programme as I have indicated, you will be able to accomplish a great deal in a quiet way, without trespassing upon any one. Remember that if you expect the teachers to do their work in the time allotted them (which should always be liberal), you must be equally careful to do yours, without infringing upon them or detaining them after the regular hour for closing school. Unless, however, you have made a careful preparation, you will trespass upon their time and fail in many ways to exert the influence and accomplish the good you would like to do at every session of the school. This matter of thorough preparation is of such great importance that no superintendent should ever neglect it unless providentially hindered. Of what I have tried to impress these things may be worth remembering:

1. That you are to be thoroughly in earnest and entirely consecrated to him in whose service you are to labor.

2. That you are to gird yourself for your work in the strength which God shall give.

3. That you are to put forth all your energies and exercise what talents the Lord has given you.

4. That you remember that in proportion to your faith will be the effort put forth and the result attained, and

5. That you are not to neglect the most prayerful, patient and thorough preparation for the work in which you are engaged.

The New York Institute.

ONE of the most successful Institutes of the year was that held in New York in March. It was conducted by Secretary Worden, under the auspices of the Presbytery of New York, with Rev. Erskine N. White, D.D., as chairman, and a model chairman he made, as the success of the Institute proves. We take from *The Evangelist* the following account of the exercises, condensing it at some points:

Dr. James A. Worden, our Secretary of Sunday-school Work, completed his Institute programme, begun on Sunday evening at the Fourth avenue Church, and continued on the afternoon and evening of Monday and Tuesday, almost without a break. Dr. Erskine N. White, who was to have presided at the opening session, being unavoidably absent, Dr. Crosby took the chair, and the speakers were Dr. Worden, Ralph Wells and Dr. John Hall.

The secretary urged that back of all, even the best of plans, there must be downright earnestness and consecration. The secular school is no model; the Sunday-school teacher must impress not only his words, but his character, his spirituality, on his class. Unless earnest and fervent in spirit, teachers will fail to reach this standard. Ralph Wells spoke of local mission work; the importance of the interest of youth in such effort. Our most successful churches had hence derived much of their strength and impulse. Dr. John Hall welcomed this occasion for the mingling of teachers and those interested in the work of our churches. Thoughts were called forth and caught up, as good seed on good ground. He was outspoken on the fact that this was a Presbyterian Sunday-school Institute. Our church instrumentalities were not much given to advertising; their forces worked like those of nature—in silence. He would have men and women attached to some concrete

object. They were not likely to stick to the abstract. The nebulosity of the clouds was nothing in their minds. The broad church was not in their way. There was a generation growing who were to become preachers, and they must train them, and make them of the stuff of which evangelistic churches are made. There were too many gypsies flitting aimlessly from church to church. Let young men be sectarian, narrow and bigoted, and all that. There is hope of such. The men and women of the most distinct opinions of church forms to-day, were in truth the broadest and most catholic in their views.

The second session, like the previous one, was very largely attended, and the proceedings were spirited and instructive throughout. First, a fifteen minute praise meeting was led by Mr. George W. Beale. Dr. Crosby was to have opened the discussion of "Bible Study," but as he was detained at home by indisposition, the subject was introduced by Dr. Mancius H. Hutton, and the discussion participated in by a number of clergymen and laymen. The further essay of the afternoon was then read by Dr. Hutton (of the Second Reformed Church, New Brunswick), his subject being "All the Church in the Sunday-school: its Importance and Method," and his theory, that the work of the Sunday-school and of the church are identical, and there should be no divided forces or interests. Conductor Worden then illustrated his method of normal class teaching, with a lesson upon "The Preparation of the Apostle Paul for the Work." This subject was also discussed by Mr. Peter Carter, Mr. Jones, and Dr. E. N. White. Afterward, Dr. Worden gave attention to a number of questions on Sunday-school work and management, which were handed to him on slips from the audience.

Monday evening's session was also opened by a short praise-meeting, conducted by Elder William F. Lee. At the close, Prof. Charles A. Briggs, of Union Theological Seminary, read a paper on "The Scriptures as Means of Grace." It was packed with pertinent thought. While all Scripture is inspired, the teacher yet needs to become skilled in its use, rightly dividing the word, giving milk or strong meat, as there is necessity. The germs of life are in the word, but not equally present in all Scripture. There is room for and need of discrimination. They are planted and nourished in the heart by the Spirit, in co-operation with the ordinances and instrumentalities of the church. The thoughts thrown out all along were weighty, spiritual, quickening, and must have proved helpful to all earnest and intelligent listeners.

Dr. Worden next introduced Dr. A. D. Vail, of St. John's Methodist Episcopal Church, Harlem, touching playfully on the rashness of putting forward one who did not hold to "election." Dr. Vail said that he should not be able to do much harm in the short time (twenty minutes) allotted to him, and at once proceeded with his theme, "The Missing Link in Our Sunday-school Work." His paper was in perfect consonance with that of Dr. Hutton, holding that the Sunday-school should be a part of the church, binding all more closely in effort and interest and co-operation.

The last paper on Monday evening was read by Dr. Marvin R. Vincent of the Church of the Covenant, his theme, "The Principles of Teaching Applied to the Sunday-school." Dr. Vincent said that teaching was a science and rested upon a principle. He believed with Herbert Spencer—though he did not believe much of Spencer's doctrine—that the symbols of knowledge could never take the place of knowledge itself. Children should not be taught by rote but by illustration, and should not be set to learning Scripture verses they were unable to understand. An archbishop once said that to teach a child verses of Scripture, in the hope that he would learn their meaning after he got older, was like making him swallow his food first and chew it afterwards. The paper abounded in striking and pertinent thought: "Power in teaching is invariably bound up with character in the teacher. The man who knows most is not necessarily the best teacher. A young man is not a mere receptacle for facts. His is a life to be informed. The teacher and truth should be as one. The power of Christianity is the power of a person, and not of a system. A teacher must have clear intellectual cognition of that which he is to teach. What a man cannot tell intelligently to others, he does not thoroughly know. The greatest teacher is the simplest. In teaching, attention is to be fastened on the most important aspects of the truth. Truth has a body, and it has clothes; your first concern is with the body, not with the drapery."

Tuesday afternoon's session began with a service of song, led by Mr. J. G. Menzies; a Primary Class Lesson by Pictorial Teaching followed, conducted by Miss Kate E. Seymour, of Immanuel Chapel; "After the Pattern Shown in the Mount," by Miss Hattie M. Morris; the theme, "A Teachers' Meeting in Every Sunday-school," was opened by Elliott F. Shepard, Esq.; next came the lesson for March 18th, taught by Secretary Worden; closing with the Question Drawer. The preliminary devotional meeting of the last evening session was led by Elder Peter Carter, with addresses by Dr. J. M. Worrall on "The Preparation of the Teacher," Dr. C. S. Robinson on "The Use and Limit of Illustrations," and by Dr. W. Ormiston on "The Work and the Reward." Then a few moments with the Question Drawer, and brief devotional exercises concluded this most profitable Institute, on the great success of which we especially congratulate Dr. Worden, who has had the laboring oar from the start, though well seconded by members of the Sunday-school Committee of the Presbytery of New York.

Deaconesses.

BY REV. PHILIP SCHAFF, D.D.

IN the New Testament there is a distinct trace of the existence of deaconesses, that is, women who were regularly employed for the care of the poor and sick, and to administer hospitality among the female portion of the congregation. In the Orient and in Greece, the sexes were much more strictly sepa-

rated (as they are to this day among the Mohammedans, Jews and Gentiles) than in Christian Europe and America. Hence there was a practical necessity for a special class of female officers who had access to their own sex and could discharge the charitable functions of the diaconate much more easily and effectually than men. Phebe is called a deaconess of the congregation of Cenchrea, the port of Corinth, and was intrusted by Paul with the important mission of carrying his Epistle to the Romans (Rom. 16: 1). The pious and devoted women, Prisca, Mary, Tryphæna, Tryphosa and Persis, who "labored much in the Lord," and are saluted by Paul (Rom. 16: 3, 6, 12), were in all probability likewise deaconesses; for just in that capacity women could make themselves most useful in the church without stepping outside of their proper sphere, or violating their native modesty. Whether certain passages in the Pastoral Epistles (1 Tim. 3; 11; 5: 9; Tit. 2: 3) refer to the same office, is a matter of dispute among commentators.

In the Eastern churches, the office of deaconess continued down to the end of the twelfth century. The candidates were solemnly ordained. In the Roman Church the congregational deaconesses ceased, or were superseded by sisterhoods devoted to charitable work. Everybody knows what a powerful, though silent influence these sisterhoods exert in public and private hospitals, female seminaries, in afflicted homes, and how effectually they commend their Church even to Protestants and the indifferent world. Far be it that we should detract one iota from the merit of those noble women, who, prompted by the love of Christ, devote their fortune and their lives to the relief and comfort of their suffering fellow-men, and find their happiness in this labor of love. We rejoice in every manifestation of genuine Christianity in the Roman Catholic or any other church. It redounds to the honor of Christ, our common Lord.

Among Protestants, similar sisterhoods have been founded by the Moravians and in Lutheran, Episcopal and other churches. The most useful institution and society of that kind is the sisterhood of Kaiserwerth on the Lower Rhine, founded by Pastor Fliedner, which has sent out branches to various parts of Germany, Switzerland, France, Russia, Sweden, Alexandria, Smyrna, Beirut and Jerusalem. The sisterhood is an honor and benediction to evangelical Christianity.

But while all these sisterhoods derive their inspiration from the love of Christ and from the New Testament, they cannot do the full duty of the apostolic institution which provides for a regular congregational office. They do occasional and special work of great importance, and are most indispensable in seasons of war, pestilence and the raging of contagious diseases. But they cannot do the local work in every community. There is no church in the city or the country where there are not some poor and suffering mortals who appeal to the sympathy and support of Christians. "The poor," says the Lord, "ye have always with you." Every congregation, therefore, ought to have a regular band of deacons and deaconesses to attend to these charitable duties. The revival of the apostolic diaconate—male and female—is an important practical question for the churches to consider.—*Sunday School Times.*

The Christian's Rosary.

A Prayer for Each Day in the Week.

BY MRS. HELEN E. BROWN.

SABBATH.

Sabbath, rest-day, crown of all the seven,
Give me, Lord, to-day, a glimpse of heaven;
Feed me with the food that angels taste
Earnest of the everlasting feast.

MONDAY.

On the threshold of a busy week,
Lord, thy guidance and thy grace I seek;
Use me at thy pleasure, here or there;
Serving, waiting, I have not a care.

TUESDAY.

Through the tangled business of the day,
Keep me, blessed Saviour, lest I stray;
Lest I lose the golden thread of love
Holding me secure to things above.

WEDNESDAY.

Lord, be pleased to let thy love-light shine
With full glory through this heart of mine,
Into some poor, suffering life to-day,
Which would else in doubt and darkness stray.

THURSDAY.

What shall come to-day? Oh, let me rest
Every care with Jesus and be blest;
Joy or sorrow, all shall work in me,
By thy Spirit, that which pleaseth thee.

FRIDAY.

May my conversation be with grace;
Cheerfulness irradiate my face;
Hands be strong for all that should be done;
Feet, on thy sweet errand, quick to run.

SATURDAY.

Cumbered with much serving, still I'd be
Mindful of thy tender care for me;
All I do, done for my Saviour's sake,
Please to accept; my—heart's glad offering take.

Days and weeks and years are gliding on;
Soon life's narrow hand-breadth will be run;
May each hour I spend in service here,
In thy book, approved, at last appear.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

SECOND QUARTER.

1. April 1.—Simon the Sorcerer. Acts 8 : 14–25.
2. April 8.—Philip and the Ethiopian. Acts 8 : 26–40.
3. April 15.—Saul's Conversion. Acts 9 : 1–18.
4. April 22.—Saul Preaching Christ. Acts 9 : 19–31.
5. April 29.—Peter Working Miracles. Acts 9 : 32–42.
6. May 6.—Peter Preaching to the Gentiles. Acts 10 : 30–44.
7. May 13.—The Spread of the Gospel. Acts 11 : 19-30.
8. May 20.—Herod and Peter. Acts 12 : 1–17.
9. May 27.—Paul and Barnabas in Cyprus. Acts 13 : 1–12.
10. June 3.—**At Antioch.** Acts 13 : 13–16 and 43–52.
11. June 10.—**At Iconium and Lystra.** Acts 14 : 1–18.
12. June 17.—**End of First Missionary Journey.** Acts 14 : 19–28.
13. June 24.—**Review.**

Lesson X. **AT ANTIOCH.** June 3d, 1883.

Acts 13 : 13–16, 43–52. Memorize vs. 47–49.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region."—Acts 13 : 49.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 13 : 13–42....*Paul's Sermon.*
T. Acts 13 : 43–52....*Turning to the Gentiles.*
W. Rom. 15 : 8–21....*Paul the Minister to the Gentiles.*
Th. 2 Cor. 11 : 16–33 ..*In Labors Abundant.*
F. Eph. 3 : 1–21 .....*The Gentiles Fellow-Heirs.*
S. Col. 1 : 14–29.....*Mystery made Manifest.*
S. Isa. 35 : 1–10 .....*The Return of the Ransomed.*

TOPIC.

Preaching to Jews and Gentiles.

LESSON PLAN.

1. Preaching in the Synagogue. vs. 12–16. **2. The Envy of the Jews.** vs. 43–45. **3. Turning to the Gentiles.** vs. 46–49. **4. The Preachers Driven Away.** vs. 50–52.

Time.—A. D. 45. **Place.**—Antioch in Pisidia.

Catechism.—Q. 21. *Who is the Redeemer of God's elect?* A. The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who, being the eternal Son of God, became man, and so was, and continueth to be, God and man, in two distinct natures, and one person, for ever.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 950: "Work, for the night is coming." Other hymns, 102, 136, 555, 640.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

INTRODUCTORY.—The scene of our last lesson was the island of Cyprus. Paul and Barnabas did not long remain there, but pressed on eagerly to Asia Minor. Politically this country was broken up into numerous communities with diversity of language, customs and government. Religiously, it was given up to idolatry. There were many Jews scattered through the principal towns. There were many discouragements to missionary work. The roads were very bad. Many parts of the country were infested with robbers and bandits. Yet toward this needy field these missionaries turned their faces with great eagerness. They were intent on carrying the good news to those who needed it most.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

13 Now when Paul and his company loosed from Pa'phos, they came to Per'ga in Pamphyl'ia: and John departing from them returned to Je-ru'sa-lem. [Acts 15 : 38.]

14 ¶ But when they departed from Per'ga, they came to An'ti-och in Pi-sid'i-a, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down. [Acts 18 : 4.]

15 And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men *and* brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on. [Heb. 13 : 22.]

16 Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with *his* hand, said, Men of Is'ra-el, and ye that fear God, give audience.

* * * * * * * *

43 Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Bar'na-bas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. [Matt. 10 : 22; Acts 11 : 23; Tit. 2 : 11.]

44 ¶ And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.

45 But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against

those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. [1 Pet. 4: 4; Jude 10.]

46 Then Paul and Bar'na-bas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gen'tiles: [Matt. 10: 6; 21: 43; Isa. 55: 5; Rom. 1: 16.]

47 For so hath the Lord commanded us, *saying*, I have set thee to be a light of the Gen'tiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. [Isa. 42: 6; 49: 6.]

48 And when the Gen'tiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. [Acts 2: 47.]

49 And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region. [Ps. 68: 11.]

50 But the Jews stirred up the devout and honorable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Bar'na-bas, and expelled them out of their coasts. [2 Tim. 3: 11.]

51 But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto I-co'ni-um. [Matt. 10: 14; Acts 18: 6.]

52 And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost. [Matt. 5: 12; Acts 16: 22.]

REVISED TEXT.

13 Now Paul and his company set sail from
Paphos, and came to Perga in Pamphylia:
and John departed from them and returned
14 to Jerusalem. But they, passing through
from Perga, came to Antioch of Pisidia; and
they went into the synagogue on the sabbath
15 day, and sat down. And after the reading
of the law and the prophets the rulers of the
synagogue sent unto them, saying, Brethren,
if ye have any word of exhortation for the
16 people, say on. And Paul stood up, and
beckoning with the hand said,
Men of Israel, and ye that fear God,
hearken.

* * * * * *

43 Now when the synagogue broke up, many of
the Jews and of the devout proselytes fol-
lowed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to
them, urged them to continue in the grace
of God.
44 And the next sabbath almost the whole
city was gathered together to hear the word
45 of God. But when the Jews saw the multi-
tudes, they were filled with jealousy, and
contradicted the things which were spoken
46 by Paul, and blasphemed. And Paul and
Barnabas spake out boldly, and said, It was
necessary that the word of God should first
be spoken to you. Seeing ye thrust it from
you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal
47 life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath
the Lord commanded us, *saying*,
I have set thee for a light of the Gentiles,
That thou shouldest be for salvation unto
the uttermost part of the earth.
48 And as the Gentiles heard this, they were
glad, and glorified the word of God: and as
many as were ordained to eternal life be-
49 lieved. And the word of the Lord was
spread abroad throughout all the region.
50 But the Jews urged on the devout women of
honourable estate, and the chief men of the
city, and stirred up a persecution against
Paul and Barnabas, and cast them out of
51 their borders. But they shook off the dust
of their feet against them, and came unto
52 Iconium. And the disciples were filled with
joy and with the Holy Ghost.

13 *Paul and his company.* From this time on with few exceptions (14: 14; 15: 25), Paul is named first, and evidently is the leader, Barnabas taking a second place, and taking it cheerfully. Paul's company or companions consisted, so far as we know, of Barnabas and Mark. *Loosed from Paphos.* Revised Version: *Set sail. Perga.* An old city on the river Cestrus, about eight miles from its mouth. It was famous for the worship of Diana. Only the ruins of the ancient city are now to be found, and shepherds pasture their flocks amid the broken walls and columns. *Pamphylia.* One of the provinces of Asia Minor, then in a flourishing condition, with considerable commerce and with navigable rivers, now obstructed

by bars. *John departing . . . returned.* This was John Mark, who had accompanied them as an attendant. v. 5. The reason for his departure is not given, and the commentators have been fertile in suggestions. Probably he grew homesick, or the perils attending the proposed missionary tour may have seemed too great for his courage. We know that Paul considered his conduct so blameworthy that he would not consent to take him on the second journey, although Mark was ready to go. Chap. 15: 38, 39. There is no doubt that whatever was the fault of Mark in this case he fully redeemed himself in after years, even in Paul's estimation. See 2 Tim. 4: 11; Col. 4: 10; Philemon 24. The missionaries seem to have passed through Perga, without making any stay there and without entering upon the work of preaching the gospel.

14 *Antioch in Pisidia.* To distinguish it from

Antioch in Syria, from which Paul and Barnabas had set out. The city was built on a hill, and its ruins remain near the modern village of Yalobatch. It was then an important city. The distance from Perga was nearly one hundred miles, and the journey must have been perilous, as it lay through rugged mountain passes which were infested with bandits. *The synagogue.* There were Jews therefore in the city, but probably only one synagogue.

15 *After the reading.* The Scriptures were arranged in lessons for the year, one from the law and one from the prophets. After the reading of the Scriptures, the men in charge of the services noticing Paul and Barnabas in the synagogue sitting among the people, gave them an opportunity to speak. According to the custom any rabbi could speak in the synagogue service.

16 *Paul stood up.* Ordinarily Jewish teachers gave their instructions sitting, but the apostles appear to have stood while speaking (see chaps. 1: 15; 11: 28; 15: 7), possibly after the Greek usage. *Beckoning with his hand.* To gain silence and attention. *Men of Israel, and ye that fear God.* Including both Jews and devout Gentiles, that is, Gentiles who had renounced idolatry and become worshipers of the true God. These were called "proselytes of the gate." *Give audience.* Revised Version: *Hearken.*

The verses omitted from our lesson passage contain the sermon which Paul preached that day, his first reported sermon. It will be interesting to compare it with the address of Stephen before the council (chap. 7), which Paul almost certainly heard. The first part of it (vs. 17–22) is historical, recounting the dealings of God with Israel down to the time of David. Next (vs. 23–37), referring to the promise made to David, he declares that Jesus was Messiah and Saviour, and shows how, in his death and resurrection, the Old Testament prophecies had been fulfilled. Then (vs. 38–41) he proclaims to his hearers the good tidings of remission of sins and justification from all things (here is the germ of Paul's after-teaching of this great truth), and warns them not to reject this Messiah. The audience was favorably disposed, and Paul was urged to repeat his address the next Sabbath. Notice the correct reading of v. 42 in the Revised Version.

43 *Broken up.* Dismissed. *Religious proselytes.* Gentiles who had accepted of the true God and worshiped with the Jews. *Continue in the grace of God.* This implies that some had believed the gospel and become disciples of Christ. The preachers urged them to continue faithful. See chap. 11: 23.

44 *Almost the whole city.* The missionaries had spent the intervening week in the city, no doubt speaking much to the people in private conversations concerning the doctrines of the gospel, and when the Sabbath came there was a great outpouring not only of Jews but also of Gentiles to hear them.

45 *When the Jews saw.* The presence of the Gentiles in such numbers in their synagogue offended the Jews and aroused them to jealousy. If this gospel was to be offered to all men indiscriminately they would not accept it. *Contradicting and blaspheming.* See the form of this verse in the Revised Version. They not only opposed the doctrines, but they sneered at the name of the blessed and holy One whom the apostles preached.

46 *Waxed bold.* Spake out boldly. Instead of being intimidated by the contradiction and blasphemy of the Jews, they only grew the bolder, and now plainly asserted what before they had but implied. *It was necessary.* In obedience to the Master's own command. Acts 1: 8; Rom. 1: 16. The gospel was to be preached first, but not exclusively to the Jews. Now the missionaries had done their duty in first offering it to the Jews. Since, however, these had refused it, their next duty clearly was to turn to the Gentiles. *Seeing ye put it from you.* Note the stronger language of the Revised Version: *Thrust it from you.* Implying the most positive rejection. *Judge yourselves unworthy.* This was the practical result of their rejection. They had condemned themselves as not worthy of eternal life. *We turn to the Gentiles.* That is, they now turned to the Gentiles then present, and offered to them the salvation which the Jews had refused. This was not a final turning from the Jews as a nation, for Paul continued elsewhere to offer the gospel first to them.

47 *So hath the Lord commanded.* The prophecy quoted is from Isa. 49: 6. It is quoted here to show that God's original purpose embraced the Gentiles as well as the Jews, and that this was no sudden impulse of the apostles themselves.

48 *The Gentiles . . . were glad.* The Gentiles who were present. They rejoiced to know that they were no longer to be shut out from the privileges of the gospel. *As many as were ordained to eternal life.* I prefer to quote here the words of Dr. J. A. Alexander: "As many as were ordained, ordered or appointed to eternal life, a favorite expression of John and Paul to signify salvation. . . . The violent attempts which have been made to eliminate the doctrine of election or predestination from this verse, by

rendering the last verb *disposed*, *arrayed*, etc., or by violent constructions, such as that adopted by Socinus, can never change the simple fact, that wherever this verb occurs elsewhere, it invariably expresses the exertion of power or authority, divine or human, and being in the passive voice, cannot denote mere disposition, much less self-determination."

50 *Honorable women.* Women who were Jewish proselytes, and who had great social influence in the city. Their husbands were probably in positions of power. *A persecution.* Perhaps a sudden outbreak. They were not formally expelled by legal act, or they would scarcely have returned so soon. See chap. 14: 21.

51 *They shook off the dust.* They thus followed the express direction of the Master himself. Luke 9: 5. *Iconium.* At this time a populous city. It is now called Konieh, and has a population of 20,000 to 30,000. But few remains of the old city are now to be found.

52 *The disciples.* Not Paul and Barnabas only, but also the new converts.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

Paul and his company set sail from Paphos and came to Perga. See them cutting away from all familiar walks and plunging into the very heart of the Gentile world. What is it that impels them forward in their course? Are they in pursuit of wealth? Are they chasing some dream of pleasure? Is there some prize hidden away in the Pisidian mountains which they are seeking? We well know what it is that they are seeking. They have an ambition; it is to carry Christ and his glorious gospel to the lost souls that are buried away in the darkness of that heathen land. The prize they seek is not gold or silver, but immortal souls. Never did men press with more resistless determination any quest for earthly things than did these men their quest for souls. The noblest heroisms of the world are found in the records of the doings of the missionaries of the cross of Christ.

John departed from them and returned to Jerusalem. He began and was not able to finish. He put his hand to the plough and looked back. We need not discuss the causes of his defection. It is no matter why he grew faint-hearted; the fact is enough. The lesson for us is that no one who enlists in the service of Christ should for any reason turn back. No matter what the hardships may be, or how great the sacrifices may be, that are required, when we begin to follow Christ we should persevere to the end. This turning back of Mark caused a long series of troubles both to himself and to his friends. He lost the confidence of Paul, and it always is a great misfortune to lose the confidence of good men. He became the occasion of the separation of Paul and Barnabas, and of a sharp quarrel between them which resulted in *their* separation, also, in work for Christ. We never can know the full consequences of this separation on Mark's own future life and work. Had he stayed with Paul he might, under the influence of his inspiring character, have become a far grander man than he ever did cut off from this influence. The lesson is that we should count well the cost before we begin to follow Christ, but that, when we once begin, nothing should ever cause us to turn back. There will come hard pinches now and then, even in the sunniest Christian life. We cannot expect to have it easy all the time. Christ our Master found it very hard, and should we not be willing to endure hardness for his sake? There is another side, however, to this bit of Mark's history. Here at the beginning of his Christian service he stumbled and made sorry work; but he was restored again and became after all a useful man. He even succeeded in regaining Paul's confidence, and won from the apostle, toward the end of his life, warm words of commendation. If one begins to serve Christ and stumbles, he must not give up in despair and go back into the world again. Many a soldier has failed in one battle and yet lived to burn out the shame in noble heroisms in after battles. It is the glory of Christianity that *it always gives men another chance.*

Paul . . . urged them to continue in the grace of God. There is little use in beginning anything unless we continue it to the end. This counsel of the apostle is just the word for the young people who last winter started in the Christian life. It is a great thing to have started; but they must hold on to the end if they would receive the reward which is promised to the faithful.

When the Jews saw the multitudes they were filled with jealousy. There are some people who can never bear to see others enjoy any favors. If they cannot have a thing all to themselves they do not want it at all. These Jews probably would have received the gospel if it had been offered to them exclusively, but when it was offered to the Gentiles as well as to them they did not want it. This spirit is as far as possible from the spirit of Christ. The Chris-

tian rejoices to see others receiving the same blessing which he himself receives.

Seeing ye thrust it from you . . . we turn to the Gentiles. One truth taught here is that sinners can only get clear of Christ by actually *thrusting him away.* He waits long and pleads earnestly. He presses the blessings of heaven upon our souls with great and loving persistence, and will not go away unless we drive him from our hearts. A Christian father pleading with his wayward son not to go out from his home into the streets to plunge into sin, laid himself down on the threshold, and said, "If you go you must step over your father's body." So Jesus Christ seems to do. Sinners can only get clear of him by violently thrusting him aside or by trampling over his bleeding love as they rush past him down to woe. There is another startling lesson here—*rejected blessings fly away.* Who can tell what these Jews lost in thrusting Christ from them? Then when they had rejected Christ the blessed offer was withdrawn from them and carried to others. The Saviour will not always plead. He will sometime turn away, and only his back will be seen as he sadly passes on to other souls with his blessings.

Ye judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life. That is just what every rejecter of salvation really does. The way we receive the word of the Lord when it comes to us reveals our real character in God's sight. It will be found in the end that every soul writes its own condemnation. Men are lost only because they will not be saved.

As the Gentiles heard this they were glad. Some rejected Christ, but others received him. We may put the gospel away from us, but others will be ready to take it up. We cannot hinder it in the accomplishment of the purposes of God's mercy and love on which it is sent.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Love for Christ and for souls inspires men to brave the greatest hardships. v. 13.
2. When once we have entered Christ's service we should never turn back. v. 13.
3. Those who are full of love for Christ should take every opportunity to preach the gospel to others. v. 16.
4. Those who have believed on Christ are eager to hear more of him. v. 43.
5. Those who begin must continue in the grace of God if they would be saved. v. 43.
6. We should rejoice to see others coming to Christ. There is grace enough for all. v. 45.
7. Christ has to be thrust away before he will leave a sinner. v. 46.
8. We never can know what blessings and glories we reject when we refuse Christ. v. 46.
9. The word of the Lord rejected is taken from us and given to those who will receive it. v. 46.
10. Those who drive away the messengers of grace are driving away heaven's richest blessings. v. 50.
11. Rejected offers of grace are dread witnesses to leave behind us. v. 51.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

BY THE REV. JAMES A. WORDEN, D.D.

I. Carefully prepare your lines of approach. Know precisely what is the first word you are going to utter.

(1) You should not begin without a map. (2) Call for a rapid review of "Paul and Barnabas in Cyprus." (3) Trace the sail from Paphos to Perga. (4) Question on the change of expression—"Barnabas and Saul" to "Paul and his company." (5) What single incident is narrated as occurring at Perga? Why did John Mark forsake them? How did Paul look upon it? Of what was it the cause? Acts 15: 36–39. What did Jesus say? Luke 9: 62. How is Mark afterward spoken of by Paul? What can we learn from this change in Mark? How should we treat a brother overtaken in a fault? Gal. 6: 1. (6) Picture Paul and Barnabas journeying from Perga to Antioch in Pisidia. Describe, with map in hand, the two preachers of the gospel toiling up the defiles of the Taurus mountains. Here have the class turn to 2 Cor. 11 and read the twenty-sixth verse.

II. Your outline (for your own use) may be—

AT ANTIOCH
Toil. vs. 13–16.
Triumph. vs. 43, 44, 48, 49, 52.
Trial. vs. 45, 46, 47, 50, 51.

III. WORD PICTURES.

1. *The Toil Scene.*—What day of the week was it? Two men are walking along the narrow street in Antioch. They are the same we saw climbing up the mountain sides. Who are they? What are they trying to do? What is the great work of their lives? Rom. 10: 1, 14. Where are they going? They stop before a Jewish synagogue. Did you ever see such a synagogue? God had scattered the Jews throughout the world that they might get the Gentiles ready in some measure for the missionaries of the cross, headed by Paul. Paul and Barnabas enter. Who are present? There are a great many Jews, all men; some sitting on raised seats on the end toward Jerusalem. There are also quite a number of Gentiles

present, who had come to worship as the Jews (religious proselytes). Behind a lattice work, in a kind of gallery, are Jewish and Gentile women. For what purpose did Paul and Barnabas go into the Jewish synagogue? Why should the apostle of the Gentiles seek the Jews first? At one end of the synagogue is a chest, and in the centre of the end a pulpit. The ruler of the synagogue reads the prayers (the people standing), the psalms and the lessons from large parchment rolls. The ruler looks around. He sees two strangers. He invites them to give the *derash* or word of exhortation. Paul (always ready) promptly rises and preaches a sermon. See vs. 16–41. It tells much the same story as Stephen told. Acts 7 : 2–53. All the hours after service Paul and Barnabas are repeating the old, old story over and over again, and all the week they are laboring with the inquirers.

But what has all this scene to do with your scholars? It is an object-lesson on toiling for Christ, and all the Christians in your class ought to be workers for Christ.

a. God may use this lesson to call some boy or girl to be a foreign missionary. You might ask the question thus—Paul and Barnabas toiled thus for the salvation of the heathen; what are *you* going to do for them?

b. A superb lesson comes to every one to imitate Paul in being *ready* with God's word hidden in our heart and on our tongue's end, so that we may seize the opportunity, as Paul did.

2. *The Triumph Scene.*—Picture Paul and Barnabas surrounded with eager inquirers and joyous young converts. *Apply.*—If you toil you shall *reap*. How are *you* treating God's messengers?

3. *The Trial Scene.*—Picture Paul bearing opposition for the Jews, turning to the Gentiles, and finally driven out of Antioch.

Inspired apostles were opposed, how much more shall *we* be?

Sinners rejected the gospel spoken by Paul; shall we be dismayed if sinners reject the gospel spoken by *us?*

[See Illustrative Notes for other practical lessons to be enforced.]

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

BY MRS. G R. ALDEN—"PANSY."

The Scene.—A square representing a city named Antioch. A smaller square representing the inside of a church. Marks for an audience; one in different color for the preacher.

This simple blackboard work may be outlined, while the teacher calls upon those who have studied the lesson to explain to her what it means; to tell whether the congregation was small or large, to give the name of the preacher, etc.

Picture Illustration.—Study your botany or dictionary, if necessary, until you are able to make what shall represent a poisonous plant, with broad green leaves and bright red berries. Lead class, rather by questioning, than by actual telling, to describe the kind of fruit which grows on such a plant. What has it to do with the lesson? Suppose it represents something that grows in the human heart? (Outline a heart around the plant.) Some people in Paul's congregation had hearts in which this plant grew, filling them. "What does the lesson say that some of the Jews were filled with?"

When you have drawn out the word "ENVY" (which you will be able to do if you properly encourage your scholars to study), print it on the plant; then make shoots extending from the plant *outside* the heart into the outward life, and ask class what fruit in this instance came from the plant "ENVY."

A little care on your part will lead them to tell that the fruits of "CONTRADICTION" and "BLASPHEMY" appeared. Print these words on the shoots, while you lead your scholars to notice what truths the Jews were contradicting, and what blasphemy is. It will also appear, as the story of the persecution develops, that "CRUELTY" was another offshoot from the plant of "ENVY."

What was the effect on the Jews? Let it be made very plain, that they succeeded finally in driving away these ministers who had come to them with good news. *But* that they did not succeed in their attempt to crush the story of Jesus, for it was told to the Gentiles, who heard it gladly, and the golden text shows how the story spread. Bad men can hinder, but they cannot destroy God's work.

Practical Application.—Satan plants the same poisonous seed in hearts to-day, so that God's work will be hindered.

Story Illustration.—There was once a little boy whose heart was so full of envy because five of his classmates stood up in the church on Review Sabbath and recited all the golden texts of the Quarter, that he told everybody with whom he had a chance to talk, that they read the verses from their books instead of reciting from memory.

It was not true, but some believed it, and a great deal of sorrow was caused.

If the teacher has the hearts of her scholars,

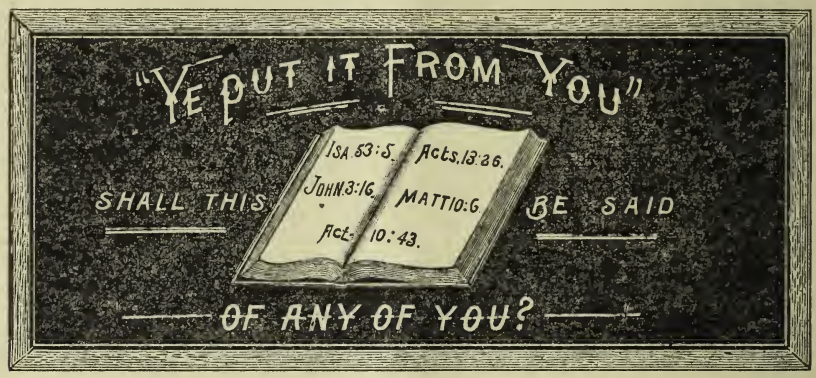
and at this point their fixed attention, she may be able to make a solemn closing application to this lesson by asking the children to shut their eyes for a moment and think whether the plant "ENVY" has lately been growing in their hearts. Then, after a moment spent thus, lead them to bow their heads in *silent* prayer, asking God, if it has begun to grow, to root it out.

I want to emphasize the word *silent*, because I would not encourage the sort of wholesale public confession that is sometimes drawn out in the primary class-room, and too often means nothing but fun to the children.

There are some scholars who might safely be called on to give an illustration of the growth of this sin in the heart, the teacher printing the word which the child thinks was its fruit on the poisonous plant. This exercise will help smaller ones to understand the ways in which they may be tempted.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

BY J. HOWARD SEAL.



SUGGESTIONS.—Let the open Bible, with the texts only, be exposed to view in introducing the lesson from the desk. (Cover the rest with paper.) Have these texts read by different classes, or if preferred, by the entire school in concert. Follow these by reading Acts 5: 20. Show how the wicked rulers put "the words of this life" from them; what the words of this life mean; how they rejected salvation through Jesus the crucified One, etc., and remove the paper covering the top line. Then remove the paper covering the question, "Shall this be said of any of you?" and make the application.

Directions for Coloring.—Top line, green shaded with pink; the Bible in white; texts in yellow; "Shall this be said," white shaded with red; "Of any of you," brown shaded with orange.

Lesson XI. **AT ICONIUM AND LYSTRA.** **June 10th, 1883.**

Acts 14: 1–18. Memorize vs. 15–18.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Speaking boldly in the Lord."—Acts 14: 3.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 14: 1–18.....*Man-worship Rebuked.*
T. Ps. 115: 1–18.....*Idol-worship Rebuked.*
W. Ex. 20: 1–17.....*The Worship of God Enjoined.*
Th. Jer. 10: 1–16.....*"A Doctrine of Vanities."*
F. Ps. 19: 1–14.....*His Handiwork.*
S. Col. 1: 1–19.....*Christ the Creator.*
S. Heb. 1: 1–14.....*Christ Worshiped as God.*

TOPIC.

Different Effects of the Gospel.

LESSON PLAN.

1. Enmity Aroused. vs. 1–6. **2. A Miracle Wrought.** vs. 7–10. **3. God Only to be Worshiped.** vs. 11–18.

Time.—A. D. 46. **Places.**—Iconium and Lystra.

Catechism.—Q. 22. *How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man?* A. Christ, the Son of God, became man by taking to himself a true body and a reasonable soul; being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the virgin Mary, and born of her, yet without sin.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal 829: "Praise to God, immortal praise." Other hymns, 344, 621, 645, 812.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—Paul and Barnabas were driven away from Antioch by the persecution there, as we learned in our last lesson, and went to Iconium. Our present lesson tells of their work there, amid much opposition, yet with great success. At length they were compelled to flee to avoid the storm of persecution. Then they went to Lystra, and preached there and in other small towns.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

1 And it came to pass in I-co'ni-um, that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed. [Acts 13: 14.]

2 But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gen'tiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren.

3 Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands. [Mark 16: 20; Heb. 2: 4.]

4 But the multitude of the city was divided; and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles.

5 And when there was an assault made both of the Gen'tiles, and also of the Jews with their rulers, to use *them* despitefully, and to stone them, [2 Tim. 2: 11.]

6 They were ware of *it*, and fled unto Lys'tra and Der'be, cities of Ly-ca-o'ni-a, and unto the region that lieth round about: [Matt. 10: 23.]

7 And there they preached the gospel.

8 ¶ And there sat a certain man at Lys'tra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked: [Acts 3: 2.]

9 The same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed, [Matt. 8: 10; 9: 28, 29.]

10 Said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked. [Isa. 35: 6; Acts 3: 8.]

11 And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Ly-ca-o'ni-a, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. [Acts 8: 10; 28: 6.]

12 And they called Bar'na-bas, Ju'pi-ter; and Paul, Mer-cu'ri-us, because he was the chief speaker.

13 Then the priest of Ju'pi-ter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people. [Dan. 2: 46.]

14 *Which* when the apostles, Bar'na-bas and Paul, heard *of*, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, [Matt. 26: 65.]

15 And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: [Jas. 5: 17; Rev. 19: 10.]

16 Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. [Acts 17: 30.]

17 Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness. [Rom. 1: 20; Ps. 19: 1; 65: 10; Matt. 5: 45.]

18 And with these sayings scarce restrained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them.

REVISED TEXT.

1 And it came to pass in Iconium, that they
entered together into the synagogue of the
Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude
2 both of Jews and of Greeks believed. But
the Jews that were disobedient stirred up the
souls of the Gentiles, and made them evil
3 affected against the brethren. Long time
therefore they tarried *there* speaking boldly
in the Lord, which bare witness unto the
word of his grace, granting signs and won-
4 ders to be done by their hands. But the
multitude of the city was divided; and part
held with the Jews, and part with the
5 apostles. And when there was made an
onset both of the Gentiles and of the Jews
with their rulers, to entreat them shamefully,
6 and to stone them, they became aware of it,
and fled unto the cities of Lycaonia, Lystra
and Derbe, and the region round about:
7 and there they preached the gospel.
8 And at Lystra there sat a certain man, im-
potent in his feet, a cripple from his mother's
9 womb, who never had walked. The same
heard Paul speaking: who, fastening his
eyes upon him, and seeing that he had faith
10 to be made whole, said with a loud voice,
Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped
11 up and walked. And when the multitudes
saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their
voice, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The
gods are come down to us in the likeness of
12 men. And they called Barnabas, Jupiter;
and Paul, Mercury, because he was the chief
13 speaker. And the priest of Jupiter whose
temple was before the city, brought oxen and
garlands unto the gates, and would have
14 done sacrifice with the multitudes. But
when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard
of it, they rent their garments, and sprang
15 forth among the multitude, crying out and
saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We
also are men of like passions with you, and
bring you good tidings, that ye should turn
from these vain things unto the living God,
who made the heaven and the earth and the
16 sea, and all that in them is: who in the
generations gone by suffered all the nations
17 to walk in their own ways. And yet he left
not himself without witness, in that he did
good, and gave you from heaven rains and
fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food
18 and gladness. And with these sayings scarce

restrained they the multitudes from doing sacrifice unto them.

1 *Iconium.* An important city at that time. Later it became famous as the capital of the Seljukan Turks. It is rich in remains of Moslem architecture, with but few relics of Greek or Roman workmanship, except some stones and fragments of sculpture, bearing inscriptions, which have been built into the walls. Its present population is estimated at 20,000 to 30,000. *Entered together.* Paul and Barnabas. They were not daunted by their ill success at Antioch. Although at Antioch they had been driven away by the Jews, they here first offered to them the gospel, showing that their hearts still yearned for their own people. *Jews and Greeks.* These Greeks must have been "proselytes of the gate," who attended the Jewish services and were attached in some sense to the Jewish religion, though not circumcised.

2 *The unbelieving Jews.* See Revised Version. Unbelief is disobedience. Belief is a duty. It should be noticed that in nearly every case of persecution mentioned in the Acts the Jews were the instigators. *Evil affected.* Hostile, malignant. They may have done this by exciting political prejudice against them as preachers of another kingdom (chap. 16: 20, 21); or the attack may have been made upon the character of the missionaries.

3 *Long time.* Comparatively so, probably several months. "*Therefore*" refers back to vs. 1, 2; the success of the gospel, and also the necessity of living down the aspersions made against their characters led to their prolonged stay. *In the Lord.* In the name of the Lord, or in dependence on the Lord. Their boldness resulted from this confidence in God. *Which gave . . . signs.* While they spake boldly, God also wrought with them, giving them power.

5 *An assault.* Not an open attack, but a strong movement or excitement which would soon have resulted in an assault had not the preachers withdrawn. *To use them despitefully.* They intended to use them brutally and to stone them, and the missionaries only escaped this treatment by fleeing.

6 *Ware of it.* They were probably informed of the evil purpose by their friends, as at Damascus (chap. 9: 24), and when they knew of it they fled, as the Master had directed. Matt. 10: 23. Their flight was not prompted by fear but by prudence. They did not run away to hide, but went elsewhere to preach Christ. *Lystra and Derbe.* The site of these towns cannot be positively identified, although it is supposed that the ruins of Lystra have been discovered at the foot of a volcanic mountain called Kara Dagh, or the Black Mountain, about thirty miles south of Iconium. Paul visited it subsequently. It was the home of Timothy. Chap. 16: 1. Derbe was the home of Gaius (20: 4), but nothing is known of the place. Even its position is not certainly identified. The two towns were probably close together, as they are named in the same connection.

8 *There sat a certain man.* Paul was preaching at the time probably in the market-place, as there seems to have been no synagogue at Lystra. This man was listening to Paul's words, and was impressed by them. He may have been a beggar. *Who never had walked.* His disease was of a hopeless character.

9 *Heard Paul speak.* The word implies that he was intently listening and deeply interested in what Paul was saying. *Stedfastly beholding him.* Paul's attention was drawn to him by his earnest manner. *That he had faith.* There was something in his face that indicated to the apostle his acceptance of Christ and his belief in him. *To be healed.* The Revised Version renders this *To be made whole;* in the margin, *To be saved.* If the latter rendering is correct, the meaning is that Paul saw in the cripple a spiritual acceptance of Christ as his Saviour. This prepared him to receive healing also.

10 *With a loud voice.* To attract the attention of the cripple, and also to call the attention of the bystanders to the cure he was about to perform. *Stand upright.* Paul here makes no reference to the name of Christ, as Peter did (chap. 3: 6); but the mere absence of the formula in the record does not prove that it was not used. Or, if it was not used, it certainly was implied. Or, is it possible that the apostle's omission of the reference to the real Healer led to the mistake of the people, in attributing to the missionaries themselves the wonderful cure? *Leaped and walked.* He sprang up immediately, showing that he was healed; then his *walking* showed that the cure was complete and permanent.

This miracle was similar to that wrought at the beautiful gate, and yet different from it in several regards. In that case the lame man asked only for alms and expected nothing else, even after Peter had spoken to him; here the cripple was listening to Paul, and faith had already sprung up in his heart. In that case, Peter took the lame man by the hand and lifted him up; here the cripple leaped up and walked without any aid.

11 *When the people saw.* The miracle made a profound impression on them. *The speech of Lycaonia.* Possibly a mixture of Greek and

Syriac. Paul had spoken thus far in Greek, which the people probably understood; but when they became excited they spoke in their own native dialect, which Paul and Barnabas did not understand. If the apostles had understood what the people were saying they would certainly have checked them at once. *The gods are come down.* When we understand the religious beliefs prevalent in this region, this conclusion appears very natural. They held that the gods did come down to earth in human form. Ovid tells the story of a visit paid in this very region, by these same deities, to two poor peasants, Baucis and Philemon, whose kindly welcome they rewarded by changing their lowly hut into a proud temple.* It is not surprising, therefore, that these Lycaonians, when they saw such a wonderful work wrought by these two men, should at once conclude that they were gods come to them in human form. *Jupiter . . . Mercury.* In their mythology, Jupiter was the chief of all the gods. Mercury was the messenger of the gods, and the god of eloquence. He was also the usual attendant of Jupiter. The reason that Paul was supposed to be Mercury was because he was the leading speaker. Not content with this simple reason, here so plainly given, many writers have inferred from this incident that Paul must have been a little man, and that Barnabas must have been old and venerable in his aspect. It is unfortunate for this theory that Mercury (Hermes) was represented as vigorous and active. Whatever the apostle's bodily appearance was, the only reason for his identification here as Mercury was his prominence as a speaker.

13 *The priest of Jupiter.* There was a temple of Jupiter outside the city. *Oxen and garlands.* The oxen to offer in sacrifice; the garlands to decorate both the sacrifices and the priests, or perhaps the apostles themselves. *Would have done sacrifice.* That is, to Paul and Barnabas. *The gates.* Of the house at which they were staying.

14 *The apostles.* Referring to both Paul and Barnabas, though the latter was not, strictly speaking, an apostle. *Rent their clothes.* In token of their horror or grief at the terrible mistake the people were making in proposing to worship them as gods. *Ran in among the people.* Revised Version: *Sprang forth.* That is, rushed out of the house in which they were lodging, and among the people, to put a stop immediately to the proposed sacrifice.

15 *Of like passions.* Mortals like yourselves, only men. *We . . . preach unto you.* Instead of accepting worship at your hands, we come to proclaim to you the good news of a true and living God, and to beseech you to turn from these vain idols to worship and serve him. *These vanities.* These gods which are only vanities, with no power to help. The speaker may have pointed to the temple of Jupiter as he spoke. *God, which made heaven and earth.* As showing his power, in contrast with the vain gods which they worshiped.

16 *In times past suffered.* Permitted or allowed. *All nations.* All Gentiles or heathen nations. *In their own ways.* Not giving them the instructions, nor imposing on them the restraints of a revealed law, such as he had given to his own people.

17 *Left not himself without witness.* While the Gentiles were without a written law, God had given them many proofs of his existence and his goodness in his providence. *Did good.* Through nature, as shown in the following words. *Rain.* In that country where rain fell so rarely, and where there was so much suffering for want of it, this allusion to it as a special token of God's goodness was peculiarly appropriate.

18 *With these sayings.* Probably only the substance of his address is given. *Scarce restrained.* So determined were they to sacrifice to them.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

They . . . so spake that a great multitude . . . believed. A great secret lies in this verse, which every earnest teacher should try to find out. What is the meaning of "so?" How did these men "so speak" as to convince and lead to Christ this multitude of souls? Was it their eloquent manner, or was it something in their matter that won the people's hearts and drew them to the Saviour? We would all like to know, for who does not with all his heart desire to be a winner of souls? Who does not want to learn the art of speaking in such a way as to lead men to believe? Many of us go on talking for years, and yet none or almost none are persuaded by our words to accept Christ. What is the trouble? Is it some defect in our elocution? Would it remedy the defect if we were to take lessons in oratory? Or is the fault in our language, and would a few lessons in English grammar and rhetoric make us successful? Or may it be that the trouble lies deeper, in our own hearts? Is it not worth while, when we are at this verse, to try to find out just what the trouble is? How did Paul so speak that

*See Dryden's translation of Ovid's Metamorphoses. Book viii.

multitudes believed? We know that it was not by the mere graces of rhetoric that he had such power over his audiences, for he afterward said that he did not preach "with excellency of speech," and "that his speech was not with enticing words of man's wisdom." We know also that the theme of his preaching was "Christ and him crucified." We know also that his preaching was "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." We know, too, that he was an intensely earnest man, full of love for souls. These are suggestions enough as to the meaning of "so" in this verse. Now it is our part to try to learn a lesson in so presenting the truth of Christ as to win souls thereby.

Long time therefore they tarried there speaking boldly in the Lord. Opposition did not drive them away from their work. Indeed, one of the reasons why they tarried so long was because they were opposed. We must not be easily discouraged by difficulties. It is probable that evil things, false things, were said of the preachers by their enemies; but instead of resenting them or trying by arguments to disprove them, they simply went on with their work all the more earnestly, showing in their lives the falsity of the aspersions cast upon them by evil men. This is usually the true course for Christians to follow—not to deny the false things said of them by enemies, but to go on in the path of duty, and leave to God the vindication of their names and character.

The multitude of the city was divided. The gospel always divides men, setting them in two distinct parties—those who believe, and those who believe not. This division will continue in the other world. At the great day of Christ's coming again all the race will be divided into two classes—one to stand on the King's right hand and the other on his left. Through eternity this same separation will continue. And the separating line will be the same as that which divided the people in this city; the two classes will be—those who believe and those who believe not.

They . . . fled. They were not cowards; they were ready to die for the cause of Christ if it was necessary. They did not run away to hide; they only went elsewhere to preach the same gospel. Christ's command was that when they were persecuted in one city they should flee to another. It is cowardice when one's mouth is shut by the taunts and threats of scoffers; yet it may often be our duty to turn away from scoffers and cease to speak to them the words of life while we turn to others with our message. God does not want us to throw our lives away where nothing can be gained by the sacrifice.

They rent their garments, crying . . . We also are men of like passions with you. They were horrified at the thought of receiving even from heathen men any part of that honor and worship which belong to God alone. Contrast the conduct of Herod, who accepted the homage of the people when they cried, "It is the voice of a god, and not of a man."

Ye should turn from these vain things. Idols are vain things. They have no power to give help. We all know this. We would not turn to a marble statue of Jupiter if we were in trouble; we know that it could give us no help. But there are idols that are not carved into statues. A great many people worship idols in these modern days. Wealth, power, pleasure, honor, self, are idols, and are just as really vanities as were these which Paul condemned. When we are in need, in trouble, in sorrow, in the depths of remorse, in the presence of death, what power have any of these to give us comfort or help or deliverance? There is only one "living God" who can aid us in any of the great needs of life. If we rest on anything but God we shall find ourselves in terrible plight when our trust is swept away from us and we have nothing left to which to cling.

He left not himself without witness. So even the heathen are "without excuse." See Rom. 1: 20. If that be so, what excuse can we have who have the gospel in all its fullness and simplicity? When we think of it it is an awful thing to have the Bible and the Church. We glory in our privileges as a Christian nation, with all the light of the word of God streaming about us; let us beware lest our very light make terrible darkness for us in the world that comes after this. Dr. Wm. M. Taylor says: "You may buy a New Testament for five cents; yet it may be to you at last the most costly possession you ever had; for Michael Bruce was right when, shortly before his death, he wrote these lines in the fly-leaf of his copy of the Scriptures:

"'Tis very vain in me to boast
How small a price this Bible cost;
The day of judgment will make clear
'Twas very cheap or very dear.'"

LESSON POINTS.

1. The highest of arts is to speak the gospel so that those who hear shall believe. v. 1.

2. Unbelief is disobedience. v. 2. Compare the two versions.

3. When we are very earnest in working for Christ we must not be surprised if enemies try to injure our name. v. 2.

4. The best answer to false aspersions is continued faithfulness and earnestness. v. 3.

5. The gospel always divides those who hear it; how is it in your class? v. 4.

6. When we are driven from one place or one effort, we should not give up, but go to another. v. 6.

7. When we see evidence of faith in any soul we should seize the opportunity to lead the soul at once to decision and action. v. 9.

8. All idols of whatever kind are vanities, and can do nothing for those who trust in them. v. 15.

9. If even the heathen are without excuse, what excuse can we give who have the gospel. v. 17.

10. We should see the goodness of God as shown in the gifts and blessings of daily providence. v. 17.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

Introduce this lesson by questions on the cause of the departure of Paul and Barnabas from Antioch. What successes attended their labors there? What opposition met the apostles in Antioch? What spirit filled their enemies? v. 45. Have v. 50 read. What drove Paul and Barnabas from Iconium? From Lystra? What first scattered the Jerusalem church and sent the disciples everywhere preaching the word? Acts 8: 4, 5. What occasioned the first foreign mission labors? Acts 11: 19, 20. Show that the fires of persecution have been the beacon lights of Christianity's progress?

Outline the lesson simply by *the places*—at Iconium, at Lystra.

I. AT ICONIUM.

Bring out by running questions the events of the lesson. What points contain the most practical bearings for your particular scholars? Apply *to Christians in your class*. How had Paul and Barnabas been treated at Antioch by the Jews? To what place did they go in Iconium? How did they show their love for the souls of their countrymen? How did they show courage and perseverance? What mean the words, "So spake?" What kind of a manner and spirit had they? Why, if God's Holy Spirit alone can convert souls, is it necessary for Christ's workers to "*so speak?*" What beside the gospel *truth* is necessary? To speak "the truth as it is in Jesus," truly; "in love;" "in the Spirit;" in the demonstration of the Spirit and with power;" "in meekness instructing those who oppose themselves."

Dear teacher, are you so cultivating the simplicity of Christ, his meekness and gentleness, his reverence and love, that you "so speak" that your scholars believe?

What is meant by the phrase "in the Lord?" "Trusting in him," "abiding in him," "deriving all strength, grace and authority from him."

"Boldly." What means this? Courageously, freely, frankly. Bring out all the grandeur of their courage at this time, as displayed in the face of danger. Refer to Jesus—his lowliness of heart; his sublime manliness and courage. Show how Christ really is here carrying on his work; "the Lord gave testimony to the word of his grace."

Another retreat.—The Parthians fought best while in retreat. Fabius Maximus wearied out the Carthaginian Hannibal by his masterly retreats. So at a certain crisis of our revolution, Washington pursued the Fabian policy. So Paul and Barnabas, "persecuted in one city, fled to another." What command of our Saviour did they thus obey? How was such a flight submission to God's providence?

II. AT LYSTRA.

Master the geographical and mythological references to ancient sacrifices, and the traditions of the appearance of Jupiter and Mercury in these very regions. But far more interesting and important will be *the Parable of Conversion*, given in the healing of the cripple at Lystra. Bring out and apply the points of analogy. His helpless *life-long* weakness; his hearing the gospel; his consequent faith to be healed; his obedience to Paul's word. Here is an application suited to any non-Christian scholar who yet desires to come to Christ. At Christ's command let him attempt to believe, to pray, to rise. As he strives, God's power will enable him to come. But there is one kind of scholar yet untouched. It is the careless rejecter or neglecter. Here is the truth for him in *Paul's Speech*. vs. 15–17.

The cripple is going down the streets of Lystra leaping and walking. Who cured him? "It must have been the gods," some one says. "It *was* the gods," spreads far and wide. "We have not worshiped Jupiter in vain," they shout. "Where are they?" "They have been here before; now they have returned." Crowds gather. They talk in Lycaonian language. There is great excitement. There comes the priest; there are the oxen garlanded with flowers. There are Paul and Barnabas. Barnabas they think is Jupiter, because he is large and of a dignified and benign countenance. Paul must be Mercury, for he is so eloquent. Paul and Barnabas understand at last that the ignorant idolaters are really going to worship them. They tear their garments in distress. They rush in among the crowd; they would have all glory to be given "to the Lord of hosts." A lesson for all preachers, superintendents and teachers not to desire undue affection and honor from

others, but to shun the world's idolatrous flattery and garlands.

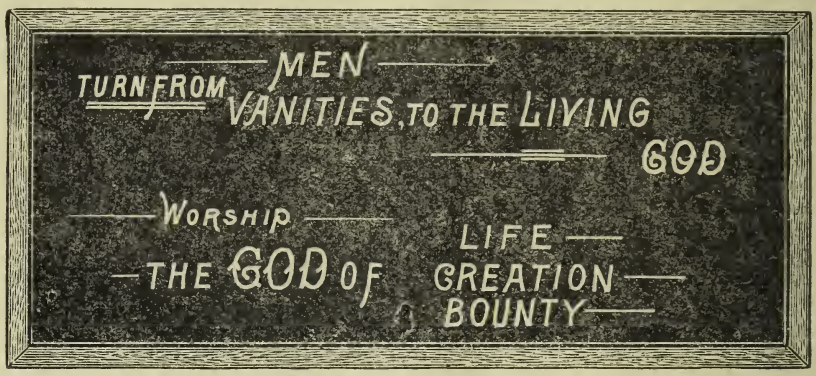
Then Paul speaks. His address points to God. He calls on them to turn from these vanities to God, for he is the Creator and the Giver of all good.

Here the great lesson is that we are to give to God the honor for the things he does through us, and not claim or accept it for ourselves.

Lesson for Sabbath, June 17th, 1883:

1. Draw a map of Paul's first missionary journey.
2. List of facts in Paul's life up to the close of his first missionary journey.
3. The office of ruling elder.
4. The blessings which flow from zealous prosecution of foreign missions.
5. The way of tribulation.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



SUGGESTIONS.—Driven from Iconium by the unbelieving Jews and such of the Gentiles as these enemies could influence, Paul and Barnabas fled unto Lystra. There they healed an impotent man, which so aroused the admiration of the people and their priests that they attempted to do sacrifice unto them. The lesson is to show how Barnabas and Paul sought to direct attention from themselves to the living God, by whose power the miracle was performed, and the design of the blackboard is to impress this lesson. It is needful in this day, when Christian ministers and laymen are tendered the honor and glory which belong to God, whose instruments only they are. It would be well if *all* such would *always* do as Barnabas and Paul did, seek to turn *admirers* from men and vanities to the living God, and urge them to worship him, the God of life, of creation and of bounty. May God keep us from pride as he gives us success in our work for him, and make us humble, then we shall have real power.

Directions for Coloring.—"Turn from men," "vanities," white; "To the living God," red shaded with yellow; "Worship," white; "The God of," red shaded with yellow; "Life," orange; "Creation," green; "Bounty," light blue, all shaded lightly with pink.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The Teacher in her Class.—This line enclosed one of the cities to which Paul and Barnabas went. It commences with "I." Who can give its name? This square is to stand for a church. Why do I make a great many marks in it? (Draw out the idea of a multitude.) What word shall I print here to stand for a great many of them, something which they did that was right? Print "Believed."

I will make marks outside the church, because people all around were talking about the things that these two men were preaching. Was there any difference in these people? See, I am drawing a mark right through the city; a crooked mark, it winds in and out among the people. What does it show? (Draw out the fact that the multitude was divided; part held with the Jews and part with the apostles.)

Do you know I think that is the way it is in Sunday-school, right in this class. There is a line drawn that divides my scholars. Part of them love and obey Jesus, and part do not. We cannot see the line, but God can. Sometimes we can tell by the way the children act on which side they belong, but God does not have to wait for their acts.

Tell why the apostles left Iconium. Here is an outline for another place commencing with "L." What is the name? Here is a little crooked mark. It represents a man sitting

down. What can you tell me about him? Draw out the entire story, erasing the crooked mark as the cure is mentioned, and make it straight. Do you know what the people thought then? Think what an excitement there must have been. How the crowds gathered in the streets; how eager they were for the sight of these whom they thought were gods. (Picture the bringing of the oxen, the garlands, etc.)

Now Paul and Barnabas have only to keep quiet and they will be honored more than men ever were before. The people will bow down and worship them. They can have everything just as they wish. Do they keep quiet?

Let class describe the eager way in which they hastened to prevent the sacrifice and assure the people that they are only men, and that there is but one God. Bold, brave men are they.

Special Point.—There are three words in the golden text that need emphasizing—*in the Lord.* Little children are often bold in speaking what should not be spoken; bold in acting what were better left undone. They need to have carefully explained to them that true courage is that which does and says what the Lord will approve. From all of which I should deduce the special theme, *true courage* or "boldness," as contrasted with false.

Illustration.—Three little boys looked down at a swift rushing stream, having only a log on which to cross it. "Come on," says one, "I'm not afraid." That was not the truth. He was afraid that the others would laugh at him and call him a coward. "No," said another; "my mother said I must not cross, and I'm not going to." He was a bold, brave boy, speaking in a way to please the Lord.

The thought of humility is also strongly taught in the lesson, but as it has been taught in previous lessons I prefer the thought of Christian courage.

Teachers who watch their scholars will have no difficulty in finding illustrations on this point to fit their needs.

Lesson XII. END OF FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY. June 17th, 1883.

Acts 14 : 19–28. Memorize vs. 21–23.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—Matt. 28 : 19.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 14 : 19–28.....*The Journey Ended.*
T. Matt. 28 : 11–20 .....*The Apostolic Commission.*
W. Matt. 10 : 16–26 .....*Persecutions Predicted.*
Th. 2 Cor. 11 : 16–30.....*"Once was I Stoned."*
F. 1 Pet. 3 : 8–18.....*Suffering for Righteousness'*
S. 2 Tim. 3 : 1–12 .....*Endured with Joy.* [*Sake.*
S. 2 Tim. 4 : 1–8 .....*The Final Reward.*

TOPIC.

The New Converts Instructed.

LESSON PLAN.

1. Paul Stoned. vs. 19, 20. **2. The Disciples Confirmed.** vs. 21–23. **3. The Journey Ended.** vs. 24–28.

Time.—A. D. 46. **Places.**—From Derbe to Antioch in Syria.

Catechism.—Q. 23. *What offices doth Christ execute as our Redeemer?* A. Christ, as our Redeemer, executeth the offices of a prophet, of a priest and of a king, both in his estate of humiliation and exaltation.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 496: "Lord, I hear of showers of blessings." Other hymns, 494, 609, 632, 636.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—The last lesson described the healing of the lame man and the great excitement produced among the people of Lystra by the miracle, resulting in an attempt to offer sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas as divine persons. In this lesson we see how fickle were the feelings which swayed the multitude, for throwing away the garlands they had brought they now take up stones to stone the missionaries.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

19 ¶ And there came thither *certain* Jews from An'ti-och and I-co'ni-um, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew *him* out of the city, supposing he had been dead. [2 Cor. 11 : 25; 2 Tim. 3 : 11.]

20 Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Bar'na-bas to Der'be.

21 And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lys'tra, and *to* I-co'ni-um, and An'ti-och, [Matt. 28 : 19.]

22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, *and* exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. [Acts 11 : 23; 13 : 43.]

23 And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed. [Titus 1: 5.]

24 And after they had passed throughout Pi-sid'i-a, they came to Pam-phyl'i-a.

25 And when they had preached the word in Per'ga, they went down into At-ta-li'a:

26 And thence sailed to An'ti-och, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled. [Acts 13: 1; 15: 40.]

27 And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gen'tiles. [Acts 15: 4-12; 1 Cor. 16: 9; Col. 4: 3; Rev. 3: 8.]

28 And there they abode long time with the disciples.

REVISED TEXT.

19 But there came Jews thither from Antioch
and Iconium: and having persuaded the
multitudes, they stoned Paul, and dragged
him out of the city, supposing that he was
20 dead. But as the disciples stood round
about him, he rose up, and entered into the
city: and on the morrow he went forth with
21 Barnabas to Derbe. And when they had
preached the gospel to that city, and had
made many disciples, they returned to
Lystra, and to Iconium, and to Antioch,
22 confirming the souls of the disciples, exhort-
ing them to continue in the faith, and that
through many tribulations we must enter into
23 the kingdom of God. And when they had
appointed for them elders in every church,
and had prayed with fasting, they com-
mended them to the Lord, on whom they
24 had believed. And they passed through
25 Pisidia, and came to Pamphylia. And when
they had spoken the word in Perga, they
26 went down to Attalia; and thence they sailed
to Antioch, from whence they had been com-
mitted to the grace of God for the work
27 which they had fulfilled. And when they
were come, and had gathered the church to-
gether, they rehearsed all things that God
had done with them, and how that he had
opened a door of faith unto the Gentiles.
28 And they tarried no little time with the dis-
ciples.

19 *Jews from Antioch* [in Pisidia] *and Iconium.* From both these places Paul and Barnabas had been expelled by the same spirit which now followed them. See chaps. 13: 50; 14: 5. The Jews were enraged against the apostles, because they saw them disregarding the old Jewish lines and offering the gospel to the Gentiles. When they heard of their success at Lystra they came determined to break up their work there. *Persuaded the people.* Probably by telling them that the apostles had wrought this miracle through some evil power, and not as the Lystrians had supposed through divine power. See Matt. 12: 24. The Lycaonians were notoriously fickle and faithless, and we need not be surprised to see here how quickly they throw away the garlands and bring stones. For a parallel to this fickleness, see chap. 28: 4, 6. *Stoned Paul.* At Iconium he had only escaped stoning by fleeing; at Lystra he was actually stoned. See 2 Cor. 11: 25, where the reference is doubtless to this experience. Barnabas was not stoned, Paul being regarded as the chief offender, as he was the evident leader. *Drew him out of the city.* The stoning had been done in the city, and when they thought him dead they dragged his body outside the gates and left it there as unworthy of burial.

20 *As the disciples stood round about him.* These disciples were those who had been converted by Paul's preaching since his arrival there; among them was probably Timothy, who had heard of Christ from the apostle's lips, and from this time became his lifelong friend and companion. When the brutal crowd had left the bruised body lying outside the city, these new friends gathered around it, mourning over the death of their teacher, and while they probably were considering how they might bury the corpse, evidences of returning life appeared and soon the apostle arose. It is generally supposed that his restoration was miraculous. He must have been terribly bruised by the brutal stoning and by being dragged over the rough ground; yet he seems to have been able at once to move about, and the following day to travel. *Next day he departed.* He may have spent the night at the house of Eunice and Lois (2 Tim. 1: 5), and from this time his friendship with this family probably dated.

21 *Had taught many.* Revised Version: *Made many disciples.* The work in Derbe was successful, and was not met by opposition as in the other cities they had visited. *Returned . . . confirming.* It required great courage to go back to places in which they had suffered so much; but they were ready to endure any peril in order to do their work faithfully. These words indirectly show us how great a measure of success they had achieved in those cities in spite of the opposition they had encountered, for they evidently found considerable bodies of believers in each place when they returned. The object in this second visit was, apparently, not to preach publicly as before, to make new disciples, but to confirm and strengthen those who had already accepted Christ. It is probable that their visits to these cities were made in secret, they perhaps entering in disguise and meeting the disciples by night.

22 *That we must through much tribulation.* The disciples may have been in danger of dis-

couragement when they saw how their teachers had suffered in the cause of Christ; or they may themselves have suffered from the same influence, and have been in danger of losing courage. The apostles assured them that they must expect just such treatment on their way into the kingdom of God.

23 *Ordained them elders.* Revised Version: *Appointed.* On the officers of the apostolic churches, see an editorial article in this number. *Prayed with fasting.* Referring to the services attendant upon the ordination of the elders. It seems probable that the verse describes what we now understand by the organization of churches, or its equivalent. *Commended them to the Lord.* To Christ, as the head of the Church. Compare chap. 20: 32, in which a similar commendation is described. The words imply that they committed these churches, as something very precious and dear, into the keeping of Christ, in whom they had the most perfect confidence.

24 *Pisidia . . . Pamphylia.* Provinces in Asia Minor.

25 *Perga.* At their first arrival from Cyprus (chap. 13: 13) they had passed through Perga, but had not stayed to preach there. It was at Perga that Mark left them. Now they returned there and preached. *Attalia.* A town on the coast, about sixteen miles south-west of Perga, at the mouth of the river Catarrhactes. It is now known as Attalia, and is quite an important town, with a population of 8,000. It was famous in the time of the Crusades. Here it was that "King Louis of France, after his disastrous march through Anatolia, embarked with his knights and nobles for Antioch, leaving the plebeian crowd of infantry to perish at the foot of the Pamphylian hills." (A. D. 1148.)

26 *Antioch:* In Syria, thus returning to the point whence they had set out.

27 *They . . . gathered the church together.* They had been sent out by this congregation, and now they assemble them to make report to them of all that they had accomplished and experienced. *Opened the door of faith.* Had given access to the Gentiles and success in preaching to them; or had opened the door to the Gentiles themselves, that they might enter into God's kingdom—a door of *faith*, without requiring them to pass through the old gate of circumcision. Paul often uses this figure of a door. See 1 Cor. 16: 9; 2 Cor. 2: 12; Col. 4: 3.

28 *There they abode long time.* Revised Version: *No little time.* The length of time cannot be fixed; it is generally supposed that they tarried there more than a year.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

There came Jews thither from Antioch and Iconium: and . . . persuaded the multitudes. These Jews had driven the evangelists away from their own cities, but, not content with this, they followed them to the other towns and tried to raise enmity against them there. We do not know what they said about the missionaries to cause such a storm, and so suddenly to change the feelings of the people. It may be they suggested that they had wrought the miracle of healing through the agency of Satan. Whatever they did their success shows how easy it is to destroy the influence of a good man by maligning him and speaking against him. Many a minister's usefulness has been destroyed for all his after life by the malicious tongues of enemies. And others besides ministers have suffered in the same way. An evil tongue has an almost unlimited power for harm. It is a terrible thing to defame a good man or woman and thus destroy the work of a life. We ought to be exceedingly careful how we speak of others.

They stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city. Only a little while ago they were bringing garlands and sacrifices to worship him as a god; now they are hurling stones at him to kill him. That is all the favor of such people is really worth. There is a good deal of the same kind of friendship in every community. Many persons are very enthusiastic in their devotion to a leader until some one comes and talks against him, when they veer around at once and become his violent enemies. Their friendship really has no foundation. It is only a selfish impulse. True friendship rests on character, and is constant and firm, not affected by what others say of our friend. When enemies malign him we cleave all the more closely to him, and stand all the more loyally by him, if our friendship is sincere. One of the lessons to learn here is not to rely too much on the admiration of professed friends when we are on the wave of popularity, for the garlands may soon change to stones; any evil influence may in a day change the whole drift of sentiment. Another lesson to teach here is the baseness of such fickle friendship as this. When we are friends, let us be loyal through all changes of sentiment. We had better not try to have too many friends, but when we have made our choice let us be true to them unto the end.

They stoned Paul. There seemed a kind of poetic justice in this experience of Paul's after all. It was not so long before this that Paul

himself was actively engaged in the stoning of Stephen at Jerusalem. He must have remembered this when the stones were crashing into his flesh. It very often happens that the echo of men's past evil deeds comes back to them even after their conversion. "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." Even the divine forgiveness does not annul this law which runs through life.

The disciples stood round about him. These were his true friends, and it was because they had been converted to Christ. They had not long known Paul, but now when all the multitude had turned against him they clung to him and would not forsake him. How nobly this little group, standing around the apparently lifeless body of the apostle, contrasts with the fickle crowd! It must have been dangerous at that time to profess friendship for the apostle, but these disciples did not think of that. Study this as a picture of true friendship, the kind that the love of Christ in the heart gives. It is constant, self-forgetful, tender, sympathetic, ready for any service or sacrifice.

On the morrow he went . . . to Derbe, and . . . preached the gospel to that city. What unquenchable zeal in the service of Christ! One day stoned and left for dead on the outskirts of Lystra; the next off again for another field, and soon preaching, as before, the same blessed gospel! Nothing could quench the ardor of that glorious heart. The love of Christ was in Paul a fire that nothing could put out. No persecution could discourage him or dampen his zeal. Crushed to the earth to-day he would to-morrow rise again and be at work with all his old energy. His example ought to incite us even at this great distance to sublimer heroism in the cause of Christ.

They returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch. Another illustration of the courage of these evangelists. Another illustration, also, of their great love for souls. They had been driven away from these towns but a little while since, yet now when duty to the young converts they had left there called for their return, they did not hesitate for a moment, but went back at once. When duty calls us we should never ask whether it is safe for us to go, but should go right forward, trusting our protection to God.

Confirming the souls of the disciples and exhorting them to continue in the faith. They did not try at this time to make new converts; their sole mission was to build up in faith and holiness those who had already been converted. This was not a mere rite of "confirmation," such as is practiced in the Episcopal Church, for these were disciples already whom they confirmed. The confirmation which is here described was performed by instructing them in the truths of the gospel. The evangelists taught these new converts more fully the doctrines of Christ, and sought to strengthen their faith and lead them to a more earnest consecration of themselves to the service of God. This is a very important point in this history, and one which we should not lightly pass over. Conversion is not all; it is really only the beginning. There should be growth and progress; there should be better life and more intense earnestness, as the days and years pass on. There is nothing that more needs to be done in the case of young Christians than their frequent confirmation, until they are strong and ready for active service for the Master.

Through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God. If any one expects to reach heaven by a flower-lined pathway, he will soon find that he has not understood the true nature of the Christian life. To miss all hardship and get on without trial and conflict, is to miss also all that is really noble and worth living for. Real strength and grandeur of character can be gotten only in struggle, and by victories over obstacles and difficulties. The best things in any life can be brought out only through struggle. In the epistles to the seven churches the blessings promised are all for those who "overcome." Christ himself never told men that it would be easy to follow him; he said they must "count the cost," that "in the world they should have tribulation." Those who would enter the Christian life must prepare for hardship and conflict, for trial *must be* undergone if we would reach noble life. There is one word here, however, which we must not overlook—the word "through." There are tribulations, but we are going through them, and beyond them there is the "kingdom of God." There are tribulations, but they will not last forever. Then, when we get through the trials and enter the kingdom, we shall forget the conflicts and strifes in the blessedness of the heavenly joy. This "hope set before us," beyond the line of struggle, should inspire us with patience and courage for any suffering and self-denial.

When they had appointed for them elders in every church. They believed in order. They did not leave the companies of believers in these places without any organization, but saw that they had officers and were in condition for active work. Every church needs its proper officers. Christ is the head, but he rules his Church through men chosen from among the people. Only good men, men of faith and

filled with the Holy Ghost, men whose lives are fit to be examples to the flock, should be put in positions of authority in the church. Then when such men are placed in power in the church we should give them all due honor in the Lord.

When they . . . had prayed . . . they commended them to the Lord. The Lord is the keeper of his Church. He watches over it with a most loving heart and an eye that never sleeps. The apostles were going away, and could not stay with these new converts to care for them; but they were not afraid to leave them. God would watch over them; Christ would care for them and guard them with tender love. Sometimes we feel great solicitude on account of friends who are exposed to danger and temptation; we think that we must keep an eye on them continually, and that if we intermit for a moment our loving vigilance evil will surely come to them. No doubt we have our duties of watchfulness and care and our responsibilities for the keeping of other souls; we are our "brother's keeper;" yet this is only to a certain point, for after all it is but little that we can do. When we have done our little part, and can do no more, we may then commit them into the care of Christ, who will never for a moment forget them. When a pastor is called, in the ordering of God's providence, to leave the little flock he has been watching over, if it is clearly his duty to go away, he need have no fear that they will be left shepherdless, for Christ is the great shepherd and will look after his own flock. When a parent dies, leaving a family of little children behind, he may commend them to God, with quiet confidence, for he will care for them.

They rehearsed all things that God had done with them. That must have been a glorious missionary meeting. Indeed, it was the first missionary meeting that ever was held. These were the first missionaries who ever went out to carry the gospel to the heathen, and this was their first return to the church which had sent them out. This was the first report of missionary work ever made, and we can imagine the interest which the report must have produced. It is to be noticed that the missionaries did not put themselves forward as having done the work; they spoke of *what God had done with them.* Here is a lesson which we should not overlook. Sometimes we forget, when we have been the means in God's hands of doing anything good, that it was he and not ourselves who really did the work. We should always be sure that God gets the glory of his own work. We are all so desirous of recognition and of honor, when we have done anything good or great, that we are apt to be more careful that the instrument shall be owned, than that the great Author of the work shall have praise.

Speaking of this *first missionary meeting*, Dr. W. M. Taylor has these practical suggestions, with reference to our own times: "Audiences can be obtained for almost any adventurer who chooses to visit our shores; and even Christian families will turn out in crowds to be amused by some professional manufacturer of mirth; but when a simple-minded missionary, who has been laboring for years to elevate and Christianize the heathen, is announced to preach, there is 'a beggarly array of empty benches.' . . . We do not seem to care much for missionary intelligence, no matter how it is presented. Our *Missionary Heralds* lie unread amid the piles of periodicals that accumulate upon our tables; our missionary meetings are too generally counted the driest of all our services; and there are few among us who could give any very intelligent account of the condition of the missionary enterprise in any single field, not to speak of the world at large. These things ought not so to be. The annals of history contain nothing grander, as a manifestation of heroic self-sacrifice, than the deeds of our modern missionaries. Their journals read almost like a continuation of the book of the Acts of the Apostles; and their success in many lands is one of the most striking illustrations of the power of the gospel, and a much-needed counteractive to the materialistic unbelief that is seeking to make disciples among us. . . . Let us keep our ears open for tidings from our missionaries. Let us sustain them by our gifts and by our prayers; and when they come back among us to tell us what God has done through them, let us hear no more the depreciating whisper, as they ascend the pulpit, 'It's only a missionary;' but let us give them ovations more enthusiastic than those which greet the warrior, for they are 'men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.'"

LESSON POINTS.

1. The enemies of Christ are not content with rejecting him themselves, but must try to keep others from accepting him. v. 19.

2. It is easy by false words about others to destroy their influence and work. v. 19.

3. Even in men who are saved the bad sowing of the old life is apt to have a harvest. v. 19.

4. Contrast true and false friends in the crowd that first worshiped, then stoned Paul, and the group that believed and then stood around the apostle's body. vs. 19, 20.

5. Note the unquenchableness of the zeal and

love in these men's hearts: stoned to-day, off to-morrow and preaching again. v. 21.

6. Note also the fearlessness of these men in returning to the same cities where they had been persecuted. v. 21.

7. Conversion is only the beginning of a Christian life; there is need for confirmation and progress. v. 22.

8. The way into the kingdom of God lies through conflicts and trials of faith and courage. v. 22.

9. We must not overlook the word "through;" the Christian is going *through* these tribulations, and beyond is glory. v. 22.

10. Organization and order are necessary in the church. v. 23.

11. The Lord is the Keeper of his Church. v. 23.

12. There will be a final home-coming some day of all the Lord's servants, when they will rehearse in the ears of Christ himself all that they have done for him. v. 27.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

In preparing the lesson apply these tests to yourself:

1. Have I learned all that I can learn of the *places* mentioned, and of the *facts*, the *doctrines* taught or implied, the *duties* growing out of this lesson?

2. Have I studied the *Westminster Lesson Leaf*, *Question Book* or *Quarterly*, that I may know what particular lines in this lesson my scholars have studied, so that I may give them an opportunity to recite what they have learned?

Introduce the lesson by questioning on the sacrifice which the people of Lystra were about to offer to Paul and Barnabas. From this you can readily pass by contrast to the treatment recorded in vs. 19, 20.

I. *Paul Stoned.* In what stoning had Paul taken part? Acts 7: 58; 8: 1. In what particular did Paul at Lystra differ from Saul at Stephen's martyrdom? Picture the stoning at Lystra: The excitable crowd of ignorant Lycaonians; the Jews from Iconium; the charges against Paul and Barnabas, "they have healed the cripple, not because they are gods, but because they are demons." The Jews begin the stoning. Paul reels and falls. "It is over," they shout. They drag his body outside the city walls. Weeping disciples gather around. The body stirs! Paul rises and walks into the city! Where does Paul refer to this? 2 Cor. 11: 25; 2 Tim. 3: 2. Why is it better to be stoned for Christ's sake than idolatrously garlanded for our own sake?

II. *The Disciples Confirmed.* vs. 21–23. What work did Paul and Barnabas perform in Derbe? What spirit did they show by persevering in preaching after so much persecution? What cities did they re-visit? What is meant by the expression "confirming the disciples?" By what means did the apostles seek to establish and confirm them? Personal visitation, faithful instruction, exhortation, complete organization, prayer. How would personal visitation help the disciples? How does personal visitation of our scholars by their teachers confirm and help them? What strength and consolation is there in the truth that "we must through much tribulation (varied trials) enter into the kingdom of God." How did the apostles complete the organization of these churches?

Have the Presbyterian Form of Government at hand. Select a good reader from among the scholars. Have him read the chapter on The Session. What is the Scripture warrant for the office of *ruling elder?* 1 Tim. 5: 17; Acts 11: 30; 14: 23; 20: 17; Titus 1: 5; James 5: 14. What are these duties? What are our duties to them? With what exercises were these elders ordained?

What was the direct route from Derbe to Antioch in Syria? Why did the apostles not take it. How does this return journey show the dauntless courage of Paul and Barnabas? How their love for Christ and souls? How that they preferred *duty* above ease? That they preferred duty before safety?

III. *The Journey Ended.* vs. 24–28. Describe this first missionary meeting, the audience, the speakers, the speeches.

Points to be assigned in next Sabbath's lesson:

1. What places have been mentioned in this Quarter's lessons?

2. Please draw a map of Paul's first missionary journey.

3. What enemies of the gospel are mentioned in these lessons?

4. What special cases of conversion are narrated?

5. What persecutions are recorded?

6. What duties concerning foreign missions do these lessons teach us?

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

A missionary lesson. I am growing into the feeling that we cannot have too many lessons on missions.

Enclose in a large square little squares in different colors to represent the various places to which the missionaries went. Begin with Lystra.

Make a mark for Paul prostrate. Imagine his friends bending over him sorrowing. Let class tell of the disgraceful treatment he had received in the very place where but a few hours before the people wanted to worship him as a god. Mark a journey line to Derbe, making the square for it. Make a square, or a dot, or a steeple, anything to represent the church, while the class tell you what was accomplished there by the missionaries.

Now these faithful men are going home. But first they want to visit the places where they have worked, to see how the friends of Jesus are getting on. Do you think they will go back to Lystra where they were so badly treated? Oh, yes, indeed. Follow them to Iconium, letting class recall the experiences there. Then to Antioch (your blackboard outline will help the children to get the geography of the country, and to discover that there were two Antiochs), thence to Perga, then to Attalia. At all these points let class tell what was done; how the missionaries talked with and prayed with the people.

A few careless dashes with blue crayon will sufficiently represent water, and any sort of mark will stand for the ship in which they sailed from Attalia back to Antioch; and to follow the course of the imaginary vessel as you talk will have the effect of vivifying the whole story.

The faithful workers have got home again. They have a great deal to tell. They have worked, and suffered, and enjoyed.

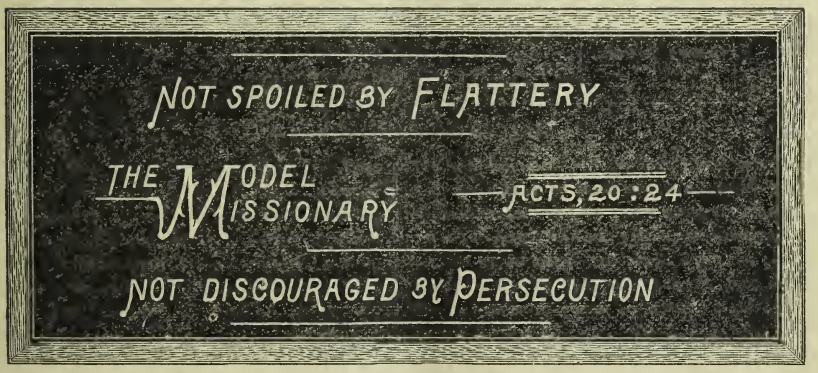
They call the Church together, and the story is about "all that God had done with them."

The class will have no difficulty in seeing the connection of the golden text. These workers had been obeying Christ.

As for the practical application, it will depend on what you have been doing in your classes during the months past.

How familiar are your children with mission stations? To what special missions have they contributed of late? Can you select three or four, outline their location, and imagine a ship with all your scholars on board going out to call on them? Can you have certain distinctly defined facts about each station for the class to learn during their call? What news can the children carry them? That they are praying daily for the missionaries by name, that they remember in prayer this little heathen boy or girl who lives at this station. You see, teachers, the possibilities of the lesson, provided you have former teaching to fall back on. If you have not, it would be well to select one field. Outline it, take the children to visit it, to learn the name of *one* missionary, and the needs of the people, and to leave their pledges that they will labor and pray for that spot.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



SUGGESTIONS.—Review briefly last lesson. Paul could not be hindered in his great missionary work. He is not spoiled by flattery nor discouraged by persecution. Though pursued and stoned by the enemies of the cross of Christ and left for dead, he arises out of the persecution, and, with Barnabas, we find him in Lystra, Iconium and Antioch "confirming the souls of the disciples and exhorting them to continue in the faith." A model missionary, indeed. See the great impelling motive. Acts 20: 24. Have the school read it in concert, and impress it as earnestly as possible. We all need the same spirit of love and consecration. We are so apt to be discouraged by persecution or spoiled by flattery. Remember, "that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."

Directions for Coloring.—Top line, red shaded lightly with white; "The model missionary," white shaded heavily with orange; lower line, red shaded lightly with brown; text, white.

Lesson XIII. **QUARTERLY REVIEW.** June 24th, 1883.

[*From the Westminster Quarterly.*]

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 8 : 1–40.
T. Acts 9 : 1–43.
W. Acts 10 : 1–48.
Th. Acts 11 : 1–30.
F. Acts 12 : 1–25.
S. Acts 13 : 1–41.
S. Acts 13 : 42–14 : 28.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."—Rom. 1 : 16.

REVIEW CHART.

Lessons in Acts.	*Title.*	*Topic.*	*Golden Text.*	*Lesson Plan.*
1.—8 : 14–25.	Simon the Sorcerer.	God's Gifts Cannot be Bought.	Thy heart is not right. v. 21.	1. Gifts of the Holy Ghost. 2. The sorcerer's offer. 3. The apostle's rebuke.
2.—8 : 26–40.	Philip and the Ethiopian.	Salvation through Faith in Christ.	And he went on his way. v. 39.	1. A meeting divinely arranged. 2. An inquirer directed. 3. A disciple rejoicing.
3.—9 : 1–18.	Saul's Conversion.	The Power of Divine Grace.	And he received sight. v. 18.	1. The meeting with Christ. 2. The ministry of Ananias.
4.—9 : 19–31.	Saul Preaching Christ.	The Convert's Early Experiences.	He which persecuted us. Gal. 1 : 23.	1. The people amazed. 2. Enemies conspiring. 3. Believers distrusting.
5.—9 : 32–43.	Peter Working Miracles.	Christ the Giver of Health and Life.	Jesus Christ maketh thee. v. 34.	1. Healing of Ananias. 2. Mourning for Dorcas. 3. Dorcas Restored.
6.—10 : 30–44.	Peter Preaching to the Gentiles.	The Gospel for the World.	On the Gentiles also. v. 45.	1. The centurion's vision. 2. The gospel for all nations. 3. Christ's life mission.
7.—11 : 19–30.	The Spread of the Gospel.	Disciples first called Christians.	And the hand of the Lord. v. 21.	1. Persecution scatters the gospel. 2. Mission of Barnabas. 3. Growth of the Church.
8.—12 : 1–17.	Herod and Peter.	Useless to Fight against God.	The angel of the Lord. Ps. 34 : 7.	1. Cruelty of Herod. 2. Deliverance of Peter. 3. Surprise of the Disciples.
9.—13 : 1–12.	Paul and Barnabas in Cyprus.	Christian Missions the Work of God.	Separate me Barnabas & Saul. v. 2.	1. First foreign missionaries. 2. Opposition of the sorcerer. 3. Sorcerer rebuked.
10.—13 : 13–16; 43 : 52.	At Antioch.	Preaching to Jews and Gentiles.	And the word of the Lord. v. 49.	1. Preaching in the synagogue. 2. Envy of the Jews. 3. Turning to the Gentiles. 4. Preachers driven away.
11.—14 : 1–18.	At Iconium and Lystra.	Different Effects of the Gospel.	Speaking boldly in the Lord. v. 13.	1. The gospel produces strife. 2. Paul works a miracle. 3. Divine honors offered.
12.—14 : 19–28.	End of First Missionary Journey.	The New Converts Instructed.	Go ye therefore. Matt. 28 : 19.	1. Paul stoned. 2. The disciples confirmed. 3. The journey ended.
13.—8 : 14–14 : 28.	Review.	Church Extension and Missions.	I am not ashamed. Rom. 1 : 16.	

SUGGESTIONS FOR REVIEW.

We have now finished the study of the first fourteen chapters of the book of Acts. To-day we go back to review what we have learned from these chapters, especially the last seven of them. In them we have seen the little band of one hundred and twenty disciples growing into a well-organized church of many thousands. At first it is confined to the city of Jerusalem and vicinity. But when the time for further extension comes persecution is permitted to drive the disciples from Jerusalem, and they go everywhere preaching the word. Samaria is evangelized; an Ethiopian nobleman is converted; a Roman centurion receives the gospel; Cyprus and Cyrene hear the joyful news; a church largely composed of Gentiles is collected at Antioch, and thus the way is prepared for the mission of Paul and the planting and extension of the Church among the Gentiles. We have gone with the apostle on his first missionary tour from Antioch to Selucia, and thence to Salamis in Cyprus. We have visited with him Paphos, Perga, Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe. Thence we have retraced our steps to the starting point in Syria. We have been with him in persecution and peril, and have seen how God "opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles."

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

[*From the Westminster Quarterly.*]

Introductory.—Into how many parts may the book of Acts be divided? What is the first? The second? How is the first subdivided? What events in the life of Peter are recorded in the Gospels? Give the leading events in the lessons of the first Quarter? What is the subject

of the first eight lessons of this Quarter? Of the remaining lessons? The golden text of this lesson?

Lesson I. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? What did the apostles at Jerusalem hear? What did they do? What did these apostles do after praying with the Samaritans? What did Simon want to do? What did Peter say to him?

II. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? On what mission was Philip sent by the angel of the Lord? What was the man doing when Philip met him? What did Philip do? What effect had his preaching? What followed?

III. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? For what purpose did Saul go to Damascus? What changed his purpose? What did Saul then do? For what purpose was Ananias sent to him? What took place at the visit of Ananias?

IV. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? What did Saul do immediately after his conversion? How did he escape from those who sought to kill him? How did the disciples receive him at Jerusalem? How were their doubts removed? What did he do when his life was again in danger?

V. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? Whom did Peter find at Lydda? What did he say to him? What followed this command? What was the character of Dorcas? How did Peter restore her to life?

VI. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? What great truth did Peter declare? Of what were the apostles witnesses? What had Jesus commanded them to do? What is the testimony of all the prophets concerning him? What happened while Peter was yet speaking?

VII. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? Who preached to the Gentiles at Antioch? What followed their preaching? Whom did the church at Jerusalem send to Antioch? What name was given to the disciples? What fruit did Christianity bear?

VIII. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? What act of cruelty did Herod commit? What did he intend to do with Peter? What was done to prevent his escape? What did the disciples do for him? How were their prayers answered?

IX. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? What did the Holy Ghost command the prophets and teachers at Antioch to do? Where did Barnabas and Saul go? Who sent for them at Paphos? Who opposed them? How was the sorcerer punished?

X. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? What did Paul and Barnabas do in Antioch? How were the Jews affected by their preaching? What did Paul then say to them? How did the Gentiles receive these words? What was the success of the gospel there?

XI. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? What followed the preaching of the apostles at Iconium? How were they driven from Iconium? What miracle did Paul there work? How did this miracle affect the people? How did Paul and Barnabas prevent this?

XII. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? What did the people do at Lystra? Where did Paul and Barnabas now go? Where did they go from Derbe? What did they do in these cities? How was their journey ended?

General Questions.—What have you learned about Philip's mission to Samaria? The work of Peter and John there? Simon the sorcerer? Philip and the Ethiopian? Saul's mission to Damascus? His conversion? His escape from that city? His visit to Jerusalem? Peter's tour of visitation to the churches? His miracle at Lydda? At Joppa? His vision? His preaching to the Gentiles? The spread o the gospel? The church at Antioch? The new name? The visit of Barnabas and Saul to Jerusalem? The death of James? The imprisonment of Peter? His release? The death of Herod?

CATECHISM REVIEW.

12. What special act of providence did God exercise towards man, in the estate wherein he was created?

13. Did our first parents continue in the estate wherein they were created?

14. What is sin?

15. What was the sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created?

16. Did all mankind fall in Adam's first transgression?

17. Into what estate did the fall bring mankind?

18. Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?

19. What is the misery of that estate whereinto man fell?

20. Did God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery?

21. Who is the Redeemer of God's elect?

22. How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man?

23. What offices doth Christ execute as our Redeemer?

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

Hints as to Plan.

At the teachers' meeting the method of conducting the review should be thoroughly considered by superintendent and teachers. A full understanding should be secured by every teacher of the method agreed upon. It may be arranged that the teacher is to have twenty minutes for his class review, carefully to drill his scholars on the plan agreed upon. Then the superintendent, adhering to the same plan, may conduct the review as a school exercise for twenty-five minutes more. This harmony between the class and school review is most important. Indeed, I know of no other way which will be fair for the teacher and scholar, or which will insure practical success. The opening and closing worship of the school should on this day be shortened to give time for the review.

Hints as to Preparation.

1. Carefully and minutely drill yourself on all the titles and golden texts, persons, places, doctrines and duties of each lesson.

2. Know precisely the form of every question you expect to ask.

3. Begin preparing your scholars for the Quarterly Review the first Sabbath of the Quarter, and constantly keep it in view.

4. Do not attempt too much in your review. Select what will be most suitable for your class.

5. Do not dwell too long on any one lesson. Remember there are *twelve*.

6. Strive to make your review pointed, practical and spiritual.

Hints as to Teaching.

I. *Call for the titles and golden texts.*

On your board or paper write—

1. S. the S.	7. The S. of the G.
2. P. and the E.	8. H. and P.
3. S.'s C.	9. P. and B. in C.
4. S. P. C.	10. A. A.
5. P. W. M.	11. A. I. and L.
6. P. P. to the G.	12. E. of F. M. J.

Let the teacher mention the number of the lesson, and the scholars, either individually or in concert, name the title, the teacher writing the initial letters of the answer. In his general review the superintendent may mention the number of a lesson, and call upon one department or a single class to respond with the title.

II. *Call for the recitation of the golden text of each lesson*, either by a scholar or a class or the entire school.

1. Thy heart is not	7. And the hand of the
2. And he went on	8. The angel of the
3. And he received	9. Separate me
4. He which	10. And the words
5. Jesus Christ	11. Speaking boldly
6. On the Gentiles	12. Go ye therefore

III. Combine the twelve lessons into one inspired account of the first

Foreign Mission.

1. *God prepared the Church for foreign missions.* Lessons I., II., VI., VII. record God's method of gradually preparing his Church, at that time wholly composed of Jewish Christians, for obeying the Saviour's command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Show how the disciples were providentially led to obey the Saviour's order in "Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth."

How was the Church prepared for missions by the events in Lesson I.? In Lesson II.? Lesson V.? Lesson VI.? Lesson VII.? How has God been preparing the modern Church for foreign missions?

2. *God prepared Paul to be a foreign missionary.* Lessons III., IV., VII. How did the events of Lesson III. prepare Paul for preaching? How did his experiences recorded in Lesson IV. prepare him? How those recorded in Lesson VII.?

3. *God began and blessed foreign missions.* Lessons VII., IX., X., XI., XII. Draw from the class and the school how God himself inaugurated foreign missions in the early Church. Follow the first missionary journey through to bring out God's providential guidance and blessing of the toils and trials of Paul and Barnabas.

4. Locate on the map the places mentioned in the lessons of the Quarter: Samaria, Gaza, Ethiopia, Azotus, Cæsarea, Damascus, Tarsus, Lydda, Joppa, Phenice, Cyprus, Antioch in Syria, Seleucia, Salamis, Paphos, Perga, Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, Attalia.

If possible, have a map of Palestine, and Paul's first missionary journey drawn on the blackboard.

5. *Call for incidents connected with:* A magician vanquished by an apostle. An incurable invalid made to walk. A Christian needlewoman honored and blessed. A Bible student finding Jesus. The first heathen convert baptized. The proud persecutor made an humble disciple. A prison door unlocked without hands. A young convert testifying for Jesus. Foreign missions started through laymen. The first opposer and first convert of foreign missions. The first foreign missionary prayer-meeting. The first foreign missionary conference. The first recorded sermon of the greatest of preachers.

6. *Prove from this Quarter's lessons*—That private Christians should work for Christ. That we should listen to the Spirit's inner voice guiding in Christian work. That we should shun

covetousness in Christian work. That the very young Christian should speak for Jesus. That Christian women should be honored in their work for Christ. That we should prefer persecution to wicked honors. That we should pray, work and give for foreign missions.

7. The teacher and superintendent may prefer to group the Quarter's lessons in a biographical outline. If so, the following may be suggestive:

PHILIP { Preaches in Samaria. Converts the Ethiopian.

PETER { Heals Æneas. Raises Dorcas. Preaches to the Gentiles. Delivered from Prison.

PAUL { Converted. Preaches Christ. In Cyprus. At Antioch in Pisidia. At Iconium and Lystra. Returns to Antioch.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

SUGGESTIONS.—Assuming that the review will be part in class and part from the desk, I suggest that ample time be given to each. The superintendent should desire to learn what, besides the titles and golden texts, the scholars remember of the principal persons and events, and the practical lessons. You know what you have taught the school from the desk in the closing exercises on each Sabbath. Ascertain what is remembered of it. The blackboard is intended to impress the general lessons. We have twelve lessons on mission work. This work was done at home and abroad. The gospel is for *all the world*. To carry it everywhere, money and men are both needed. Have school read Rom. 10: 14, 15. The workers must expect persecution, but they are promised protection; they must persevere if they would prosper. We can all help.

Let none hear you idly saying,
"There is nothing I can do,"
While the souls of men are dying,
And the Master calls for you.
Take the task he gives you gladly,
Let his work your pleasure be;
Answer quickly when he calleth,
"Here am I; send me, send me."

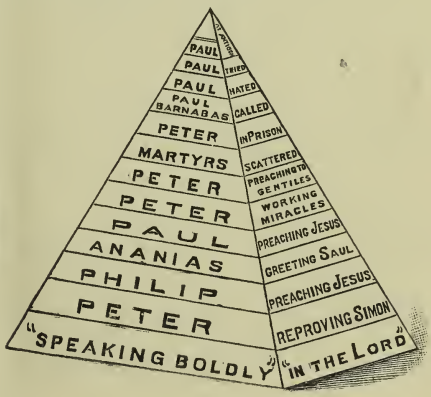
Sing this verse as you close. If you do not have it in your book, print it on the reverse side of your board, and sing it to "Harwell."

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

I have prepared a pyramid for this Quarter's review, based on the idea in the *Westminster Primary Leaf*, that the three months have been spent with heroes. The scholars will be interested in having the pyramid built in the class, they supplying the facts as you add the layers.

Such reviews should be interspersed with singing and recitations selected from the Quarter's work, to fit the central thought for the day, which is "*True Courage.*" The motto for the Quarter might be, "Speaking boldly in the Lord."

The special thought to impress is the question, Who in this class are truly brave? What ways of showing it have they had during this Quarter's work? How many will begin to-day to serve Jesus boldly?



REVIEW EXERCISE.*

Signal for silence.

SCRIPTURE SENTENCES.

Superintendent.—Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion: Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: We shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple. Ps. 65: 1, 4.

School.—One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple. Ps. 27: 4.

Supt.—I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy loving kindness and for thy truth. Ps. 9: 1; 138: 2.

Teachers.—Righteous art thou, O Lord, and upright are thy judgments. Ps. 119: 137.

Boys.—He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord. Ps. 33: 5.

Girls.—He ruleth by his power for ever; his eyes behold the nations; come and see the works of God. Ps. 66: 5, 7.

Supt.—Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men. Ps. 107: 8.

All.—O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard. Ps. 66: 8.

Singing.—Hymn 36 (Pres. Hymnal):

Come, let us join our cheerful songs,
With angels round the throne;
Ten thousand thousand are their tongues,
But all their joys are one.

"Worthy the Lamb that died," they cry,
"To be exalted thus!"
"Worthy the Lamb," our lips reply,
"For he was slain for us!"

Prayer.—Closing with the Lord's Prayer.

Recitation of the Creed or Commandments.

Singing.—Hymn 322:

Welcome, welcome, dear Redeemer!
Welcome to this heart of mine;
Lord! I make a full surrender,
Every power and thought be thine;
Thine entirely,
Through eternal ages thine.

Known to all to be thy mansion,
Earth and hell will disappear;
Or in vain attempt possession,
When they find the Lord is near;
Shout, O Zion!
Shout, ye saints! the Lord is here.

Notices and collections for the day.

REVIEW QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

LESSON I. **Supt.**—What did Simon the sorcerer offer the apostles?

School.—He offered them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.

Supt.—What did Peter say to him?

School.—Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.

II. **Supt.**—What scripture was the Ethiopian reading when Philip joined him?

School.—He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth.

Supt.—What did Philip do?

School.—Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.

III. **Supt.**—What happened to Saul as he was going to Damascus?

School.—Suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven; and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

IV. **Supt.**—What did Saul do after his baptism?

School.—Straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.

Singing.—Hymn 640:

Blow ye the trumpet, blow;
The gladly solemn sound
Let all the nations know,
To earth's remotest bound;
The year of Jubilee is come:
Return, ye ransomed sinners, home.

Extol the Lamb of God,
The all-atoning Lamb;
Redemption in his blood
Throughout the world proclaim.
The year, etc.

Ye who have sold for naught
Your heritage above,
Come, take it back unbought,
The gift of Jesus' love.
The year, etc.

The gospel trumpet hear,
The news of heavenly grace,
And saved from earth appear
Before your Saviour's face.
The year of Jubilee is come:
Return, ye ransomed sinners, home.

V. **Supt.**—How was Dorcas restored to life at Lydda?

School.—Peter kneeled down and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up.

VI. **Supt.**—What took place while Peter was preaching in the house of Cornelius?

School.—The Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.

VII. **Supt.**—What followed the preaching of the gospel at Antioch?

School.—A great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.

Supt.—What new name did the disciples receive?

School.—The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.

VIII. **Supt.**—What did Peter say about his deliverance from prison?

School.—Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod.

Singing.—Hymn 324:

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!
What more can he say than to you he hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?

When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace, all-sufficient, shall be thy supply!
The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design
Thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine.

E'en down to old age all my people shall prove
My sov'reign, eternal, unchangeable love;
And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn,
Like lambs they shall still in my bosom be borne.

IX. **Supt.**—What direction was given to the prophets and teachers at Antioch?

School.—The Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

Supt.—Where did the missionaries go?

School.—So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia, and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

X. **Supt.**—Who opposed them at Antioch in Pisidia?

School.—The Jews spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.

Supt.—What did Paul say to them?

School.—It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.

XI. **Supt.**—What effect had the preaching at Iconium?

School.—A great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed.

Supt.—What took place at Lystra after Paul healed a lame man?

School.—The priest of Jupiter brought oxen and garlands, and would have done sacrifice with the people.

XII. **Supt.**—What happened soon after?

School.—Having stoned Paul, they drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead. . . . The next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.

Supt.—What then took place?

School.—When they had preached the gospel to that city, they returned again to Lystra and to Iconium and Antioch.

Supt.—What did they do in all these places?

School.—When they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

Singing.—Hymn 636:

Hasten, Lord! the glorious time
When, beneath Messiah's sway,
Every nation, every clime,
Shall the gospel's call obey.

Mightiest kings his power shall own,
Heathen tribes his name adore;
Satan and his host, o'erthrown,
Bound in chains, shall hurt no more.

Then shall wars and tumults cease,
Then be banished grief and pain;
Righteousness and joy and peace
Undisturbed shall ever reign.

Bless we, then, our gracious Lord;
Ever praise his glorious name;
All his mighty acts record;
All his wondrous love proclaim.

Review drill on titles, golden texts, Catechism, with whatever further exercises may be desired.

Singing.—Hymn 646:

Hail to the Lord's Anointed,
Great David's greater Son;
Hail, in the time appointed,
His reign on earth begun;
He comes to break oppression,
To set the captive free,
To take away transgression,
And rule in equity.

He comes with succor speedy
To those who suffer wrong;
To help the poor and needy,
And bid the weak be strong;
To give them songs for sighing,
Their darkness turn to light,
Whose souls, condemned and dying,
Were precious in his sight.

He shall come down like showers
Upon the fruitful earth,
And love, joy, hope, like flowers,
Spring in his path to birth;
Before him on the mountains
Shall peace, the herald, go,
And righteousness in fountains
From hill to valley flow.

Secretary's and Librarian's Distribution.

CLOSING SENTENCES.

Supt.—The Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another. Gen. 31: 49.

School.—The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make his face shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee.

Supt.—The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee and give thee peace. Num. 6: 24–26.

All stand in silent prayer one minute, to be dismissed by bell or organ playing.

---

*Extra copies of this Review Exercise will be furnished at 50 cents per hundred, on application to the Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1334 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.

OUR OWN NEWEST BOOKS.

..Martyrs of the Reformation. D'Aubigne's Martyrs of the Reformation, with an Introduction by the Rev. C. H. A. Bulkley, D.D., Professor of Rhetoric and Literature in Howard University. The personal sketches contained in this volume have been carefully culled by Dr. Bulkley from D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation. They constitute a notable gallery of religious portraits, which, for vivid coloring and personal verisimilitude, are unsurpassed. Their reading should and will give nerve and fire to our too cool religious emotions if rightly apprehended. Presbyterian Board of Publication. 16mo, pp. 510. Price, $1.75.

..The Church in Scotland. A history of its antecedents, its conflicts, and its advocates from the earliest times to the first Assembly of the Reformed Church. By the Rev. James C. Moffat, D.D., Professor of Church History, Princeton Theological Seminary. Recent research has done much to clear up the obscurity which rested upon the early periods of Scotch church history. Ancient books upon the subject have been subjected to careful comparison and criticism. Fact has been separated from fiction, and true historic record from legendary lore. The results of this research have here been brought together in a consecutive narration, every statement of which is supported by critically defined evidences. The history is in four books: Book First, Ancient Period; Book Second, Period of Papal Rule; Book Third, Causes which led to the Reformation; Book Fourth, The Reformation Conflict. Four maps, prepared expressly for it, illustrate the volume. The book will contribute largely to a popular understanding of an interesting but hitherto greatly misunderstood portion of the Christian Church. Presbyterian Board of Publication. 12mo., pp. 447. Price, $1.75.

..China and the Chinese. A general description of the country and its inhabitants; its civilization and form of government; its religious and social institutions; its intercourse with other nations, and its present condition and prospects. Revised edition. By the Rev. John L. Nevius, D.D., twenty-eight years a missionary in China. Now that China is our next neighbor on the west it is important that we become acquainted with the country and its inhabitants. This book, which is fully described on the title page, will help us to such an acquaintance. It gives the results of the personal observations and experiences of a man of high intelligence and abundant opportunity, during more than twenty-five years of familiar intercourse with all classes of the people and in different parts of the empire. Presbyterian Board of Publication. 8vo, illustrated, pp. 452.

..Graham on Ephesians. By the Rev. William Graham, D.D., of Bonn, Prussia, formerly of Damascus. This is a book of no ordinary merit. The characteristics by which it is specially marked are broad learning, shown in results rather than by processes; a remarkable knowledge of the Scriptures, by which light is made to concentrate upon the text under consideration from a multitude of related passages, and an intense fervor, enlightened by a rare spiritual insight. It is a book to be read not hastily, but section by section, with attention and meditation, that its deep thoughts of things divine and spiritual may be grasped and made our own. A brief sketch of the author's useful and eventful life, now (1883) in its seventy-third year, is prefixed to the volume. Presbyterian Board of Publication. 8vo, pp. 463. Price, $1.25.

..The Elder and his Work. By David Dickson, Master of the Merchant Company of Edinburgh. Reprinted from the thirteenth thousand of the Edinburgh edition. This tractate is from the pen of one of the best known and most useful elders of the Free Church of Scotland. It is practical in its scope, and abounds in the most admirable suggestions. It treats in successive chapters of the importance of the eldership, of the elder's qualifications, of his duties, of the elder in his district, etc. It is eminently adapted for circulation among elders in our American churches. 16mo, pp. 94.

..The Greys. By Abby Eldridge. A temperance tale, directed rather against those insidious effects of moderate drinking, which often escape notice outside of the home, than against drunkenness in its grosser forms. The book is well written. Presbyterian Board of Publication. 16mo, pp. 216.

..Tom Bard; and other Nortonville Boys. By the Rev. J. A. Davis, author of the "Chinese Slave Girl." The boys, girls, men, women and places told of in this book are real, though bearing fictitious names. The story shows that boys can live Christian lives and yet be real boys; and in boy-life simple acts of kindness and charity may bring results far beyond our highest expectations. The one great object of the book is to lead boys to become better acquainted with the Saviour. Presbyterian Board of Publication. 16mo, illustrated, pp. 408.

..Dr. Grantley's Neighbors. By Ella Beckwith Keeney and Annette Lucille Noble. This book has the peculiarity of being the work of two authors. Ella Beckwith Keeney, whose previous book, "Following the Master," gave high promise of excellence as an author, began this volume, but, dying in early womanhood, left it only half written. Her friend, Miss Annette Lucille Noble, took up the unfinished work and carried it to completion with so full a sympathy that it is impossible to tell where one writer ended and the other began. In a tale of more than ordinary power the influence of consistent Christian bearing on the part of his "neighbors" to break down the bitter prejudices of the infidel, Dr. Grantley, is skillfully portrayed. Presbyterian Board of Publication. 16mo, illustrated, pp. 320.

..The *Sunday-school Times* has this to say of Dr. Miller's books: "In the two volumes, 'Woman's Ministry' and 'Week-day Religion,' the Rev. Dr. J. R. Miller has already given evidence of his ability to handle acceptably themes in the sphere of the sentiments and the social feelings. In Home-Making, his most recent book, he again touches a congenial theme. The nine essays which make up the volume treat of the wedded life, of the relations of husband and wife, of parents and children, of brothers and sisters, of the common life within the home, of home religion and home memories. Dr. Miller writes of these in a tender and clear style, without affectation; and young housekeepers, who are trying to be home-makers, ought to profit by his kindly counsels and fertile suggestions." 16mo, pp. 310. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication. "Week-day Religion," $1.00; "Home-Making," $1.00; "Woman's Ministry," net, 50 cents.

THE WESTMINSTER TEACHER.

VOL. XI. JULY, 1883. No. 7.

—Dr. John Hall says that foreign ministers are the only kind of dry goods we import without duty.

—Christian character has few severer tests than summer travelling affords. A great many very polite people leave their politeness at home when they enter a railway train or a steamboat. But really this is not the best way to do.

—There is no danger that the lessons in Joshua shall prove heavy or uninteresting to any who make thorough work in studying them. They are not only rich in historical facts, but are full of most helpful and stimulating life thoughts.

—If you are absent from your class for a number of weeks or months this summer, one good thing to do will be to write to them frequently. You can tell them what you are doing, what you see, what you hear that may interest them. Unless your class is very large it will not be an arduous duty to write to them individually once or oftener, and the worth of such letters to them you cannot know.

—Do you go away on a vacation? What about your class? Are you making any provision for it? Then what about yourself? What are you going to do for the Master during your vacation? You do not think of taking a vacation from all Christian service? You do not mean that there shall be two months left entirely blank in the year's record as made above? While away from home, resting from ordinary duties, what wayside ministry are you expecting to perform? Something surely.

—It is the fashion for periodicals to make a grand rally for the enlargement of their circulation at the close of each year, but it will be an improvement in this custom, so far at least as the WESTMINSTER TEACHER is concerned, for our subscribers to be on the lookout for the extension of its influence at more than one season of the year. There is every reason for encouragement in the constantly and rapidly increasing circulation of our magazine and in the words of warm commendation given it, but we cannot be absolutely satisfied whilst there are Presbyterian Sabbath-school teachers unassisted and unaided by it. It is safe to say that of the tens of thousands of subscribers now using our TEACHER, there is not a single man or woman who could not add *one* to its subscription list by a little effort. If you find it helpful to yourself, introduce it to another.

Joshua's Preparation.

THE hero of the book of Joshua is the man whose name it bears. Here we see him at his work, but back of these years of noble service there lie long years of quiet preparation. It may be profitable to glance at these before we take up the study of the great deeds which link themselves so closely with his name.

No one sees or admires the foundations of a great building. They are hidden away out of sight, buried under the ground. They are not beautiful. No pains have been taken to adorn them. They are usually rough and unsightly. Yet who will despise the foundations? Does not the whole grand structure rest upon them? Just the same relation that the foundations bear to the building that rises in stately grandeur upon them do the quiet years of preparation for life bear to the life itself that is reared up before the eyes of the world. A poor foundation makes a tottering and insecure building; a good and strong foundation makes a building that will stand firm and unshaken for long years. In like manner a poor preparation for life insures failure when the burdens and responsibilities of manhood rest upon the shoulders; whereas thorough training and adequate fitting in the days of childhood and youth render almost sure the success of the life in the after days of maturity and strength. There must have been good foundation work done in Joshua's early years to give to the world such a grand and heroic character.

Yet when we begin to look after the facts of his early life we find no record. We can gather up the materials for a pretty full history of Moses; we know the story of his birth, his infancy, his education, his almost royal honors, his flight to the desert, his long lonely years with God; and we can trace his course through all his life to its close. But Joshua starts up be-

fore our eyes, at the first sight we have of him, as a full-grown man, occupying a place of honor and power. The very first mention of him is as the successful commander of the armies of Israel in the battle with Amalek at Rephidim.

Yet we can in some measure fill up the story. We can count backward and know that he was born in Egypt about forty to forty-five years before the exodus. He was therefore a little child of three or four years old when Moses fled away from the wrath of the king and sought refuge in the desert. He was born a slave. He may, even as a child, have been exposed to the bitterness of that cruel bondage under which his people were groaning. Thus early his heart would be stirred with a desire for freedom, with a sense of wrong, and with a purpose to do something when he became a man to help to break the chains which bound his nation. We know how the Israelitish parents brought up their children with loyal devotion to the name and memory of their fathers; and how they taught them the laws of God and the conditions of the covenant. Nothing is said of the mother of Joshua, but his father was of the house of Joseph, the most illustrious of all the families of the nation. It is reasonable to suppose that the mummy of Joseph was kept in his father's house, standing upright in its case, waiting for the time promised when it was to be borne away to Canaan. It would prove a constant inspiration of hope to the youth amid the cruelties of bondage, for it told him that a time of release was coming. Who can doubt that that mummy in its case was one of the educating influences most potent in preparing the young Hoshea for the great mission to which he was at length to be called?

More than forty years were spent thus in slavery that grew all the time more intolerable, with a heart whose hopes and purposes were continually strengthening as the time for emancipation drew on. At last Moses returned with his commission to lead the people out of bondage. Then followed the signs by which the Lord's command to Pharaoh were attested. Plague after plague fell upon the land of the oppressor. The last night in Egypt came. The first-born lay dead in every home, and amid the agony of woe that filled the land Israel marched away from slavery. Joshua shared in the triumphs of that eventful night when "history was born." He crossed the Red Sea, and amid the hosts that sang their songs of victorious triumph on the other side his voice was heard.

So much of his story we can write out, although not a single mention have we on the page of sacred history. All these years a silent education was going on in him, for, although he did not know it, God had him in preparation for the great work to which still forty years later he was to be called. Very sudden is his first appearance in history. Moses chooses him to take command of the army of Israel when the first enemies the people met in the wilderness were to be resisted. The scene is very picturesque. Moses himself sits on the mountain from morning till nightfall, with hands upheld by Aaron and Hur, watching the onset of the fierce Arab horde, while below in the valley Joshua leads the army of Israel to victory. This is our first glimpse of our hero, but we know well that he must already have proved himself capable as a soldier and as a man, to have been trusted that day with such a sacred charge. This, however, was his first victory in war, and we can conceive of the honors which must have been paid to him by the people at its close.

From that day on he was the trusted friend and aid of Moses the great commander. We see him always by the side of the lawgiver. With him he ascends the mountain, going even further than Aaron toward the holy summit. With him he descended again when Moses came down, bearing the tables of stone in his hand, to find the people led by Aaron worshiping the golden calf. Thus we see his fidelity when even the brother of Moses was false to him and to the Lord. So unto the end do we find the same faithfulness. He never betrayed a trust. He never failed in a duty. Sent as one of the twelve spies to visit the promised land and bring back a report of it, he and Caleb alone returned with faith ready for the conquest.

Moses was not to be permitted to enter the promised land, and the time was drawing near when he must die. A successor must be chosen, and the choice fell upon Joshua. He had been in training eighty years for the mission to which at last he was called. He had proved faithful in all the trusts reposed in him. He had learned all his lessons well. How he fulfilled the duties now laid upon him the story of the book that bears his name tells us.

Very simple, yet very important, are the lessons that come to us from the story of this early preparation. No circumstances of birth or condition are a bar to success in life; Joshua was born in slavery yet became one of the sublimest heroes of the ages. True character shines out in every test to which it is subjected; Wherever we see Joshua we find some bright glory of soul revealing itself. Fidelity to humble duties is the golden stairway to higher honors; Joshua was faithful in the lowlier tasks and was trusted with more and more sacred responsibilities.

In our classes sit to-day thousands of youth

who are in preparation for life. They will only be called to the places in after days for which by diligence, by study, by fidelity, by the knitting of the thews of character, and by the training of the hands for service and of the heart for duty, they are now being prepared. God never calls men or women into missions for which they are not prepared.

My Bible-Class.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

SITTING here to-night in my quiet library I have been thinking of my great Bible-class, the class which I am permitted to teach or lead, week after week, through the pages of THE WESTMINSTER TEACHER. It is a very large class, numbering not less than forty thousand members, scattered over all this country, with many outside in other lands. It comprises a membership before which any man ought to be very proud to sit. There are in it men of the highest standing in all the professions and in all ranks of business; and women also distinguished for their gifts and graces and for their noble deeds. Nearly all who gather in this class are in turn themselves teachers of others, and sit down every Lord's day before a class of younger or older scholars, to guide them in the study of that word which is able to make them wise unto salvation.

In great measure this is a silent class. At least but few answers reach my ears. Now and then I hear a reply from some one. Occasionally a question comes up. There is a point on which more light is wanted. Or there is a heart that has kindled into unusual warmth over some thought in a lesson, and out of the fulness of the heart there comes an added word. A teacher somewhere has a perplexity and sits down and writes about it, asking counsel and help. One feels discouraged and comes with the burden, craving sympathy and longing for a word of cheer. Such responses as these are continually finding their way to my ears from members of this great class, and how welcome they are only those know who have sat in the quiet hush and spoken out to a silent and unseen company like that to which I speak week by week. I make no complaint, but it would be a very pleasant thing to receive more responses from this multitudinous class as we go over the lessons together. Have you not a word to speak now and then which would stimulate thought? Have you not sometimes a burden which it would do you good to permit another to share? Have you not some encouragement in your work of which you can write? Or, it may be that you are discouraged and need a word of helpful sympathy. Or you may have a suggestion to make which will aid others. It would certainly be to mutual profit if this great Westminster Bible-class were more responsive. What say you?

Our Colporteurs and Sabbath-schools.

IT is a part of the duty of every colporteur of the Board of Publication to organize new Sabbath-schools in destitute places on his field wherever he finds it practicable, and to supply them with the library books, Catechisms, lesson helps, papers and other facilities published by the Board. It is also his duty to visit and encourage, so far as he can, all Sabbath-schools, especially such as are feeble, on his field. This part of his work grows in importance and value every year. It has been found in very many cases to prepare the way for a demand for the home missionary, and in not a few instances has been a first step towards the organization of flourishing Presbyterian churches.

The colporteurs report that during the past year they have organized seventy-two new schools in such destitute localities. They have also visited and encouraged 1,172 schools during the year, into many of which they have infused new life, and in not a few instances have prevented their extinction. Large numbers of children have thus begun to receive regular Sabbath instruction in the blessed truths of the Bible, and to feel the benign influence of the Christian religion.

This branch of our colportage work was begun eight years ago, since which time the Board's colporteurs have organized and nurtured 712 Sabbath-schools, and have visited and aided 10,760 schools. Over twenty thousand children have thus begun to receive instruction in the Holy Scriptures, and to be led in the path towards happiness in this life and the eternal happiness of heaven, instead of being left to ignorance of God, to Sabbath breaking and all the fearful consequences.

Hints and Suggestions.

BY THE REV. JAMES A. WORDEN, D.D.

Question, Illustrate, Repeat, Simplify, Review, Apply.

These are the great points in method.

Do you ask what are some of the best helps in studying these Old Testament lessons?

1. Geike's "Hours with the Bible," vol. 2.

2. "Joshua and his Times," by Thornley Smith.

3. "Israel's Iron Age," by Marcus Dods, D.D.
4. "Hand-books for Bible-classes," Joshua and Judges, by Principal Douglass.
5. "Cambridge Bible for Schools."
6. "Kitto's Daily Bible Illustrations."

Have you heard of the newest plan in our work? It is "The Bible Correspondence Society," for the thorough study of the Bible *at home*, conducted by means of lessons and examinations received and sent by mail. Write for the complete plan.

Thousands of our Presbyterian teachers keep Saturday afternoon and evening as hours of agreement in prayer for the Sabbath-school work.. Are you among the number?

Is not murmuring against "being obliged to go back to the Old Testament again" a partial denial of the fact that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for teaching?

Induce all your scholars to bring their own Bibles to Sabbath-school. Did you ever see "the Bible Inspection" by Mr. Wanamaker at Bethany? That is the way. Ask all to hold up their Bibles. Insist upon their bringing them. Apply to this matter the Presbyterian "Perseverance of the Saints."

When the Bibles are brought *use them*. Leave all lesson helps at home. Ask the class to turn and read passages. Teach out of the Bible. Keep close to the very words of God.

Joshua was a busy man. A general in command has no spare time. Yet Joshua was not to let the book of the law depart out of his mouth, but was to meditate therein day and night. If a *general* was to do this, what should a teacher do?

Scholars should be discouraged from attending more than one Sabbath-school.

The Sabbath-schools of our Church have increased 206,000 since the reunion in 1870. They have averaged an increase of over 17,000 each year, or 5,000 above the average increase of church members.

There is a dearth in the supply of coming ministers. How shall the want be met? Where are the young men to come from to fill the ranks? From Christian homes and the Sabbath-schools. What are you doing to train up ministers of the Lord Jesus?

Teacher, do not argue. Draw out your class, but avoid controversy. If one comes up, "look it square in the face and pass on." If any scholar wants more light invite him to visit you.

Give every child in your class something to do for Christ and his Church. Plan work for each one. They will love what they work for.

II. The Superintendent in the Opening Service.

BY R. W. WOODWARD.

THE moment has come for beginning the exercises. The superintendent rises in his place, and, this being the signal for silence, the school promptly comes to order. The organ at once begins to play the tune of some familiar hymn, previously selected with reference to the lesson theme. No words are spoken or sung, but the mere playing of the tune suggests the words with which it is associated in the minds of the scholars. Thus, at the very opening, the thoughts of all are brought into sympathy with the subject of the lesson study for the day. In this way the school is called to order so gently and quietly that an observer could hardly tell why the room becomes so suddenly still, or in just what way the order and attention have been so effectually secured.

A word about the use of a bell in the average church school. I cannot believe that there is any real need for one during the whole service unless it may be to indicate toward the close of the lesson that but five minutes more remain to the teacher. If there is a piano in the schoolroom a single chord struck upon it at the proper time will be sufficient even for this purpose. When the closing exercises are to begin all that is needed is the playing, as at the opening, of the tune of a familiar hymn, the striking of the first note being the signal for order. Then let the hymn be announced and sung. Right here let me express my appreciation of the wisdom of the editors of the *Westminster Quarterly* in printing entire with each lesson one of the good old hymns of the church upon the same pages with the lesson itself. As this hymn should always have a place somewhere in the service, what better could be done than to sing it at the close of the lesson as just indicated?

The plan of using some particular printed form of opening service has, of course, its advantages and disadvantages. A number of excellent "Orders of Service" have appeared from time to time in the WESTMINSTER TEACHER and other helps of our Board; though at present discontinued it is to be hoped that they will soon again be resumed. Prepared as they were with skill and care they were certainly helpful to all, but especially to inexperienced superintendents. Yet whether a regular order is followed or not, Scripture passages independent of the lesson should be introduced in the opening exercises, and these should be such as to awaken reverence and stimulate the spirit of devotion. These selections should be made also with reference to the theme of the lesson for the day,

so that the entire opening worship may prepare the minds and hearts of teachers and scholars for the study of the hour.

There is one danger against which the superintendent must guard himself. Let him be careful not to conduct the service in such a way as to tire the school with the sound of his voice. Many an otherwise excellent superintendent by making this mistake loses half his influence. If he always has to tell why he selected this or that hymn, or why he desires to have certain passages of Scripture read instead of or in addition to the lesson for the day, the scholars, and teachers as well, will lose their interest, and will merely wait with patience until he has "had his say" and is ready for them to take up their part. If, however, the superintendent is judicious in this regard, and wisely holds himself in reserve, he can at the proper time call attention to some truth strikingly conveyed by the hymn, thereby making it more impressive; or to a Scripture passage, giving a fresh interest to some text that has become so familiar as to have lost much of its meaning. Once in a while an apt illustration in few words may be introduced and made very telling. But this should be very rarely done, for if frequently done the opening service, instead of being helpful to the teachers, will be unhappily quite the contrary. The superintendent's aim should be to open the school quietly, reverently, yet joyously and heartily; if he does this he may rest assured of his teachers' appreciation and interest.

There is another matter of very great importance which must not be overlooked. The superintendent should show in his conduct of the opening worship that he regards the pastor of the church as the superior officer of the school. The Sabbath-school should never be considered as separate and apart from the church, any more than the prayer-meeting should be. The preaching service alone is not the church; the Sabbath-school is not the church; the prayer-meeting is not the church; but all these together, moving harmoniously under one leadership, constitute the church. Consequently in the opening service the pastor should occupy his place and take an active part. In the occasional reading of the Scripture, in the prayer, and a week or two before the communion service, if at no other time, in a few words to the school, he should have his place. It should also be the aim of the superintendent to aid in fastening the truths of the pastor's sermons as far as he can on the minds and hearts of the scholars. This he may do by calling for the text—book, chapter, verse and words—at each session of the school, as part of the regular opening order. This is done in some places with great success, and the superintendent who has never tried it will be surprised to find how much even the youngest scholars can remember if they are expected to recite it every Sabbath. By this means the superintendent will also indirectly help in educating the scholar in attendance upon the preaching services, and also, when there, in attention to what the pastor says.

Thus far I have attempted only to show what may be expected as the result of a careful preparation in advance and a thoughtful regard on the part of the superintendent; and to impress the fact that his work, to be done effectively, should be done quietly and unobtrusively. Not that it should be lacking in tone and force; on the contrary, the superintendent who would attain to any measure of success in his work must be in every sense the leader of the school, and his personality must be felt and recognized by all. There is a force and power that is calm and collected, yet withal earnest and positive.

The superintendent must also remember that if he desires to have the opening worship cheerful, reverential and in every way wholesome and helpful, it will become such only in the degree in which he realizes the need of the Holy Spirit's aid, and learns to lean upon that and not upon himself. Otherwise there will be but little of real worship and very little of true growth and edification. If it is true that every Christian ought to be "in the Spirit on the Lord's day," the superintendent ought, in a peculiar sense, to realize in his own soul this devout experience.

The reason why I have said so much about teaching through hymns and Scriptures in the opening service is because the Sabbath-school is educational in its character and design. We are to teach the scholars how to worship God and to serve him in his holy temple, as well as teach them in the lessons how to live in the world and in all life's relations so as to glorify him. The devotional part of the exercises is therefore of very great importance. One of the most essential duties to be taught the young in these days is reverence toward God, reverence for God's house, reverence for God's word, and this can best be done through the exercises of the opening worship. Let the superintendent then seek to raise himself and his school to a higher plane in this devotional part of his service, and he will find that the hymn, the prayer, the earnest word, the well-chosen Scripture, will, in a way he has not dreamed of, prepare the hearts both of teachers and scholars for the studies of the day, and at the same time greatly help in the spiritual culture of the whole school.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

THIRD QUARTER.

1. July 1.—**Joshua, Successor to Moses.** Josh. 1 : 1–9.
2. July 8.—**Passing over Jordan.** Josh. 3 : 5–17.
3. July 15.—**The Plains of Jericho.** Josh. 5 : 10–15 and 6 : 1–5.
4. July 22.—**Israel Defeated at Ai.** Josh. 7 : 10–26.
5. July 29.—**The Reading of the Law.** Josh. 8 : 30–35.
6. Aug. 5.—The Cities of Refuge. Josh. 20 : 1–9.
7. Aug. 12.—The Last Days of Joshua. Josh. 24 : 14–29.
8. Aug. 19.—Israel Forsaking God. Judg. 2 : 6–16.
9. Aug. 26.—Gideon's Army. Judg. 7 : 1–8.
10. Sept. 2.—The Death of Samson. Judg. 16 : 21–31
11. Sept. 9.—Ruth and Naomi. Ruth 1 : 14–22.
12. Sept. 16.—A Praying Mother. 1 Sam. 1 : 21–28.
13. Sept. 23.—The Child Samuel. 1 Sam. 3 : 1–19.
14. Sept. 30.—Review.

Lesson I. **JOSHUA SUCCESSOR TO MOSES.** July 1st, 1883.

Josh. 1 : 1–9. Memorize vs. 6, 7.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might."—Eph. 6 : 10.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Num. 27 : 12–23.....*Joshua Appointed.*
T. Deut. 31 : 1–13.....*Moses' Charge.*
W. Deut. 31 : 14–23.....*Moses and Joshua.*
Th. Josh. 1 : 1–18.....*Joshua Encouraged.*
F. Eph. 6 : 10–18.....*"Be Strong in the Lord."*
S. Isa. 41 : 8–20.....*"I Will Help Thee."*
S. Heb. 4 : 1–16.....*The Promised Rest.*

TOPIC.

God's Words about Success.

LESSON PLAN

1. The Leader Commissioned. vs. 1, 2. **2. The Leader Encouraged.** vs. 3–6. **3. The Leader Counseled.** vs. 7–9.

Time.—B. C. 1451. **Place.**—The plains of Moab, on the eastern bank of the Jordan, opposite Jericho.

Catechism.—Q. 24. *How doth Christ execute the office of a prophet?* A. Christ executeth the office of a prophet, in revealing to us, by his word and Spirit, the will of God for our salvation.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 515: "Stand up, my soul." Other hymns, 225, 518, 666.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

INTRODUCTORY.—The book of Joshua takes up the history of the Chosen People at the death of Moses and narrates the crossing over into the promised land and the conquest of the same. It takes its name from the great leader whose exploits it records. Joshua was born in Egypt, and grew up a slave in the brick-fields, experiencing in that land the bitterness of the cruel bondage which the sons of Jacob were compelled to endure. He was with the people in their hour of deliverance and through the forty years' life in the wilderness. Every mention of him is with honor, and adds lustre to his name. He was then in preparation for his great work.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

1 Now after the death of Mo'ses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Josh'u-a, the son of Nun, Mo'ses' minister, saying, [Ex. 24 : 13; Deut. 1 : 38.]

2 Mo'ses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, *even* to the children of Is'ra-el. [Deut. 34 : 5.]

3 Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Mo'ses. [Deut. 11 : 24; Josh. 14 : 9.

4 From the wilderness and this Leb'a-non even unto the great river, the river Euphra'tes, all the land of the Hit'tites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast. [Gen. 15 : 18; Ex. 23 : 31; Num. 34 : 3–12.]

5 There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, *so* I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. [Deut. 7 : 24; Ex. 3 : 12; Ps. 46 : 11; Heb. 13 : 5.]

6 Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give them. [Deut. 31 : 7; 1 Kings 2 : 2; Eph. 6 : 10.]

7 Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Mo'ses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it *to* the right

hand or *to* the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. [Num. 27 : 23; Deut. 5 : 32; 28 : 14; Col. 1 : 11.]

8 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. [Deut. 17 : 18, 19; Ps. 1 : 2; 19 : 14; 119 : 9–11.]

9 Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God *is* with thee whithersoever thou goest. [Deut. 31 : 7, 8, 23; Ps. 27 : 1; Jer. 1 : 8; Prov. 3 : 6.]

1 *Now.* Correctly *And.* Connecting the narrative about to be given with that which has gone before, showing that this is a continuation of the same history. It is an interesting fact that the first four books of the Pentateuch, and also the historical books, as far as First Chronicles, are joined together in the same way by the conjunction "and." *After the death of Moses.* See Deut. 34th chap. Moses died on the eastern side of the Jordan, without entering the land of promise. He died alone in the land of Moab, and was buried by the Lord himself in a valley over against the idol sanctuary of Beth-Peor. (This reference to the death of Moses links this lesson back to our last Old Testament lesson, Dec. 11, 1881.) After the death of Moses there followed thirty days of national mourning for the great leader and lawgiver. It was probably after this period of weeping that Joshua received the commands recorded in the following verses. *The Lord spake.* In what way this communication was made we are not informed; probably by direct revelation. *Joshua.* For a sketch of his life previous to this time see article on another page. *Moses' minister.* Not Moses' *servant*, but *minister*, his official attendant, his prime minister. He had occupied this position for some time. For his formal appointment see Num. 27 : 18.

2 *Moses my servant.* A title of the highest distinction peculiarly associated with Moses. *Now . . . arise.* Joshua had been already appointed as the successor of Moses (Deut. 31 : 7), but waited after the death of the great leader for a specific command to take up his new duties. *This Jordan.* Called *this* Jordan because it was near by, as the people were encamped on its banks. The Jordan is a very remarkable river, both in itself and in its historical associations. It rises in northern Palestine, among the mountains of Lebanon. Three mountain streams, the Hasbany, the Leddan and the Banias, which collect the waters of numerous springs of Lebanon, unite in the plain El Huleh and form a lake—Lake Merom, as it was called in the ancient times, now Lake Huleh. From this lake the river flows sluggishly for two miles, and then rushes with swift current and rapid descent, until it empties into the Lake of Gennesareth. In these nine miles it descends 900 feet. It flows out again, and soon becomes a foaming torrent, and plunges through twenty-seven rapids, with a fall of 606 feet, till it empties into the Dead Sea. The whole distance in a straight line from Gennesareth to the Dead Sea is sixty miles, but as the river runs in its tortuous course it is two hundred miles. The level of the Jordan at its mountain source is 1,700 feet above the Mediterranean, and at its mouth, where it empties into the Dead Sea, it is 1,300 feet below, so that its entire fall is 3,000 feet. From its rapid descent and its swift current it takes its name—"The Descender." *All this people.* Numbering, according to the last census (Num. 26 : 51), 601,730 men, from twenty years old and upward. The whole number is estimated at above two millions. *The land.* Of Canaan.

3 *Every place.* Within the limits described in the next verse. *That the sole of your foot shall tread upon.* There seems to be a reference here to the necessity for occupation and conquest; the land was theirs by gift from God, but the sole of their feet must stand upon it before it would be actually theirs. It must be conquered. *As I said to Moses.* Deut. 11 : 24.

4 *From the wilderness.* The boundaries of the land of promise are here given. See also Gen. 15 : 18–21; Ex. 23 : 31; Num. 34 : 1–12; Deut. 11 : 24. On the south was the Arabian desert; on the north Mount Lebanon; on the east the river Euphrates; on the west the Mediterranean. *This Lebanon.* Called *this* Lebanon because though so far away the mountain range was visible from where the people lay encamped. Lebanon means "white"—the *White* Mountains, because always covered with snow. *The great river.* The Euphrates is usually in the Bible designated in this way. The name Euphrates means "the good and abounding river," and it is the greatest and most important of the rivers of western Asia. *The land of the Hittites.* Strictly, the Hittites were the descendents of Heth, the second son of Canaan. Here, however, they stand for the Canaanites in general. For an interesting mention of them, see Gen. 23 : 3–5. *The great sea.* The Mediterranean; called "the great" because it was the greatest sea known to the Israelites. *The going down of the sun.* The westward limit was on the sea in whose waters the sun appeared to set. *Coast.* Boundary line. The word "coast" is so used, with very few exceptions,

in this book, not referring to sea line, but border or boundary. The whole area thus described embraced about 56,000 miles, equal to the States of New York and Vermont; but Canaan proper or Palestine was less in area than New Jersey. The people never really possessed all the territory here marked out as given to them, except for a brief time during the reigns of David and Solomon.

5 *To stand before thee.* In battle; a pledge of victory and success at every point. This promise was made to Joshua as the leader of the people, and it was fulfilled, for they were never permanently defeated. *As I was with Moses.* There was to be no break in the divine presence. Joshua knew how the Lord had been with Moses.

6 *Be strong and of a good courage.* Literally, *Strong and firm.* The first word refers to strength of hand and arm in grasping anything; and the other word implies firmness in the knees, in standing fixedly in one's position. Joshua was exhorted to lay hold boldly and to allow nothing to drive him from his position. *Shalt thou divide.* Apportion or arrange the lots of the different tribes. This assurance that he would complete the work would encourage him to undertake it.

7 *Only.* There was a condition on which the promise just given depended; Joshua must do his part. *That thou mayest.* It would require both strength and courage to keep the law and do all that would be required of him. *That thou mayest prosper.* Literally, *Act wisely.* He alone acts wisely wherever he goes who is guided at all times by the counsel of God.

8 *This book of the law.* The Pentateuch. The book of the law was laid up in the holy place. Perhaps it was lying before Joshua at this time. *Shall not depart out of thy mouth.* He must continually speak to the people in the words of the law. It must be the theme of his conversation and of his instruction. *Thou shalt meditate therein.* It should be his constant study; he should make himself familiar with its teachings. No careless reading would do, but its words must be deeply pondered so that he might penetrate to its inmost meaning. *That thou mayest observe to do.* Obedience is always to be the object of Bible study; no matter how much we read the holy book, all amounts to nothing unless we *do* what the Scriptures tell us to do. *Prosperous . . . success.* True success always comes to those, and comes only to those, who keep the commandments of God.

9 *Have not I commanded thee?* God reminds Joshua that he who has spoken to him in command and promise is able to do that which he has engaged to do, and that there can be no failure on the divine part. He then repeats the commands and promises previously given to add emphasis to them.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

After the death of Moses . . . the Lord spake unto Joshua. Moses had done his work, and had only brought the people to the edge of the land of promise. He could not lead them over into their inheritance. Joshua is then called to take up the unfinished work and carry it on to completion. He was to lead the people into Canaan, and bring them into full possession of their promised inheritance. It needs no explanation to show the typical meaning of this. Moses represents the law, which cannot save. It can only bring men to the edge of the spiritual kingdom; it cannot give peace, or life, or hope, or a home in the presence of God. Then Joshua comes, Jesus, the true Joshua, and leads his people over into the land of glorious promise and puts them into full possession. We cannot be saved by the law; it leaves us still outside after it has done its best; Jesus only can take us into the kingdom of grace.

Joshua. His original name was Oshea or Hoshea, which meant "*salvation.*" His name was afterward changed to Jehoshua, or Joshua, which means "*God's* salvation," or "Jehovah the Saviour." This change was made by combining the name of God with his original name. He was to bring salvation to the people, but it was to be only as God's instrument. He was to be *God's* salvation. He not only had the name of Jesus, but was a type of Jesus. His work was typical of the work of Jesus. He led his people into Canaan and conquered for them the inheritance promised to them, vanquishing their enemies and saving them from the innumerable dangers that beset them.

Moses' minister. He did not begin at the top, but had worked his way up step by step by faithfulness in the lower and humbler duties. Reading over the whole story of his life we learn that he began as a slave in the brickfields of Egypt. Then he became a soldier, when the cause of his people needed service in battle; and as a soldier he was true, valiant, brave and loyal. By these qualities he rose, proving by faithful and efficient service in the lowlier duties that he was fitted for higher responsibilities. As he was fitted he rose. At length he became Moses' adjutant or first officer.

Serving faithfully in this position, when Moses died he was promoted to the vacant place, and became the great leader of the people. There was no "luck" in his success; it was by simple faithfulness that he rose. He filled well every place in which he was tried. If he had failed as a soldier or as a subordinate officer, he would never have been elevated to the higher trusts which were at last reposed in his hands. This bit of personal history ought to have its lessons for the boys and young men who study it. There is an impression abroad that success in life can be achieved by smartness or by "strokes of good luck," or in some other way, at least, than by honest hard work and simple devotion to duty. Never was there a falser idea abroad. The only way to rise to success and honor and to the highest places is by starting wherever God puts us and doing with faithfulness and earnestness the humblest duties of our calling. We can only get up to a higher place when we prove ourselves ready for it. Success is a ladder or a stairway, and we must go up step by step to reach the top.

Moses . . . is dead; now therefore arise. Joshua was mourning for Moses, but sorrow was not his only duty. It was right to cherish the memory of so good and great a man as Moses, but the way to do this was not by sitting there in grief day after day. Joshua had a work to do. He was to take up the work that Moses had laid down and carry it forward to completion. There is a lesson here for all who are called to mourn the death of friends; they are not to sit down in inconsolable grief and spend the remainder of their life in weeping. They are to arise and take up the work that waits for their hands. Our duties do not fall out of our hands when our friends die. Our grief is not to be allowed to break up our work. Oftentimes the death of a friend puts upon us new responsibilities and duties. When a father dies the son is called to take up the burdens that the father has been carrying. The death of a husband lays new responsibilities on the wife, which she must now assume. Grief for our friends is in no case to interrupt us in the work God has given us to do. There is danger that we sometimes forget this when overwhelmed by a great and sudden sorrow, and that we sink down in discouragement. More than one life has been wrecked in the storms of sorrow. There is an important lesson in this ringing call: "Moses is dead . . . now therefore arise thou."

Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you. God gives us blessings, but we must go out and take possession of them ourselves. He gives them to us and assures us that they shall be ours, and yet we must win them by our own faith and courage.

As I was unto Moses. God does not forget his promises. He remembers every engagement he makes, every pledge he gives, and never fails to do just as he has said he would do. No matter how long ago he made the promise, when the time comes to fulfill it he will do it. We can rest upon the divine words and be perfectly sure that not one of them shall ever fail us.

There shall not any man be able to stand before thee. When God sends any one on an errand for him he will always give him all the needed strength for the work he has to do or for the battles he has to fight. No one should ever fail in any duty to which he is divinely called. If he fails it must be because he does not do his own part, for God makes provision for his success. No power can stand in the way if God has sent him and if he does his own part.

I will be with thee; I will not fail thee. That was the reason no man would be able to stand against him; God would be with him at all times, in every duty, in every battle, in every difficulty, in every danger. Can a man fail when God is with him? "If God be for us who can be against us?" This is not a promise that was given to Joshua and never to any other one; it is made to every one whom God sends forth on any errand for him. And there is no one who is not sent forth on some mission in life just as truly as was Joshua on his mission. What a grand inspiration it would be to us if we only realized, as we set out in life, that God is sending us out to do a work for him, and that he is going to be with us at every step of the way, and therefore that we cannot by any possibility fail if we are only faithful!

Be strong and of a good courage. Never were strength and firmness more needed than now. Every young man should learn to take hold of duty with energy, and to stand like a rock in the face of all opposition and in the presence of all danger. Want of these very elements of character is the cause of many failures in life. A man must have purpose and decision if he would succeed. Long years ago Jacob said of one of his sons: "Unstable as water he shall not excel." And Reuben never did excel. He was not a bad man—he only lacked purpose and decision. His intentions were good enough, but nothing ever came out of them. A young man must learn that it is not enough to be *good;* many a good man never amounts to anything because he has neither energy nor firmness. Joshua's life is the very best illustration of the counsel here given to him. He had all

the elements of strength of character, and he was firm as the everlasting hills.

Unto this people thou shalt divide . . . the land. He was not going out on any mere experiment. It was no Utopian dream floating through his brain that fired his ambition. Many a man has seen an imaginary goal before him and set out toward it but never reached it. Here, however, was a goal that *God* set for this man. He could only fail to reach it through his own unfaithfulness in duty. He was assured by God himself that his work would be carried through to final and complete success. It must have been many a time a glorious inspiration to him in hours of discouragement and difficulty to remember that he was destined to finish his allotted work. He could not by any possibility fail. Every Christian has a similar assurance as he accepts Christ and sets out to follow him, or as he enters on any allotted duty. There are hardships and obstacles and enemies and battles and hindrances; he encounters dangers and discouragements; but he has the assurance at the very outset that he will not fail in the end if he is only faithful. "Be thou faithful unto death, and thou shalt receive the crown of life." This ought to be a strong inspiration to every Christian. The way is ofttimes hard, but the promise is sure that *he cannot fail.* Every one of us has a mission in life, a mission on which God himself sends us; if we accept this mission and go forth on it in faith and with earnestness and fidelity we cannot fail.

Then shalt thou make thy way prosperous, and . . . have good success. When? What are the conditions of success here laid down? Every man wants to be successful. If there is any secret of success here, should we not try to find it out? If we read vs. 7 and 8 through we shall learn on what conditions Joshua's success depended. One was, "Be thou strong." Another was, "Be courageous." Another was obedience to the law of God, unswerving obedience. Times have greatly changed since God himself laid down these rules for a successful career, but the principles of life have not changed. It is just as true now as it was then that to be successful in life in the true sense, one must "fear God and keep his commandments."

LESSON POINTS.

1. The workman dies but the work goes on. One dies and another is called to take up his work. v. 1.

2. Faithfulness in humbler service prepares for promotion. v. 1.

3. When our friends die we must not allow our grief to break up our life; we must rise and go on with our duty. v. 2.

4. God assigns us our place and mission in life. v. 2.

5. God gives us an inheritance, yet we have to win it for ourselves. v. 3.

6. God does not forget his promises. v. 3.

7. When we go forth on God's errands we are invincible. v. 5.

8. The reason for this unconquerableness is that God himself goes with every one he sends on any errand. v. 5.

9. One whom God sends forth cannot fail in his mission save through his own unfaithfulness. v. 6.

10. Strength and courage are necessary to success, even when God has made the largest promises. v. 7.

11. The way to success is the way of obedience to God's commandments. vs. 7, 8.

12. Those who would succeed in life must make the word of God their constant study so as to know how to live. v. 8.

13. We need never fear to start out in the most difficult duty when God sends us. v. 9.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

BY THE REV. JAMES A. WORDEN, D.D.

It may be a trial to leave the New Testament and return to the Old; yet the lessons before us will prove very rich in instruction. This opening lesson is especially suited to the teacher. To his class he is to be a Joshua to conduct them "over this Jordan," the dividing line from the world; to lead them in conquering Canaan in driving out their foes.

I. LINES OF APPROACH.

1. Read in concert Deut. chap. 34. 2. Call for an outline of Moses' life. 3. Call for a sketch of Joshua's career up to this time. 4. As to the book of Joshua, simply have them turn and read the sanction given it in the New Testament. Heb. 11: 30, 31; 13: 5; James 2: 25. 5. Have in your hand or draw on your tablet the map of Palestine.

II. SKETCH THE OUTLINE.

Take the lesson apart, then obtain a plan, which will be a string on which you can combine all the parts. I suggest—

JOSHUA { CALLED, ENCOURAGED, INSTRUCTED.

The call is recorded in vs. 1–4; the encouragement vs. 5, 6, and the instruction vs. 7, 8.

III. QUESTION AND APPLY.

1. *Joshua Called.* What is Moses called? What is it to be "the servant of Jehovah?" What is the meaning of the word *Joshua?* What is Joshua called? How had he ministered to Moses? How had this prepared him to succeed Moses? What work did God give to Joshua? v. 2. Point out on the map the land described in vs. 3, 4. In what respects was this a *difficult* work? (Enemies, strange country, fortified cities, Jordan, Joshua's army must be fed, the women and children protected, etc.) Press earnestly on the scholars that every one has a particular work to do for Christ—a plot in his vineyard to work, a post in Christ's army to fill. Jehovah called Joshua by living voice; how does he call now? Parents, pastors, teachers are soon to die; are you being prepared to take their place? What will be the measure of our success? "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon." Faith and effort.

2. *Joshua Encouraged.* Why did Joshua specially need courage? How are young Christians tempted to be cowardly? What four promises did God give to Joshua? vs. 5, 6. What promises does he give to us? Assign one or more of these promises to each member of the class to find and read. Matt. 28: 20; 2 Cor. 6: 16; Rom. 8: 32; Ps. 121: 7; 2 Cor. 9: 8; 1: 20; John 11: 26; 14: 27, 26, 13, 2, 3, 14; 16: 24; 1 John 1: 8, 9; Rev. 14: 13; Ezek. 36: 26, 27; Rom. 6: 23; Isa. 10: 19, 20; Deut. 33: 27; Isa. 35: 10; 51: 11; 45: 17.

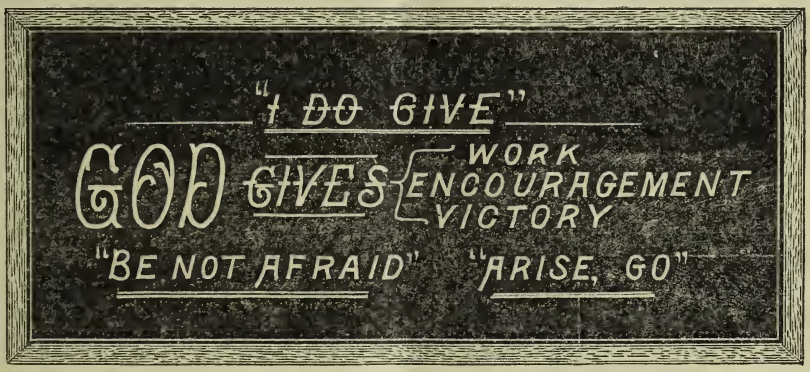
3. *Joshua Instructed.* What was to be Joshua's study? Why? How much of the Bible did Joshua possess? How was Joshua commanded to treat the law? 1. Obey it. 2. Obey "*all* the law;" "turn not from it to the right hand or the left." 3. Speak of it. 4. Meditate upon it. What lessons are there here for a Sabbath scholar? What lessons for all Christians?

Questions on the Lesson for Sabbath, July 8th, to be assigned:

1. What can you tell of Jericho?
2. Describe the visit of the spies to Jericho?
3. What was the ark of the covenant?
4. What was the time of year of the crossing and the condition of the Jordan?
5. Of what is the passing of the Jordan a type?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

BY J. HOWARD SEAL.



SUGGESTIONS.—Joshua was quite an old man. The people he was to govern were perverse and rebellious, the enemy he was to conquer formidable and warlike. There was need of divine assurance to sustain his courage. The land he was to possess was already given to him. v. 3. But he must go there. "Every place that the sole of your foot shall *tread upon* that have I given unto you." *God gives work;* we must overcome the obstacles in our path. *God gives encouragement;* "I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." *God gives victory;* "there shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life." The application, "Be not afraid, arise, go."

We overcome by GOD'S PRESENCE / PROTECTION / POWER *IN SERVICE.*

No man, or no thing, shall be able to stand before us if we go forward in the strength of the Lord "and in the power of his might." We can subdue all passions, all sins, if we "be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." He is our Joshua. God has promised us success. He asks us to be of good courage.

Directions for Coloring.—"I do give," white, heavy letter; "God gives," red shaded with yellow; "Work," orange; "Encouragement," purple; "Victory," white; "Be not afraid," "Arise, go," green shaded with white.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

BY MRS. G. R. ALDEN—"PANSY.

Dear teachers, however much joy you may have in teaching the lessons in the New Testament, I think if you glance over the selections for the coming half year you will be struck with the manner in which they can be made to appeal to little children. It would seem as though many of them must have been chosen with special reference to the work of the primary teacher. I hope we shall each find Christ in every one of them.

A brief review of lessons long laid aside will be necessary to the introduction of this one. Probably, to many of the little children, it will be new ground, instead of review; still most of them will know something about Moses; that he was leading a great company through the wilderness; that he died, and that a new leader was chosen. Present this new leader, Joshua, by name to the class. A straight mark on the board will do for his picture. About him, they will hear much. It becomes them, therefore, to make careful acquaintance with him.

The first thing to notice is that God is speaking to him. He gives him special and careful directions.

Outline an open Bible. Print at the top, "HOLY BIBLE," and underneath, "*All the Law*," while you call from class the fact that God told Joshua to observe to do according to all of it. Make little crooked paths at the right and left of the Bible. Make a guide board, with a finger pointing to the paths. Print on it the words, "TURN NOT." And down among the paths print, "Neither to the right hand," "Nor the left."

At this stage of the lesson the teacher may profitably spend a few minutes in naming some of those little crooked paths into which children's feet are apt to turn aside from the exact law of God. The scholars may be called upon to name some of the paths; which exercise will discover to the teacher the temptations of her scholars. Care should be taken to impress the fact that these commands are as much for us as for Joshua.

Finally, if the law is obeyed, what is the result? Here the teacher has a chance to display several blue arches, that shall mark the promises of God. Notice how strong they are: Such an one shall prosper. Where, and when? Lead the class to mark the emphatic words, "Whithersoever thou goest." Make three arches. One to mark the gift of the land; another for "good success;" another for "God with thee." I should make an earnest effort to teach the last verse of the lesson entire to the children as one which conveys direction and support for any time and place, and a promise that will last for ever. One practical application is obvious.

Try to urge your children to study at least one Bible verse every week, making its words their own. Also, the one command which runs all through "the law" is—Give your *heart* to Jesus.

Lesson II. **PASSING OVER JORDAN.** **July 8th, 1883.**

Josh. 3: 5-17. Memorize vs. 7-9.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee."—Isa. 43: 2.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Josh. 1: 10-18.....*Preparation Made.*
T. Josh. 3: 1-17.....*Passing over Jordan.*
W. Josh. 4: 1-24.....*Memorial Stones.*
Th. Isa. 43: 1-13.....*"I will Be with Thee."*
F. Ex. 15: 1-18.....*"Thou shalt Bring them In."*
S. Ps. 114: 1-8.....*Jordan Driven Back.*
S. Isa. 51: 10-16.....*A Way for the Ransomed.*

TOPIC.

Entering the Promised Land.

LESSON PLAN.

1. Preparation Made. vs. 5-8. **2. Instruction Given.** vs. 9-13. **3. The River Crossed.** vs. 14-17.

Time.—The 10th day of the first month, B. C. 1451. (See Josh. 4: 19.) **Place.**—The Jordan, near Jericho.

Catechism.—Q. 25. *How doth Christ execute the office of a priest?* A. Christ executeth the office of a priest, in his once offering up of himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, and reconcile us to God, and in making continual intercession for us.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, chant 34: "He leadeth me." Other hymns, 307, 324, 594.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—There is some difficulty in determining the precise order of events as recorded in these first three chapters. The difficulty arises from Joshua's words in chap. 1: 11, that in three days the host would pass over Jordan, while if we count the days spent by the spies (chap. 1: 22) and the three days mentioned in chap. 3: 2, we have at least seven or eight days, including the time required by the spies in going and returning. Two explanations are offered. Some writers believe that the spies were sent out before Joshua had received the command to cross over the Jordan. Others suggest that while Joshua expected to cross in three days, the discovery of the spies in Jericho and their detention of three days in the mountains necessitated a delay in the moving of the host. In either case Joshua, as soon as he received the charge from God, set about preparing to execute it. The host consisted of women and children as well as armed men, and many preparations were necessary before they could pass over. They first moved to the edge of the river, where the final preparations were made.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

5 And Josh'u-a said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves: for to-morrow the LORD will do wonders among you. [Ex. 19: 10, 14, 15; Lev. 20: 7; Num. 11: 18; 1 Sam. 16: 5; Joel 2: 16.]

6 And Josh'u-a spake unto the priests, saying, Take up the ark of the covenant, and pass over before the people. And they took up the ark of the covenant, and went before the people. [Num. 4: 15.]

7 ¶ And the LORD said unto Josh'u-a, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Is'ra-el, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, *so* I will be with thee. [Josh. 4: 14; 1 Chron. 29: 25; 2 Chron. 1: 1.]

8 And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the water of Jor'dan, ye shall stand still in Jor'dan.

9 ¶ And Josh'u-a said unto the children of Is'ra-el, Come hither, and hear the words of the LORD your God.

10 And Josh'u-a said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God *is* among you, and *that* he will without fail drive out from before you the Ca'naan-ites, and the Hitt'ites, and the Hiv'ites, and the Per'izz-ites, and the Gir'gash-ites, and the Am'or-ites, and the Je'bus-ites. [Deut. 5: 26; Ps. 44: 2.]

11 Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into Jor'dan.

12 Now therefore take you twelve men out of the tribes of Is'ra-el, out of every tribe a man. [Josh. 4: 2.]

13 And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jor'dan, *that* the waters of Jor'dan shall be cut off *from* the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand upon an heap. [Ps. 78: 13.]

14 ¶ And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over Jor'dan, and the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people; [Acts 7: 45.]

15 And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jor dan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (for Jor dan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest,) [1 Chron. 12: 15; Jer. 12. 5; 49: 19.]

16 That the waters which came down from above stood *and* rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam, that *is* beside Zar'e-tan: and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, *even* the salt sea, failed, *and* were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jer'i-cho.

17 And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jor'dan, and all the Is'ra-el-ites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jor'dan. [Ex. 14: 29.]

5 *Sanctify yourselves.* On the eve of the delivery of the law a similar command was given. See Ex. 19: 10–15. This sanctification would consist partly in ceremonial ablutions, as described in the passage above referred to, and partly in spiritual exercises, penitence, confession, turning to God with the heart and consecration to him. They were about to pass through a wonderful experience, and must make solemn preparation for it. *To-morrow.* According to chap. 4: 19, this was the tenth of Nisan, the anniversary of the day on which, forty years before, they had chosen every man a lamb for the paschal victim on the eve of the departure from Egypt. Ex. 12: 3. *Wonders.* Referring to the opening of the path through the river.

6 *To the priests.* It was their duty to bear the ark. *Take up the ark.* The ark was called by different names, "the ark of God" (1 Sam. 3: 3); the "ark of testimony" (Ex. 25: 22), and here and elsewhere the "ark of the covenant." It was a chest of acacia wood, overlaid with the purest gold, within and without. It was two and a half cubits in length, one and a half cubits in breadth, and the same in height. The top or lid of the ark was a plate of pure gold, called the mercy seat, which was overshadowed by two gold figures of cherubim, with outspread wings and faces turned toward each other and eyes bent downward, as if desirous to look into the mysteries of the sacred ark. In the ark were the two tables of stone on which

the finger of God had written the Ten Words of the Law on Mount Sinai. Ex. 32: 16; 34: 1, 28; 40: 20. For a description of the ark, see Ex. 37: 1–9. It was the symbol of God's presence. *They took up the ark . . . and went before the people.* This was the day following—the day of the crossing. For the instructions with regard to the order of the march, see vs. 3, 4. The ark was to be their guide. They were to watch its movements and follow it. It should move in advance of the host, and they were to follow at a distance of two thousand cubits. They were not to come near to it. The reason for this distance was not from reverence, for when the ark stopped in the river bed (v. 17) the people all passed close by it. They were to keep at this distance behind it that they might see from the river banks and bluffs the miracle of the cutting off of the waters, which they could not so well have observed if they had followed close behind the ark. Another reason for this distance was that the ark might show them the way—"that ye may know the way by which ye must go; for ye have not passed this way heretofore." Had the foremost of the people crowded close behind the ark those who came after could not have kept it in view.

7 *The Lord said.* This revelation was probably made before the procession began to move. *This day will I begin to magnify thee.* The Lord here gives one reason for the miracle he was about to work. It was as a credential for Joshua himself, to prove to the people that he was indeed their divinely appointed leader. Moses had in like manner been certified to them by the miracles which God wrought by him in Egypt and the Red Sea; and now the Lord would honor Joshua in their sight by this great work of the opening of the Jordan.

9 *Come hither and hear.* In vs. 9–13 Joshua tells the people what God is going to do for them and what they must do. This was probably the first they knew of the miracle the Lord was to work for them.

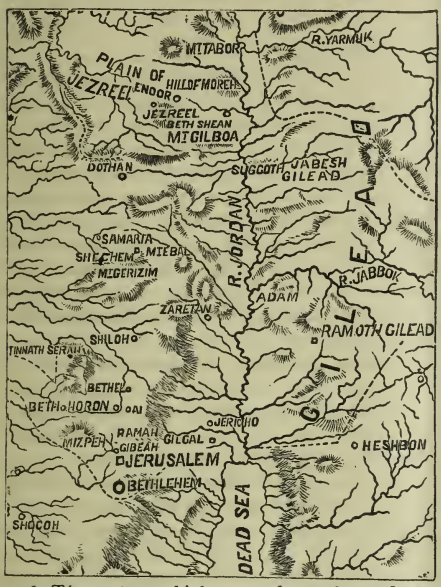
10 *Hereby ye shall know.* This was another reason for the great wonder the Lord was about to perform—that the people might know that the living God was among them. It was to reassure them that God himself was among them, and that they could not fail in the work before them. This stupendous wonder at the very beginning of their march would embolden them to move without fear against the fierce and strong nations that they were to drive out before they could take the land which they were now about to enter. The title "living God" is applied here to remind them that their God is not a mere dead idol as were the gods of the heathen nations around them. *That he will without fail drive out.* The God who could divide the river could also expel the strong nations that now held possession of Canaan. The original inhabitants of the country are here named. The *Canaanites* were the "lowlanders," inhabiting the lower tracts of the country on the coast and along the western bank of the Jordan. The *Hittites* were descended from Heth, the second son of Canaan. Of them Abraham purchased Machpelah. Gen. 23: 10. At that time the tribe was small, but at the time of the conquest it was strong. They dwelt around Hebron. The *Hivites* were a peaceful people, dwelling about Hermon and Lower Lebanon and in the highlands, afterward occupied by Benjamin. They followed the pursuits of industry and grew prosperous. The *Perizzites*, or "rustics," dwelt in open unwalled towns, and followed agricultural pursuits. The *Girgashites* are supposed to have been a family of the Hivites, and not a separate nation, and to have dwelt to the east of the Lake of Gennesareth. The *Amorites*, or "mountaineers," occupied the heights west of the Dead Sea, stretching west to Hebron, and also some tracts on the east of the Jordan. They were the strongest of the nations dwelling in the country. The *Jebusites* inhabited the mountains of Jebus, afterward Jerusalem. They were not driven out of their fortified places until David's time. 2 Sam. 5: 6–8.

12 *Take you twelve men.* See chap. 4: 2–9. They were to carry twelve stones out of the river-bed to the other side, with which they were to erect a memorial pillar as a witness of the great event of the day.

13 *As soon as the soles of the feet.* The priests bearing the ark were to move down toward the river, and as soon as their feet touched the water the river should be cut off above and cease to flow. *The Lord of all the earth.* A title of the Most High, implying that he was the God who ruled over all nations as well as over Israel, and was able therefore to give to his people victory over all their foes.

15 *Jordan overfloweth all his banks.* This is the statement of what occurred every year at this time. It was the season of the barley harvest, and the melting of the snows on Hermon caused and still causes the river to overflow its lower banks. This fact is mentioned here as making the miracle still more remarkable. At this time of the year it was impossible to ford the river. It could be passed only by swimming, and even this was a dangerous feat. The whole host with women and children could never have crossed in this way. There were no

bridges nor any means of transportation by which they could have been carried over.



16 *The waters which came down from above.* The priests only had gone down to the water's edge; the people still stood on the bluffs, in plain sight of the river. When the feet of the priests touched the water the flow of the stream was arrested. *Very far from the city Adam.* Rather, *Very far away, by Adam, the city which is beside Zarthan.* The city Adam was situated, it is thought by some, where now the ford Damieh is found, with remains of a bridge, of the Roman period. Zaretan, or correctly Zarthan, is mentioned in 1 Kings 4: 12; 7: 46, and is by some identified with the modern Surtabeh, seventeen miles above Jericho, where high rocks on both sides of the river make the valley very narrow, and almost build a wall across it. The description seems to indicate that the waters stopped flowing, were held back or dammed up at some point miles away from the crossing-place, leaving the channel bare both above and below as far as the eye could see. *The sea of the plain.* The Dead Sea. *The people passed over.* The priests stood still bearing the ark, and the people passed over, perhaps at different points. In chap. 4: 10 we are told that they *hasted* over. According to the tradition of the Jews the women and children were placed in the centre, from the fear lest they should be swept away by the current. The order of the crossing is detailed more fully in chap. 4: 1–13.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

Sanctify yourselves: for to-morrow the Lord will do wonders among you. God will not use unclean vessels. The people are not to perform the wonders themselves, but they were to get themselves in such condition that God could do the great things for them. There is a lesson here for us. Our part in obtaining spiritual blessings from God is to make sure that we are in condition to receive them. The blessings themselves are to come from God. He is ever ready to give to us, if we are ready to receive. The preparation necessary for receiving is cleanness of heart and of hand. Even God cannot do any great thing for us if we are cherishing sin, or if our hands are stained. Prayer will not be answered if any wicked thing is hidden in the heart. "If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me." No blessing will be granted unless we first cleanse our hearts and our hands. God cannot fill us with rich spiritual gifts and blessings until we throw away the poor trifles we have been clutching. As soon as we are ready the work will begin. "*To-morrow* the Lord will do wonders." That is, if you sanctify yourself *to-day*. The delay is never on God's part. When a church is ready the blessing comes. When a heart is ready the wonder of regeneration is wrought in it. When the vessel is ready for God's use he will quickly employ it. If God is not using us or blessing us we may well stop and inquire whether we are ready to be used or blessed.

They took up the ark . . . and went before the people. The ark was the symbol of God's presence. God himself was to lead them in their wonderful march. If we would only allow God always to lead us we should not so often have to halt on the brink of difficulties. If we would only follow him always, rivers would open for us too. When he goes before us he makes a way. One reason given earlier in the chapter why the ark should go in advance was that the people *might know the way.* It was a new way to them. "Ye have not passed this way heretofore." We are always coming up to experiences which are new to us, to paths over which we have never passed before. Indeed, all life is, in one sense, new to us. We start out each morning on a way which is unfamiliar to us. We do not know what new and strange experiences any day may bring to us. Then there are many special times in every life when these words are true. We come to ways that are new and strange, of whose trials and duties we know nothing whatever. If we have no guidance in these unfamiliar ways we shall not get safely through them. We need to put the ark always "to the fore," that we may know the way. We

have no ark now of wood and gold to lead us, but we have Christ himself, who desires to be our guide in every experience of life.

This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel. A man must be truly great when God honors him. How different is this kind of greatness from that which men acquire for themselves by gathering a little money, or getting a little fame, or winning a little power! Yet there are a great many more seeking after this latter kind than after the former. The way God honors a man is by using him to do good or great things.

Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you, and that he will without fail drive out . . . the Canaanites. The miracle of the crossing was a pledge that the work of conquest should be completed. The same God who could hold back the waters until a nation had passed over, could also drive out the strongest and fiercest tribes from the land. If the crossing of the Jordan represents the new birth, the beginning of a Christian life, he who can convert a soul can also complete the work of spiritual conquest. As Paul puts it: "He which began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ."

As soon as the soles of the feet of the priests . . . shall rest in the waters . . . the waters . . . shall be cut off. There must be faith first. The priests must take up the ark and walk with it down to the river's edge, and even step into the flowing stream before the waters would be cut off. They did not see a path across the river before they started. They broke up their camps and began their march while there was no sign of any crossing place. They took the first step in "the brim of the water." If they had walked down *to* the edge and then stopped to wait for the path to be opened, it would not have been opened. If they had lifted their feet and held them over the water waiting for its flow to cease, they would have waited in vain. They must take one step *into* the water before the current would be cut off. We ought not to lose the lesson here taught. We must learn to take God at his word and go forward in duty, though we see no way by which we can go forward. The reason we are so often balked by difficulties is because we expect to see them removed before we venture to pass through them. If we would move right on in faith, as soon as our feet touch the brim, the waters would flow away and leave a path. A great many people stand on the edge of the Christian life, waiting to be assured of salvation, waiting for feelings, waiting for some sign, before they will start to follow Christ; whereas, the true thing is to believe what Christ says, and step out with courage and faith to follow him. If they would but do this the way would open before them. We are saved *by faith*, not by sight or by feeling.

As . . . the feet of the priests . . . were dipped in the brim of the water . . . the waters . . . failed and were cut off, and the people passed over. The waters were not cut off before they left their camps, nor while they were coming down the banks, nor even when they got close to the river. It was not till their feet were wet in the edge of the torrent that it ceased to flow. God does not open paths for us in advance of our coming. He does not promise help before help is actually needed. He does not remove obstacles or difficulties out of our way before we reach them, yet when the time comes and we are on the edge of the need, whatever it may be, God's hand is stretched out. Many people forget this, and are for ever worrying about trials and difficulties that they foresee in the future. They expect that God is going to make the way plain and open before them miles and miles ahead, whereas he has promised only to do it step by step as they move on. In the golden text it is, "*When thou passest* through the waters, I will be with thee." You must get to the waters and *into* them before you can claim this promise. Many people dread death, and lament that they have not such "dying grace" as they hear of in others. Of course not when they are in good health, in the midst of duties, with death far in advance. Grace for *duty* now; dying grace when you come to die. When your feet are dipped in the brim of Jordan the torrent will sink away.

LESSON POINTS.

1. We must prepare ourselves for receiving blessing by cleansing our hearts. v. 5.

2. God is ready always to go before his people in all of their ways. v. 6.

3. We should never try to go in any way of life unless God leads us. v. 6.

4. Those are truly great whom God honors and magnifies. v. 7.

5. We should be touched with feelings of reverence when we see the works of grace wrought before us, for the living God is present. v. 10.

6. The God who is able to lead a soul *into* the kingdom, will not fail in fitting that soul for glory. v. 10.

7. Faith must not wait to see the way opened, but must accept God's promise, obey his command and step out, believing. v. 13.

8. If we want to follow Christ we must "remove from our tents" and begin to follow him, not waiting for sight or feeling. v. 14.

9. God does not remove difficulties before we come to them, nor does he give grace in advance of our needs. v. 15.

10. When we reach the stream and our feet are dipped in its brim, its waters part, but not till then. v. 16.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

Plan Suggested.

I. Hold a conversation on dangers and difficulties.

II. Show God's way of bringing Israel through Jordan.

III. Enforce and illustrate the practical lessons.

Methods Suggested.

I. Conversation on Dangers, etc.

Begin by a question and a short Bible reading, thus: What are meant by "waters" and "rivers" in the golden text? Have class read Job 27: 20; Ps. 18: 17; 32: 6; 69: 1, 2; 124: 5; Isa. 8: 6, 7. The Bible thus designates afflictions and trials, because they are *many*, *deep*, *dangerous*, *sudden*. What are some of the greatest dangers and difficulties in our Christian pathway? Let the class mention a number.

II. God's Way of Bringing Israel Through Jordan.

Briefly review last lesson. Recall the story of the settlement of Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh on the east side of Jordan (Num. 32: 1–33), and the account of the visit of the spies to Jericho.

1. *Picture the encampment of Israel.* Sketch with the pencil or chalk a rough outline of the hills and mountains of Moab, the level plain between the hills and the Jordan. Gain the co-operation of the class in describing the scene. Two millions men, women and children; their tents dot the mountains, hills and valleys. Two tribes and a half have taken up their permanent residence in Moab, Gilead and Bashan. Their immense herds of cattle and flocks of sheep. The length of time they have been there, in sight of the promised land. Day after day from their tent doors they look toward Canaan across Jordan. Who are here that came out of Egypt? Where are the others? How would they regard the Jordan?

2. *Picture the preparation.* "Early in the morning;" camp astir; march; toward Jordan; down the hills. Describe their camping along Jordan three days; the instruction of the officers. vs. 3, 4. Joshua; all eyes on him; his command. v. 5. Why was this given? Joshua's instructions to the priests. Describe the ark. Jehovah's encouragement of Joshua. vs. 7, 8. Carry out the full preparation. vs. 9–13.

3. *The crossing.* The priests are bearing the ark; the people do not come near it; three thousand feet of open distance intervene. The priests come with it on their shoulders to the brink of the river. They courageously walk down the bank into the rapid flowing water. The stream is cut off far above. God has put his unseen hand against the torrent coming down, and lo! it gathers into "one heap." The bed of the river is dry. Onward come the people after the priests, who now stand firm in the middle of the river-bed. The people hasten across; some fearful ones tremble. But there stands the ark firm and steady above them. Make it just as vivid and real as possible. Notice the difference between the dividing of Jordan and the opening of the Red Sea.

III. Enforce the Practical Lessons.

You will beware of *limiting* the application of the lesson to the crossing of the river of death. Jordan here typifies all great and overwhelming dangers and difficulties which lie in the Christian's course.

1. *Here revert to your introductory conversation.* Recall the "waters" and "rivers" we have to cross. There is not a scholar in your class who has not some special trial, terror or difficulty. How is your scholar to overcome ill treatment, slights, injuries, sickness, pain, bereavement, disappointment, poverty? What says this lesson as to our endurance of "the swellings of Jordan?" This it says: "Fear not. Go firmly forward toward the heavenly Canaan. The waters shall not overwhelm you." Why? The ark, even Jesus, is between the afflictions and you. He has gone through the river before you. Christ is with you in the rushing torrent. "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee." Dwell lovingly on this promise.

2. *Especially apply this lesson to the scholars* "crossing the Rubicon"—leaving the world and deciding for Christ. Conversion comes by looking unto Jesus, our ark, and going forward toward heaven. Follow your Leader through Jordan.

3. *Specially apply to our striking our tents and crossing the river of death.* This is not the only, but it is a most important application. All God's people have always loved to regard this lesson as an encouragement against the fear of death. Jesus has gone before. He is with us there. When dying, LOOK AT THE ARK. Forward, then, with Jesus toward Jordan, in Jordan, over Jordan!

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

SUGGESTIONS.—Notice the preparation for the crossing of Jordan (chap. 1: 10–18); the sending out of the two spies; their adventures, return and report. Chap. 2. "Divine providence does not do things abruptly; every great event is preceded by suitable preparation." No more pillar of cloud by day and fire by night. The ark of the covenant henceforth the visible symbol of the divine presence. The ark a type of Christ. God has opened a way for us out of this world of sin. "I am the way." We must have a full view of Christ if we would walk in God's way. "We can cross any river when the ark stands in the middle of the stream. Let the board be prepared without the cross, the sentence, "Keep the ark in sight," appearing alone. After impressing the lesson something after the above suggestions, erase the letters A and K in ark, and substitute CH and IST, and C OSS, as in diagram, and the board will read "Keep the cross of Christ in sight." Make the application, Christ is the way. *Pass over while the way is opened.* "No man cometh to the Father but by me." Have you passed over?

Directions for Coloring.—"I am the way," white shaded with brown; "Keep the ark in sight," white shaded with red; "Pass over," white shaded with blue. Cross outline in red.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The Teacher Before the Class.—

This long waved line stands for a river. What is its name? On this side of it I will make dots for the people who were there waiting to cross. How many dots must I make? (By questioning, as you rapidly make many dots, develop the idea of a great multitude.) Do you think they can get into boats and cross over? (Carefully explain the obstacles in the way of fording the river.) Now what are they going to do? On the other side is the land which God gave them for their home. Who can tell me how God made a way for them to cross? Call out the account from different scholars, letting all who have anything to tell raise their hands. Supply only the necessary links; yet when the children have given the *facts* they will be intensely interested in hearing you gather them into story form, thus: "Now let us think out the picture. This mark stands for the ark. Here are marks for the priests who carried it. They go down to the water's edge; the river is rushing on. The people are watching. There are those who fear that the priests will be drowned and the ark lost. Joshua has told them that God will take care of them, but it *is* so hard for some people to believe what God says. Now if you had been there you would have seen a very strange thing. Suddenly the water that was rushing down from away up here (indicate a point in the river) stopped coming. Then, in a short time, were seen the stones in the bed of the river; a long, smooth path for the people to pass, where but a few minutes before had been a rushing river." (At this point erase part of the river-line, leaving a path for the people.)

Imagine the people passing over. Tramp, tramp, tramp, go the crowds right in the bed of the river, but away up above them the water is piled like a great wall, held by God's hand, and they pass safely. Do you suppose that any of them were afraid? What reason had they for feeling safe? Let us make a picture to stand for the promise. Outline a blue arch directly over the river, printing on it, "I WILL," and call for the golden text.

Here is a question I want you to think about before you answer: Suppose some little boy

in the company had run away from the rest, and gone up the river miles and miles and tried to cross by himself, do you think he would have gotten safely over? How many ways did God make for his people to get over the Jordan?

Application.—See! This long dark line stands for a river that each one of us must cross. The name of the river is "DEATH." (Print the word on the river-line.) Over on the other side is the city which God has prepared for his children. (Print the word "HEAVEN" in bright letters on the *right* of the river-line.) But the river is deep and cold, and people are afraid. There is, however, one safe way to cross. God has made it. Erase part of the river-line, and print in its stead the name "JESUS," and over the whole place again the blue arch with the "I WILL" beneath it. Be careful to emphasize again the thought that there is but *one* way to cross safely. This will lead you to spend a moment in making the way to Jesus plain. No lesson should close without it.

Notice the recitation on *Westminster Lesson Leaf.* Teach the children to make little cups of their hands when they speak of holding the waters, and point upward when they speak his name.

Lesson III. THE PLAINS OF JERICHO. July 15th, 1883.

Josh. 5: 10–15; 6: 1–5. Memorize vs. 13–15.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days."—Heb. 11: 30.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Josh. 5: 10–15... *The Captain of the Lord's Host.*
T. Josh. 6: 1–14.... *Jericho Encompassed.*
W. Josh. 6: 15–27... *Jericho Taken and Destroyed.*
Th. Heb. 11: 30–40.. *Faith Powerful and Prevalent.*
F. Isa. 25: 1–12.... *"A Defenced City a Ruin."*
S. Ps. 98: 1–8..... *"Marvelous Things."*
S. Heb. 3: 17–4: 9.. *Heaven Entered by Faith.*

TOPIC.

Victory by Faith.

LESSON PLAN.

1. In the Promised Land. vs. 10–12. **2. The Captain of the Lord's Host.** vs. 13–15. **3. The Captain's Orders.** Chap. 6: 1–5.

Time.—B. C. 1451. **Place.**—Gilgal, in the plains of Jericho.

Catechism.—Q. 26. *How doth Christ execute the office of a king?* A. Christ executeth the office of a king, in subduing us to himself, in ruling and defending us, and in restraining and conquering all his and our enemies.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 517: "Awake, my soul, stretch every nerve." Other hymns, 505, 506, 516.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—After the people had passed over Jordan, the twelve men chosen for the purpose took twelve stones from the river-bed and set them up in the place where they lodged the first night, as a memorial of the great wonder of that day. When the host had all passed over the priests with the ark came up out of the channel, and the current of the Jordan flowed again as before. The place of the first encamping was on a plain that lay between Jericho and the river, called Gilgal. There the rite of circumcision, neglected while in the wilderness, was renewed. The passover was also observed.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

10 ¶ And the children of Is'ra-el encamped in Gil'gal, and kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jer'i-cho. [Ex. 12: 6; Num. 9: 5.]

11 And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the passover, unleavened cakes, and parched *corn* in the selfsame day. [Ex. 12: 18–20; Lev. 23: 6, 14.]

12 ¶ And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Is'ra-el manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Ca'naan that year. [Ex. 16: 35; Rev. 17: 16, 17.]

13 ¶ And it came to pass, when Josh'u-a was by Jer'i-cho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Josh'u-a went unto him, and said unto him, *Art* thou for us, or for our adversaries? [Gen. 18: 2; Ex. 23: 23.]

14 And he said, Nay; but *as* captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Josh'u-a fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? [Ex. 23: 20.]

15 And the captain of the LORD'S host said unto Josh'u-a, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest *is* holy. And Josh'u-a did so. [Ex. 3: 5.]

1 Now Jer'i-cho was straitly shut up because of the children of Is'ra-el: none went out, and none came in. [2 Kings 17: 4.]

2 And the LORD said unto Josh'u-a, See, I

have given into thine hand Jer'i-cho, and the king thereof, *and* the mighty men of valor. [Josh. 2: 9, 24; 8: 1; Deut. 7: 24.]

3 And ye shall compass the city, all *ye* men of war, *and* go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. [1 Cor. 1: 21–25; 2 Cor. 4: 7.]

4 And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. [Judg. 7: 16–22; Num. 10: 8.]

5 And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long *blast* with the ram's horn, *and* when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him. [Jer. 50: 15.]

10 *The children of Israel encamped in Gilgal.* This was their first encampment after crossing the Jordan, and here they remained, for a considerable time, while engaged in the conquest. Here it was that the twelve stones borne by the priests from the river-bed were set up as a memorial of the great wonder of the crossing. See chap. 4: 19, 20. The site of Gilgal is supposed at last to have been identified. The name Jiljulieh, meaning the same as Gilgal, still clings to a mound, about three miles south-east from the fountain, Ain es-Sultan, at the foot of the steep Judæan Mountains, where Jericho is supposed to have stood. At this point the host were about five hundred feet above the bed of the Jordan, and about four and a half miles distant from the river. The name Gilgal had its origin at this time, in the events which occurred there. It means "rolling," or literally, a "circle" or "wheel." It was so called because there the "reproach of Egypt" was rolled away from the people. Chap. 5: 9. Possibly another allusion may have been to the form of the memorial; the stones may have been set up in a circle. Such rings are still found in Moab and elsewhere, similar to the cromlechs which were associated with the earliest forms of religion in almost every country. Gilgal retained its importance in the nation for many centuries. It was the site of the tabernacle during the conquest and till its removal to Shiloh. It was one of the three towns in which Samuel administered justice. 1 Sam. 7: 16. It is mentioned in connection with the history of Saul and David. Even after the building of the temple it was the site of a school of the prophets. 2 Kings 2: 5. *Kept the passover.* In the earlier part of this chapter we learn that the rite of circumcision had also been observed at Gilgal, after having been omitted during all the wilderness journey. The passover had not been kept since they had left Sinai. This was therefore its third observance, or its second since the original institution in Egypt. *On the fourteenth day.* See 12: 6, 18; Deut. 16: 6.

11 *They did eat of the old corn of the land.* Rather, *The produce of the land.* Not *old* but new corn. "Corn" here is any kind of grain. The plains of Jericho are very fertile, and as the wheat harvest is not completed till after the beginning of May there would be abundance of grain standing at the time the people crossed over. *Unleavened cakes.* According to the requirements of the law. See Ex. 12: 8, 15. *Parched corn.* Ears of grain roasted in the fire.

12 *The manna ceased on the morrow.* Day after day now for forty years, except on the Sabbaths, the manna had fallen every morning. It had been miraculously given during all the wilderness journey, because other food in sufficient quantities could not be obtained for such a host. Now, however, when they had reached the fertile fields of Canaan, and there was plenty of food all about them, the manna ceased. God never works miracles unnecessarily.

13 *When Joshua was by Jericho.* This city was not far from the camp at Gilgal. Joshua had as yet received no instructions for the attack on Jericho, but it was very evident that it must be taken before the army could advance beyond it, as it was the key to the land. Joshua was probably looking about as a wise military man, to learn all he could of the city. *Behold, there stood a man.* He was in the form of a man, although from the following verse it is evident that it was the Son of God manifesting himself in visible appearance. Compare Gen. 12: 7; 18: 2. It was not a vision merely, for Joshua "went unto him." *With his sword drawn.* Indicating that he was a warrior. Compare Num. 22: 31. *Joshua went unto him.* Thus showing intrepid courage. *Art thou for us?* He did not know who the person was. He knew that he was not an Israelite and was a stranger, but whether he was friendly to him or had come to oppose him he did not know.

14 *Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come.* Rather, *Prince of the host of Jehovah.* That is, Chief of the angelic host. This was a declaration of his personality. He was not the prince of some neighboring tribe, as Joshua probably supposed when he first saw him, but the Prince of the armies of heaven. *Joshua fell on his face.* In profound reverence. Compare the attitude of Abraham before God (Gen. 17: 3), and of Moses at the burning bush. Ex. 3: 6. It does not necessarily imply that he worshiped the person as divine, though there can be little doubt that here the honor shown was of this character, as Joshua must have rec-

ognized in this Prince the Lord himself. *What saith my lord?* He was ready for the commands of his superior. We are reminded by this of the appearance of the Lord to Moses at Horeb, and the appearance of the risen Jesus to Saul at Damascus. By declaring himself to Joshua as the Prince of the hosts of heaven, the Lord assured him that in the wars of conquest on which he was about to enter he would have the help of the heavenly armies and be led by the Captain of all the Lord's hosts.

15 *Loose thy shoe.* It was a mark of reverence to remove the shoes or sandals in the presence of any person of rank or when approaching any place of peculiar sanctity. Compare Ex. 3: 5.

Chap. 6: 1. *Now Jericho was straitly shut up.* Literally, "had shut (*i. e.*, its gates), and was fast shut. The gates had been shut and bolted. "Straitly" means strictly, closely. So closely was the city closed that none went out and none came in.

2 *The Lord said.* V. 1 is a parenthetical clause thrown in to explain what follows. Joshua had asked for instructions from the captain of the Lord's hosts, and here we have the answer to his question, "What saith my lord unto his servant?" *I have given.* The city of Jericho was already theirs. God had *given* it to them; it was not to be taken by their own power or skill. In the following verses the Lord tells Joshua how he is to take the city.

3 *Ye shall compass the city.* That is, go around it. This was the most remarkable siege ever conducted on the earth. The details are more fully given in the following verses (6–20). The procession was formed in the following order: (1) The armed men, perhaps of the tribes of Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh. (2) The seven priests blowing the trumpets. (3) The priests bearing the ark of the Lord. (4) The "rereward," that is, the rear-guard, consisting of the warriors who were not in the advance. *About the city once.* Once each day for six days. They were to march in silence, save the blowing of the trumpets by the priests, without shout or noise of any kind by the people. v. 10.

4 *Seven priests . . . seven trumpets . . . seventh day . . . seven times.* Among the Israelites the number seven was invested with peculiar sacredness. The feasts of the passover and tabernacles each lasted seven days; seven days were set apart for ceremonies connected with the consecration of the priests; and in many other ways was the number distinguished so that it may be said to have been almost the symbol of the covenant between God and his people. *Trumpets of rams' horns.* Rather, *Trumpets* or *cornets of jubilee.* Not the straight trumpets generally used, but curved instruments, probably in the form of rams' horns. *The seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times.* According to the tradition of the Jews this seventh day was the Sabbath. As seven successive days were occupied in this strange siege, it follows that one of them must have been a Sabbath; but the procession being of a religious nature did not violate the sacredness of the day. On the seventh day the procession was to march around the city in the same order, but was to go seven times around it instead of once, as on the other days. On this day the people rose very early, about the dawning of the day, so that the seven circuits might be made before night. They were to pass around the city as before, the priests blowing with the trumpets and the people remaining silent until the seventh circuit had been accomplished.

5 *When they make a long blast.* This was to be the signal for the shouting of the people. *All the people shall shout.* They were to remain silent through all the former circuits, but now at the close of the seventh circuit they were to put up a great shout. *The wall of the city shall fall down flat.* Efforts have been made in many ways to account on natural grounds for the falling of these walls of Jericho, as for example, by supposing that there was an earthquake, that the walls were undermined, that there was a sudden assault made when the defenders were off their guard; but the narrative will admit of no such explanation. *Every man straight before him.* The armed men would probably encircle the whole city, and each man was to move over the prostrate wall opposite to where he stood. The remainder of the chapter must be studied to show how these commands were carried out and the city taken.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

The children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover. When God brings us out of any wilderness into any new field of blessing, our first thought ought to be praise. If we have been wandering in coldness or sin, and are brought back, we should at once seek forgiveness and then renew our consecration. If we have been in some sore trial, or in some great peril, and are at length led out of it, we should at once make a fitting recognition of God's goodness in delivering us. If we have been sick, kept away from our active work and from our place in the church or Sabbath-school, when we are restored our first duty would seem to be

to go to God's house and thank him, renewing our consecration. This first passover on the banks of Jordan suggests all these thoughts. It denoted confession of sin, for it was sin that caused the forty years' wandering. It denoted praise, for now the wilderness was behind, they were in the land of promise, and it was God who had wrought the great deliverance and blessing for them. It denoted also the renewal of the covenant with God. They had not kept the passover before since leaving Sinai; now they are going to take a new start, and they begin at God's feet. Once more, they were just entering on a new and great work, the conquest of their land. They would need divine help. The right way to begin any work for God is by prayer and worship.

The manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land. God never works miracles needlessly. In the wilderness, when the food could not be gotten, he provided manna. But as soon as they got into Canaan, where fruits and grains were abundant, the manna ceased. The lessons are important. If we are God's children we need never fear that he will fail to provide for us in some way at all times. If the ordinary supplies cannot be gotten he will care for us in some extraordinary way. If we are in the wilderness he will give "angels' food." In our deep and sore needs he gives special grace. But he never wastes his gifts. When there is corn he does not send manna. When there is joy he does not send comfort. When there is natural help, such as comes from human love and friendship, he does not send angel help.

Behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn. Joshua had a great work before him—the driving out of all the strong nations that dwelt in Canaan and the occupation of the land for God's people. The Lord had promised to be with him, but now he appears to him in human form, and as a warrior, to strengthen his faith and confidence still further. After this appearance Joshua would never fear failure or defeat. He would always remember the vision of the Captain with his sword drawn, and know that he was really conducting and fighting the battles. It is a great thing to have God on our side, and there is one way to make sure of it. Some one said once to Mr. Lincoln that he hoped God was on our side, and Mr. Lincoln said that did not concern him, but that he wanted to make sure of being on *God's* side. If we are on God's side, and are doing his will, we need not torture ourselves by wondering if he is with us.

Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. Such a vision would have terrified many a man; but Joshua did not know fear. If he had fled away at the sight he would have missed the comfort and strength which he received in the end. He advanced to meet the vision, and found not an enemy but a friend; not an occasion for terror, but a revelation of great joy. It was Christ himself who stood before him in that stern and warlike form. When he came near he found back of the sternness and warlikeness all the tenderness of love. That sword he bore was not to be wielded against him, but on his behalf, for his defence. The lessons here are very valuable. Most of the things that terrify us when we first see them lose their terrible aspect when we advance with courage and faith to meet them. This is true of many of the events of providence, if we are God's children. As they rise before us they seem to be against us, and we tremble to think of the ruin or loss they will bring to us. But they come and we find them full of blessing. In many of the ways in which Christ comes to us we are terrified at his aspect. He comes in sorrow, in trial, in sore disappointment; but as he draws near we find in him such love and so much grace and gentleness that all fear vanishes. Some persons think of Christ only as a stern warrior, with a sword to smite; but when they learn that he comes only as the friend and helper of his people, and that the sword is drawn to defend them and to conquer their enemies, their fear vanishes. We need only to come close to Christ and to know him, to find that he is our best and mightiest Friend. But what if we are not reconciled to him? Terrible indeed is that drawn sword to those who are rebels against him.

Joshua . . . said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? In this way should we always meet Christ, asking what he would have us to do, or what message he has to give to us. Every morning as we bow in prayer at his feet, this should be our question. When he comes to us in sorrow we should fall down before him and ask what new word he has now to speak to us. If we but hush the wild clamor of our hearts in such hours and receive and entertain our sorrows, as in the olden times when Abraham received the angels who came to his tent-door, we shall find that they bring to us some blessed message from God, some new revelation of his love. It is a good thing if we but train ourselves to watch continually for the vision of Christ, and habitually to ask in reverent love, "What saith my Lord now unto his servant?"

The wall of the city shall fall down flat. It

was not the trumpet blast, nor the shout of the people that caused it to fall down. There was an invisible army, led by the Captain of the Lord's host, engaged in that strange siege. The people of Jericho no doubt laughed at the strange movements of the invading army—as day after day they looked over the walls and saw them advance from their camps and march around the city, merely blowing a few trumpets, and then march back to their tents. But they did not see the invisible host that was also close by. There were no battering-rams brought up to batter down the walls, and no visible hand touched the walls, but there was an invisible army of angels whose strong hands tore down the great stones until not one lay on another. The lessons are plain. When we go on any errand for God we should remember that he goes with us. The work we have to do may seem too great for us, but if we simply obey him he will do it for us. Jericho was a type of Satan's kingdom which is to be conquered for Christ. We are to keep going around the walls blowing our trumpets. By the foolishness of preaching the world is to be conquered.

LESSON POINTS.

1. The first duty after a great deliverance or a great blessing is to praise God. v. 10.

2. Before we enter on any new undertaking we should come close to God, be sure that we are on right terms with him and seek his blessing. v. 10.

3. We should not neglect our religious duties, even though in the presence of enemies and dangers. v. 10.

4. God is economical of his blessings. He never gives needlessly. vs. 11, 12.

5. We are not ready for any duty till we have seen the Captain—Jesus. v. 13.

6. Sometimes Christ appears in stern form; but when we advance close to him we find he is our Friend. v. 13.

7. Christ bears a sword, but it is not drawn against his friends, but for their defence. vs. 13, 14.

8. We must make sure that we are among Christ's friends or the sword will indeed be terrible. vs. 13, 14.

9. Whenever Christ comes to us we should ask what message he has for us. v. 14.

10. We should learn reverence in the presence of Christ. v. 15.

11. The Lord gives us victory over all spiritual foes if we will accept it. v. 2.

12. If we go in faith to the battles of the Lord he will fight for us. vs. 3–5.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

I. HOLD A CONVERSATION ON ISRAEL'S POSITION, *i. e.*, the condition and circumstances of the Israelites at this time; their camp stretching along the Jordan valley, behind them the swollen Jordan, before them Jericho, mighty and warlike foes; their wives and little ones with them. Defeat meant more than disgrace—utter destruction. Bring out all these and other particulars by questions, and if necessary by suggestions. Then ask, In what respects is this the position of a young convert who has "crossed the Rubicon?" 1. He cannot go back to the world. By his confession of Christ he has passed the Jordan. 2. The future, like, an unknown country, stretches before him. 3. All that he holds dear is dependent on his courage, faithfulness and victory. 4. Foes confront him, bitter opposition, etc. Such a conversation will prepare for the lesson.

II. YOU CAN PLAN AND UNIFY THE LESSON, thus—

ISRAEL PREPARED FOR CONQUEST
BY
JEHOVAH'S PASSOVER,
PROVIDENTIAL SUPPLIES,
PRESENCE,
PLAN OF CAMPAIGN.

III. QUESTION, ILLUSTRATE, APPLY.

1. *Jehovah's Passover.* Where and when was the passover instituted? For what purpose? Select portions of Ex. 12 for your scholars to read. What was the proper time for celebrating the passover? In what way would the celebration of the passover prepare Israel for warfare? What sacrament did Christ institute instead of the passover? In what way will the proper observance of the Lord's Supper prepare you for work and warfare? Brings Christ's death for us before us. His great love, his sacrifice. Undertakings begun and inspired by Christ's cross succeed.

2. *Jehovah's Providential Supplies.* Under this head bring out very briefly an account of the manna, the meaning of the words, "the old corn of the land," "the fruit of the land." Reasons why God ceased working this miracle.

3. *Jehovah's Presence.* Picture the wondrous scene described in vs. 13–15. Call for the accounts of the other appearances of this Angel of the covenant. To Abraham, to Jacob at Peniel, to Moses at Horeb. What was the propriety of his appearing to Joshua as a warrior "with his sword drawn in his hand?" Meaning of the expression, "Captain of the Lord's host?" In what does Joshua's courage appear

in these verses? In what his reverence and submission? Why is it necessary for us carefully to ascertain whether persons are the friends or enemies of God? What shows that this was a *real* appearance, and not merely a vision? What was the special *design* of this appearance of "the Captain" to Joshua? 1. To strengthen still further Joshua's faith and courage. 2. To place Joshua in his true position, not as the real leader of Israel, but simply an adjutant under "the Captain of the Lord's host." Why is it necessary for all God's workers to realize that Christ is really Leader? Heb. 2: 10. Have the scholars turn to and read these promises of Christ's real presence with us to prepare us for our warfare. Matt. 28: 20; John 14: 18; 15: 1–6. As illustrations of remarkable appearances of Christ to his workers, turn and read Acts 18: 9, 10, Christ's special word to Paul at Corinth; Acts 23: 11, Jesus' appearance to Paul the night after his arrest at Jerusalem; Acts 27: 23, Jesus appears to Paul on the shipwreck; Rev. 1: 9–16, Jesus' appearance to John on Patmos. Under what conditions will Jesus manifest himself to us? John 14: 21–23. At what times do we most need Christ's presence? When beginning a new work, in affliction, in sickness, in persecution; when, as Joshua, we are about to fight Christ's foes (John 15: 6); when dying.

4. *Jehovah's Plan of Campaign.* Bring out faithfully the minute commands of "the Captain" to Joshua. Why should Jehovah choose such a way of overthrowing Jericho? What is the Jericho that must be overthrown by us? Intemperance, impurity, infidelity, hatred of God, Sabbath breaking, etc. What does this lesson teach us as to our method of overcoming these sins, crimes and vices? REMEMBER THE GOLDEN TEXT. If any scholar asks, Why was all this marching around Jericho and horn blowing and shouting? you might answer, to try and to bring out the faith of the Israelites, to prepare Israel and the men of *Jericho* for the miracle—thus the overthrow of Jericho would make its due impression.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

SUGGESTIONS.—Let "Believing, fervent prayer the Christian's true war shout" be placed neatly upon the board previous to the opening of the school, and exposed to view during the entire session. In the desk review, draw the circle, representing the wall, within which draw an outline of a heart, and print the word "Sin" in it. Impress the thought that every such heart is an enclosed Jericho, using such illustrations as will spell out the word Jericho, as in diagram. Faithful prayer will prevail, and the wall will fall down, making an entrance for the Saviour, who alone can take sin out. In illustrating this rub out lower part of circle and heart, making an opening, and print "Jesus" in place of "Sin." Space in this issue of the TEACHER will not permit of more extended explanation of lesson. It is hoped that the above suggestions will be sufficient as a frame-work for the superintendent.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

After careful thought I have determined that the better way to teach this lesson is to describe the actual *taking* of Jericho, rather than Joshua's interview with the captain of the Lord's host.

Call out the facts of the lesson from class; then outline on the board what shall stand for the walled city, and give in detail the remarkable history. The lesson affords opportunity for the exercise of much talent in studying to make the account effective.

I think I shall try to give it somewhat after

this manner: "Try to think of a great army of people, all arranged in marching order. These dots which I make in rows will stand for a few of them. This line all around the city stands for their line of march. This square may stand for the ark, with marks for the priests who helped carry it. Each priest blew his horn as he marched. No one was to speak a word. What do you suppose they thought as they solemnly marched around those great solid walls? Perhaps when they went back to camp they talked it over, some saying that they did not see what *possible* good it was going to do. These little marks all about here are for the tents, where they gathered when the march was over. The next morning they formed again, and marched around as before. Let us make another little line, close to the first one, to stand for the second day's march. Did they go again that day? Did they go again the next day? (I shall follow out the story in this manner, making a line for each day's march, letting the children keep the account.)

Six long days pass and the walls are as solid as before. I think some of the people must have been very much discouraged. Perhaps they coaxed Joshua to let them give up this foolish marching and plan of war. Then came the seventh day's march all around the city. Can't you fancy you see some of their enemies looking over the walls at them and laughing? I think I hear them saying: "There go those crazy people with their seven trumpets! Tramp, tramp! I wonder what good they think that will do them?" I fancy that some of the Israelites felt ashamed because their enemies were looking and laughing. Make the fine lines to stand for the repeated marches of that day while you continue the story. Thirteen long journeys around the city. Almost around for the seventh time that day. It is almost sunset, and there stand the walls as solid as before. Hark! There is a long, loud blast from those seven trumpets. The people understand that it is their signal to shout, and they shout. (Try to help the children to describe the scene as the walls, looking but a moment before so hopelessly solid, fall into ruins, and leave the people free to possess the city.)

"It is a wonderful story, but what shall I do with it?" So said a sweet young teacher, waiting with troubled eyes for an answer. She was one of those who are not satisfied with simply teaching a beautiful Bible story. A personal application was necessary to her comfort as a teacher. The answer came from one of long experience: "Why, child, I presume there is not a boy or girl in your class but will at some time in his life feel himself walled up from a position which he ought to take. If you can so teach the lesson as to lead each one to cast himself on God's promises, and take his apparently useless march in obedience to God's command, and wait for the walls to fall, think what a wonderful thing you will have accomplished.

"I'll tell you a little story. Where I used to live was a boy named Harney, who learned this lesson about the walls of Jericho. His father was a drunkard. There was a certain saloon which that father had to pass every day on his way to work; that is, he ought to have passed it, but every day he stopped and drank. Harney named the saloon 'The Jericho Wall;' and every day he prayed that God would take it out of his father's way, and every day he went with his father as far as the corner and saw him enter it. Still he prayed and watched. I think each night he was a little disappointed that the walls still stood. Imagine his delight one morning to discover that nothing was left of the saloon but a mass of smoking ruins. 'The walls fell!' he shouted. 'Father can get by.' His father really did sign the pledge and become a good man."

"Thank you," said the young teacher, her face bright. She had caught the idea.

Lesson IV. **ISRAEL DEFEATED AT AI.** **July 22d, 1883.**

Josh. 7: 10–26. Memorize vs. 10–12.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Be sure your sin will find you out."—Num. 32: 23.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Josh. 7: 1–15.....*Israel Defeated at Ai.*
T. Josh. 7: 16–26....*Achan's Sin and Punishment.*
W. Num. 32: 16–23..."*Your Sin will Find you Out.*"
Th. Luke 12: 15–30...*Beware of Covetousness.*
F. 2 Kings 5: 20–27..*Gehazi's Sin and Punishment.*
S. Acts 5: 1–11.....*Ananias and Sapphira.*
S. Ps. 139: 1–12.....*Darkness Hideth Not.*

TOPIC.

The Certain Consequences of Sin.

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Cause of Defeat. vs. 10–15. **2. The Sinner Sought Out.** vs. 16–21. **3. The Curse Removed.** vs. 22–26.

Time.—B. C. 1451. **Place.**—Gilgal.

Catechism.—Q. 27. *Wherein did Christ's humiliation consist?* A. Christ's humiliation consisted in his being born, and that in a low condition, made under the law, undergoing the miseries

of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross; in being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 180: "Jesus my strength, my hope." Other hymns, 183, 191, 255.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—After the taking of Jericho, Joshua intended to proceed at once against Ai. Accordingly he sent men to reconnoitre the city. They returned reporting that only a small part of the army would be necessary to take it. Three thousand men went up, therefore, but they were smitten and driven back in ignominious defeat. Great was the sorrow of Joshua at this disaster, and he and the elders cried to God to know why the army had been defeated. Our present lesson explains the cause of the disaster.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

10 ¶ And the LORD said unto Josh'u-a, Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? [Ex. 14: 15.]

11 Is'ra-el hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put *it* even among their own stuff. [Josh. 6: 17, 18; Acts 5: 1, 2.]

12 Therefore the children of Is'ra-el could not stand before their enemies, *but* turned *their* backs before their enemies, because they were accursed: neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you. [Num. 14: 15; Deut. 7: 26; Ps. 5: 4, 5; Isa. 59: 2.]

13 Up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves against to-morrow: for thus saith the LORD God of Is'ra-el, *There is* an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Is'ra-el: thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing from among you. [Ex. 19: 10; Josh. 3: 5.]

14 In the morning therefore ye shall be brought according to your tribes: and it shall be, *that* the tribe which the LORD taketh shall come according to the families *thereof*, and the family which the LORD shall take shall come by households; and the household which the LORD shall take shall come man by man. [Prov. 16: 33; Jonah 1: 7.]

15 And it shall be, *that* he that is taken with the accursed thing shall be burnt with fire, he and all that he hath: because he hath transgressed the covenant of the LORD, and because he hath wrought folly in Is'ra-el. [1 Sam. 14: 38, 39.]

16 ¶ So Josh'u-a rose up early in the morning, and brought Is'ra-el by their tribes; and the tribe of Ju'dah was taken:

17 And he brought the family of Ju'dah; and he took the family of the Zarh'ites: and he brought the family of the Zarh'ites man by man, and Zab di was taken:

18 And he brought his household man by man; and A'chan, the son of Car'mi, the son of Zab di, the son of Ze'rah, of the tribe of Ju dah, was taken. [Prov. 13: 21.]

19 And Josh'u-a said unto A'chan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the LORD God of Is'ra-el, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide *it* not from me. [2 Chron. 30: 22; Ps. 51: 3.]

20 And A'chan answered Josh'u-a, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Is'ra-el, and thus and thus have I done: [Job 7: 20; Ps. 38: 18; Matt. 27: 4.]

21 When I saw among the spoils a goodly Bab-y-lo'nish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they *are* hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it. [Hab. 2: 9; Luke 12: 15.]

22 ¶ So Josh'u-a sent messengers, and they ran unto the tent; and, behold, *it was* hid in his tent, and the silver under it.

23 And they took them out of the midst of the tent, and brought them unto Josh'u-a, and unto all the children of Is'ra-el, and laid them out before the LORD.

24 And Josh'u-a, and all Is'ra-el with him, took A'chan the son of Ze'rah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had: and they brought them unto the valley of A'chor.

25 And Josh'u-a said, Why hast thou troubled us? the LORD shall trouble thee this day. And all Is'ra-el stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones. [1 Chron. 2: 7.]

26 And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. So the LORD turned from the fierceness of his anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, The valley of A'chor, unto this day. [2 Sam. 18: 17.]

10 *The Lord said unto Joshua.* Joshua was in great distress, and was lying on his face on the earth, before the ark of the Lord, with all the elders of Israel. The occasion of his sorrow was the defeat of the army at Ai, as described in vs. 2–5. Joshua did not yet know the reason for this disaster, and in his great grief was crying to the Lord. vs. 6–9. His prayer recalls the similar appeals of Moses in like emergencies. Ex. 32: 11, 12; Num. 14: 13; Deut. 9: 28, 29. *Get thee up.* There is cutting reproof in this command. He seemed to be blaming God as if he had not kept his covenant promise (vs. 7–9), whereas he ought to have known that the fault must be with the people, that they must have sinned in some way and incurred the divine dis-

pleasure. This was no time therefore for such prayers as Joshua was putting up. There was a curse resting on the people, and he must arise and seek out the sin which had caused it that it might be put away.

11 *Israel hath sinned.* This was the cause, not any want of faithfulness on God's part, of the great disaster. This verse is a climax, each added clause being a new element in the heinousness of the sin which had been committed. The repetition of "also" before each of the phrases implies a new item of guilt. *Put it even among their own stuff.* They had purloined or stolen it from God and appropriated it to their own use. The last was the climax of their sin.

12 *Therefore.* Because this sin had been committed. It was not because the soldiers of Ai outnumbered them, or were braver or more skilful than they. The battles they were now fighting were not contests of this kind. The Lord was fighting for Israel; if they were successful it was because he was with them; if they were defeated it was because he had withdrawn his hand for some reason. *Because they were accursed.* "Accursed" here meant that which had been devoted or dedicated. The city of Jericho was thus devoted by the Lord's express command. Chap. 6: 17, 18. Rahab only and her family were to be spared; all the other inhabitants were to be put to death. Everything in the city was likewise devoted. The silver and gold and vessels of brass and iron were to be brought into the treasury of the Lord, and all else was to be destroyed by fire. Chap. 6: 21, 24. The people were expressly charged to keep themselves from the accursed or devoted thing, and warned that to take of it would bring a curse and trouble upon the whole camp. Chap. 6: 18. *Neither will I be with you any more.* They must make their choice between letting this sin go unpunished and having God's presence and favor.

13 *Up, sanctify the people.* See chap. 3: 5; Ex. 19: 10. This sanctification would be externally by ceremonial washings, and internally by spiritual preparation to appear before God. *There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee.* This was the first announcement to the people of the cause of their defeat. The intelligence would spread through all the camp, and even Achan would hear of it that night.

14 *Ye shall be brought.* Into the presence of God, before the tabernacle. *Your tribes.* Each tribe had its families, each family its households, each household its individuals. *Which the Lord taketh.* That is, by lot. This is not expressly stated here, but the phrase implies it. The usual way of casting the lot was by the use of small stones, probably white and black stones, which seem to have been drawn from a box or chest. The lot, as thus used, was not an appeal to chance, but was a divine appointment, whose decisions were directed by the Lord himself. See Prov. 16: 33. It was used on many important occasions among the Jews: (*a*) For detection (here and in 1 Sam. 14: 42; Jonah 1: 7); (*b*) for apportionment of property (Num. 26: 55; Josh. 18: 10; 21: 4); (*c*) for choosing men to undertake some perilous duty (Judges 1: 1; 20: 10;) (*d*) in the settlement of doubtful questions. Prov. 18: 18.

15 *Burnt with fire.* After he had been stoned. v. 25. The burning added to the penalty. Achan by taking of the accursed thing made himself accursed (v. 12), and everything thus devoted was to be burnt. *Folly.* Margin, *Wickedness.*

16–18 These verses describe the search made after the offender. The heads of the *tribes* first came before the ark when lots were drawn, and the tribe to which the guilty man belonged was taken. The heads of the families or clans of this tribe then came in like manner; then the heads of the *households* of the clan taken; and finally, the individuals of the household indicated, when the guilty person was found.

19 *My son.* Implying compassion even while discharging his solemn duties as a judge. *Give . . . glory to the Lord.* By confessing. Compare 1 Sam. 6: 5; Jer. 13: 16; John 9: 24. The words contain a solemn adjuration to Achan to declare the truth, as he stood now before God.

20 *Indeed I have sinned.* His confession was from terror rather than from true penitence.

21 *A goodly Babylonish garment.* Literally, *A mantle, or cloak of Shinar,* the plain in which Babylon was situated. See Gen. 11: 2, 9. The "garment" here described was a long robe, such as kings wore on state occasions (compare Jonah 3: 6), or as prophets wore. 1 Kings 19: 13; 2 Kings 2: 13, 14. It was probably of richly embroidered stuff, woven with many colors, and wrought of gold and silk threads. The finding of such a robe from Assyrian looms shows that Jericho held commerce with the far East. *Two hundred shekels of silver.* About one hundred dollars. *A wedge of gold.* Literally, *A tongue.* It was some ornament of gold shaped like a tongue or wedge. *Fifty shekels.* About twenty-five ounces, in our money about five hundred dollars. *Saw . . . coveted . . . took.* These words tell the history of his sin. *Silver under it.* Under the mantle and the gold.

23 *Before the Lord.* Before the ark.

24 *Joshua and all Israel.* Only one man had sinned, but all the people shared in the guilt, as the nation was in covenant with God and was treated by him, not as individuals, but as one. One man's sin had defiled the whole nation and broken the covenant. The whole nation, therefore, by its heads, took part in executing the sentence. *His sons and his daughters.* They were probably accomplices in his sin, for they must have known of his hiding the stolen articles in his tent. It is by some supposed, however, that his sons and daughters were not put to death, but only brought to the valley to witness his execution. *The valley of Achor.* So called henceforth, from this occurrence in it, the word Achor meaning *trouble.* v. 26. See Isa. 65: 10; Hos. 2: 15. It was in the northern border of Judah (Josh. 15: 7), and lay somewhere south of Jericho. But its site is unknown.

25 *Why hast thou troubled us?* Compare 1 Kings 18: 17.

26 *A great heap of stones.* As a memorial of his terrible sin and its punishment. See chap. 8: 29; 2 Sam. 18: 17. *So the Lord turned.* Since expiation had been made. After this Ai was taken and the shame of defeat wiped out.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

Get thee up; wherefore liest thou upon thy face? There are times when prayer is not the first duty. If there is sin anywhere it must be searched out and put away before prayer will be heard.

Israel hath sinned. One man only had actually committed the sin and yet the nation was made to suffer therefor. What a solemn and startling thought it is that our sins do not hurt ourselves alone! Only see what Achan's one secret sin cost the whole people, how it brought defeat and dishonor to them, what sorrow it spread through all the camps. We sometimes hear it said that a certain man by his sins harms no one but himself. This is not possible. In some way every sin brings injury or loss to the whole community. A blight may fall upon an entire church because of one member's unfaithfulness, even though his unfaithfulness be secret, known only to himself and God. In the deepest sense it is true that "no man liveth to himself." Every good thing any one does becomes the possession and heritage of the world; and every evil thing any one does indefinitely diffuses its curse and penalty, and scatters widespread its curse and woe.

Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies. This is the only record in the book of Joshua of a lost battle. Military men in reading of it would try to account for it in some natural way. The army at Ai had better weapons or better trained men or more competent officers. The soldiers of Israel were not familiar with the country; or they had marched all day and were exhausted; or they were suddenly surprised and broke into panic and could not be rallied. In some such way the profane historian, describing the defeat, would seek to explain it; but here we are permitted to see back of all natural causes. This "therefore" tells us that it was *sin* that caused this defeat, a secret sin, and the sin too of but a single individual. How little do we really know of the inner and real causes of the failures we see about us! All of us have our Ais, too, and very often they come just after our Jerichos, our saddest failures after our greatest successes. It was only a *little* town, too, at which this disaster occurred, so small that it was thought unnecessary to send more than a handful of soldiers to take it. Is it not often just so in our spiritual warfare? "Our greatest failures often happen in the little things of life. We miscalculate the strength of the foe; we fail to spy out the reserved forces. Indeed, we mistake, when we think it an easy matter to subdue *any* enemy. How often has it happened that he who has won his signal victory in some great crisis of the Church, who has rescued the Truth from the teachers of false doctrine, or stormed the entrenchments of Vice, has forthwith failed in some petty domestic disturbance, in some social duty, or in a trifling claim of common charity. If there be a time in life when we need more than ever to watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation, it is the hour of success."

Neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you. We cannot have God's presence and blessing unless we keep his commandments. The moment we disobey we lose his smile, and his help is withdrawn. Thank God, there is a way to get back both the smile and the help, but it is only by the truest repentance. Sorrow for the loss or shame is not enough. Sorrow even for the sin is not enough. The sin must be put away. It must be searched out and utterly destroyed. We cannot keep our sins and hope to have the divine favor restored. Are we failing anywhere —in our duties, in our power over enemies, in our success as workers for God, in our struggles with temptation? Does not this story show us a possible reason? Is it any failure on God's part? Had we not better search through the stuff in our own hearts to see if any "accursed thing" is hidden there.

Joshua . . . brought Israel . . . and Achan . . . was taken. No one can hope to hide his sin from the Lord. Here, among two millions of people, when there was only one guilty person, the finger of God pointed unerringly to the guilty man. We can never escape detection in any crowd. All sins are not discovered on the earth, but the judgment day will reveal every act.

Achan . . . said, Indeed I have sinned against the Lord. The time to have made this confession was before his detection, when in all the nation he and he alone knew of his guilt. There is no virtue in confessing when one can no longer hide it.

I saw . . . a goodly Babylonish garment . . . I coveted . . . and took. The rich garment had such attraction for his eye that when he saw it he coveted it and took it. The passion to possess it was so strong that the terrible sin of taking it was lost sight of. The same passion for dress and display is continually leading men and women, even in these Christian days, to commit sins that bring ruin upon their souls.

So the Lord turned from the fierceness of his anger. Wherefore the name of the place was called, The valley of Achor. See also Hosea 2: 15. It was indeed a valley of trouble that day, but when the sin was expiated and put away God's favor was restored, and the people went from that sad and terrible spot back to the same Ai, from which they had so lately fled, and the shame of the old defeat was soon wiped out in a glorious victory. Thus Achor became a door of hope. So any trouble that brings us back to God and restores his favor; any humiliation that cleanses us from our sins and faults; any defeat or failure that teaches us the only true way to victory, is to us also a door of hope. It will no doubt be seen at the end that our Achors are really our gateways to the richest blessings.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Sin must be sought out and put away—not merely wept over. v. 10.
2. The cause of many a disaster and failure is some secret sin. v. 11.
3. Sin makes men weak; still far worse, it loses for them the divine favor and help. v. 12.
4. When sin has brought curse the curse can only be removed by putting away the cause. v. 13.
5. One man's sin may bring disaster upon a whole community. v. 13.
6. The good of the community requires the punishment of the offender. v. 15.
7. The Lord can search out every sin however hidden. vs. 16–18.
8. See what terrible trouble came from the unlawful possession for a few hours of a little gold and silver and a brilliant garment. v. 21.
9. Sin brings its sure penalties of suffering and death. v. 25.
10. Sin builds monuments of shame over the grave of its victims. v. 26.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

APPROACH.

1. Take a rapid review of last lesson.

2. Locate Ai on the map. Bring out a brief account of reconnoitring party sent out, and of the sudden and unexpected defeat. vs. 2–4. Grief of Joshua and the people. vs. 6–9.

3. *Converse with your scholars on our Ais*, or *defeats in our Christian life.* (*a*) *Let them be free to speak of their own defeats, e. g.*, failure to overcome some sin, cowardly retreat before Christ's foes, the injury brought on Christ's cause. 2 Sam. 12: 14; Rom. 2: 24. (*b*) *Defeats of the Church, e. g.*, failure to overcome the strongholds of the enemy, (intemperance, licentiousness, Sabbath breaking,) failure in efforts to convert sinners and to secure a revival.

LESSON PLAN.

You can write in large letters on your paper pad or slate—

THE TROUBLE DESCRIBED,
ROUBLER DISCOVERED,
ROUBLER DESTROYED.

Use your own judgment as to adopting this alliterative outline (sometimes outlines are more readily remembered because they are alliterative), and as to showing it to the class before or after proceeding to the lesson.

I. THE TROUBLE DESCRIBED. vs. 10–15.

Preserve the full application of these words until you come to Achan's confession. Here it will be proper to lead the scholars to notice Jehovah's rebuke of Joshua for continuing to lie prostrate before him. Why did the Lord rebuke Joshua? Turn to his prayer. vs. 7–9. There is no confession of sin, no petition that Jehovah would show what the sin was, yet Joshua and we should know that sin only can bring defeat to God's hosts. Joshua also complained of Jehovah's dealings. Bring out the fact that there is a time to stop praying and to *act*.

II. THE TROUBLER DISCOVERED. vs. 16–23.

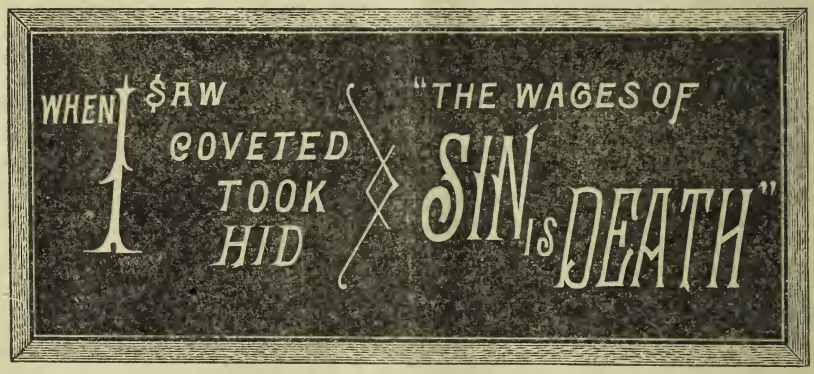
Picture out the scene in the camp, the solemnity of the people, the quaking of hearts, and the secret torture of the guilty man's conscience. You will find in teaching that *Achan's confession* will be the most practical and useful theme to

dwell upon. Especially show that it is a case of *doubtful repentance*. Why do we doubt of Achan's repentance? Bring out if possible from the scholars that Achan's confession came *late*. Shall we say *too late?* Then apply closely. The question is not, Shall we confess our sins, but *When* shall we confess? *Now* or when it is too late? Dwell on the awful *growth* of sin as shown in Achan's confession. "*I saw*," "*I coveted*," "*I took*." How does this describe the birth and growth of sin? What shall we do that we may not "see," may not let sin in through "eye-gate?" What things is it dangerous to look upon? Ps. 119: 37; Job 31: 1. What said Jesus of the eye that causes to offend? Matt. 5: 29. "I coveted." Children know little of the sin and danger of covetousness. Show it to them. 1 Tim. 6: 10; Eph. 5: 3, 5; 1 Tim. 3: 3; Luke 12: 15; Matt. 19: 22; Prov. 28: 16. Illustrate by examples from Scripture. 1 Sam. 2: 12–14; 2 Kings 5: 20–24; Matt. 26: 14, 15; Jude 11. "I took." Trace all back to the sinful looking and coveting.

III. THE TROUBLER DESTROYED.

Gather from your scholars the terrible doom of Achan, its public disgrace, how it involved his family. Show how the defaulter, drunkard and all scandalous offenders ruin their homes. Worst of all, it brings defeat to the Church.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



SUGGESTIONS.—"The wages of sin is death" to be placed on the board previous to the desk review, as in diagram. Show Achan's steps in sin, and illustrate each as they are placed on the board. "When I saw," "I coveted," "I took," "I hid." "One little hole will sink a ship; one stroke of the hammer will destroy the finest statue; a spark of fire will blow up a whole magazine of powder; one sin may destroy a soul, a whole family, and endanger a whole nation." Have school read in concert Ps. 119: 37; Matt. 5: 29. Impress that no sin can be hid from God. His eye is everywhere, and "Be sure your sin will find you out."

"ALL HAVE SINNED," but see 1 John 1: 7 and Jude 24.

Directions for Coloring.—"The wages of," green shaded with red; "Sin," red shaded with brown; "Is death," brown shaded with orange.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The Teacher in Class.—Look at these bits of paper of different colors. How many are there? (Class count the twelve.) We will let these papers stand for people. Each is at the head of a large company, called tribes. There was trouble in the camp. Describe the defeat of the army.

Who came to Joshua while he was mourning and told him the cause of the trouble? How did he tell Joshua to find out who had sinned? In calling the story from class avoid the temptation to let one, brighter than the rest, tell the whole.

Imagine the morning in which the heads of the tribes are gathered. God is to point out which tribe is at fault. He points to Judah. We will let this brown paper stand for Judah. Describe the coming forward of the different families belonging to the tribe. Have different groups, made up of bits of paper, to represent them. Select one group for the family of Zerah.

God looks among these groups and points to this as the one in which the sinner will be found. Remove the other groups and continue the story, selecting the family of Zabdi, and finally from that family, the man Achan, illustrating as

before by your pieces of paper. Simple as the illustration is, you will find it a great aid in holding the attention, and the story will be clearer than you can possibly make it with words alone. You come now to Achan's humiliating confession. Print on the board the command: "THOU SHALT NOT COVET." As the story progresses, print Achan's words: "I COVETED THEM."

Two points need to be specially impressed: 1. Achan's mistaken notion that he could hide his sin. 2. The awful punishment that followed the breaking of God's law.

Perhaps, however, the thought that the sin of *one* man brought sorrow and disgrace to the whole camp is the one which stands out most clearly. Illustrations are numerous. One son often drags down his father's family. One naughty child in Sabbath-school marks and disgraces the whole class. Another point: Stealing begins with coveting. A little thought in the heart, hidden from all but God, develops into the poison plant that all can see.

Surround Achan's words with a heart as you talk about the development that may come from harboring one sinful thought.

It is perhaps hardly necessary to repeat what has been said so often, that teachers must select from the thoughts suggested, *one* that shall be impressed and illustrated. In making this selection, be governed by the temptations and needs of your scholars.

Lesson V. **THE READING OF THE LAW.** July 29th, 1883.

Josh. 8: 30–35. Memorize vs. 33–35.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing."—Deut. 30: 19.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Deut. 27: 1–26.....*Ebal and Gerizim.*
T. Josh. 8: 30–35.....*The Reading of the Law.*
W. Deut. 30: 1–20.....*Blessing and Cursing.*
Th. Deut. 28: 58–68....*Punishment for Disobedience.*
F. John 4: 5–26.....*Spiritual Worship.*
S. Rom. 8: 1–13.....*In Christ no Condemnation.*
S. Gal. 3: 10–24.....*Christ made a Curse for us.*

TOPIC.

The Renewal of the Covenant.

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Altar Built. vs. 30, 31. **2. The Law Written.** v. 32. **3. The Blessing and the Cursing.** vs. 33–35.

Time.—B. C. 1451. **Place.**—Mounts Ebal and Gerizim, near Shechem.

Catechism.—Q. 28. *Wherein consisteth Christ's exaltation?* A. Christ's exaltation consisteth in his rising again from the dead on the third day, in ascending up into heaven, in sitting at the right hand of God the Father, and in coming to judge the world at the last day.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 531: "Father of mercies, in thy word." Other hymns, 362, 415, 452, 539.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—When the sin of Achan had been expiated the divine favor was restored and Ai was taken. The method of the attack and destruction of the city is described with unusual minuteness in chap. 8: 1–29. Both the city and its people were devoted to utter destruction. After this occurred the rehearsing of the law, as narrated in the present lesson.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

30 ¶ Then Josh'u-a built an altar unto the LORD God of Is'ra-el in mount E'bal, [Deut. 27: 4, 5, 6.]

31 As Mo'ses the servant of the LORD commanded the children of Is'ra-el, as it is written in the book of the law of Mo'ses, an altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lift up *any* iron: and they offered thereon burnt offerings unto the LORD, and sacrificed peace offerings. [Ex. 20: 24, 25; Deut. 27: 5, 6.]

32 ¶ And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Mo'ses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Is'rael. [Deut. 27: 2, 8.]

33 And all Is'ra-el, and their elders, and officers, and their judges, stood on this side the ark and on that side before the priests the Le'vites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, as well the stranger, as he that was born among them; half of them over against mount Ger'i-zim, and half of them over against mount E'bal; as Mo'ses the servant of the LORD had commanded before, that they should bless the people of Is'ra-el. [Deut. 31: 9–12, 25; 11: 29; 27: 12.]

34 And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law. [Deut. 31: 10; Neh. 8: 3; Deut. 28: 2, 15, 45.]

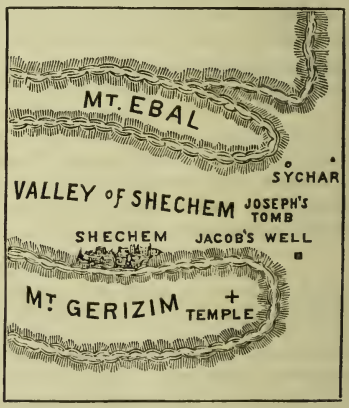
35 There was not a word of all that Mo'ses commanded, which Josh'u-a read not before all the congregation of Is'ra-el, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them. [Deut. 31: 12; Ezra 10: 1; Joel 2: 16; Acts 21: 5.]

30 *Then Joshua built an altar.* Ai had been taken (vs. 1–29), and Bethel also (v. 17), and a sure footing thus gained in the land. The population of the country seems to have been panic-stricken, and to have fled before the armies of Joshua. God had commanded through Moses (Deut. 27: 2–8) that as soon as practicable the tribes should assemble at Shechem, in the centre of the land, to renew their allegiance to him, and to hear again the conditions of inheritance. The way into the interior was now open, by the capture of Jericho, Ai and Bethel, and Joshua proceeded to obey this command. *In mount Ebal.* Ebal and Gerizim are twin mountains rising up on either side of the valley of Shechem. The valley itself is said to be the most beautiful spot in Palestine. It runs east and west, and is from a quarter to half a mile in width. "Bright rivulets fed, as the natives say, by no fewer than eighty springs, run down the slopes and sparkle over the sunny glen; gardens musical with many birds surround the walls of Nablus" (the modern Shechem), "which nestles close under the shadow of Gerizim." The mountains rise about a thousand feet above the valley. The spot chosen for this august ceremony was already sacred in the history of Israel. There Abraham (Gen. 12: 6, 7) and Jacob (Gen. 33: 19, 20) had in turn pitched their tents, and close by Jacob, hundreds of years before, had purchased the field where now the mummy of Joseph was to be laid to rest. Josh. 24: 32. Jacob's well was there also, and the oak under which he had buried the images and rings. Gen. 35: 4.

31 *As Moses . . . commanded.* Deut. 27: 2–8. *An altar of whole stones.* Stones not cut or dressed, but in the shape in which they were gathered on the spot. *No man hath lift up any iron.* The law required this, in general (Ex. 20: 25); besides, in this case there was a special command to this effect. Deut. 27: 5. *Burnt offerings.* So called because the animals were laid whole on the altar, excepting the skin, and entirely consumed by the fire. Primarily the burnt offering signified consecration to God. *Peace offerings.* In these offerings the worshiper's hand was laid on the head of the victim, and the blood was sprinkled around the altar, implying confession and atonement. The fat was burned, a portion of the flesh was given to the priest, and the remainder was eaten by the offerer, who invited others to share it with him. There was thus the idea of communion both with God and with one another.

32 *He wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law.* According to the command (Deut. 27: 2, 3, 8) the stones used for this purpose were to be coated with plaster, and the words of the law were then to be inscribed upon them. These were not the altar stones, but others, no doubt large stones, which were to be set up as a memorial of this renewal of the covenant. How much of the law was written upon these stones we do not know. The command of Moses was: "Thou shalt write upon them all the words of this law," by which some understand the Decalogue, others the whole law as written in Deuteronomy (chaps. 4: 44 to 26: 19), others still the blessings and curses read at this time, and yet others an abstract or short summary of the law. The words were written on the plaster which coated the stones. Such writing was very common in ancient times. Dr. Thomson (Land and Book) says that he has seen numerous specimens of it, certainly more than two thousand years old, and still as distinct as when they were first inscribed on the plaster. In the dry climate of that country the plaster will continue hard and unbroken for ages.

33 *All Israel . . . stood.* The whole nation was present, not simply the men, but the women and children also. *On this side the ark and on that side.* The ark stood in the valley between the two hills, and around it were the priests, elders, officers and judges. The nation was then divided in two parts, the tribes which had sprung from Jacob's lawful wives—Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph and Benjamin—were placed on the slope of Gerizim; and the



tribes descending from the handmaids of Leah and Rachel—Gad, Asher, Dan, Naphtali, with Reuben also, probably on account of his great sin, and Zebulon, being the youngest son of Leah—were placed on Mount Ebal. See Deut. 27: 12, 13. *That they should bless the people.* Although both blessings and cursings were uttered, the ceremony was virtually one of blessing, intended as a renewal of the covenant,

34 *Afterward he read all the words.* These words were read by the priests or Levites. Deut. 27: 14. There is something very remarkable about the acoustic properties of this spot. See also Judg. 9: 7 for another illustration. A natural amphitheatre is formed by a recess in Mount Ebal, exactly facing a similar recess in Mount Gerizim. Canon Tristram (Land of Israel, pp. 149, 150) tells us that a single voice may there be heard by many thousands. "In the early morning we could not only see from Gerizim a man driving his ass down a path on Mount Ebal, but could hear every word he uttered, as he urged it; and in order to test the matter more certainly, on a subsequent occasion two of our party stationed themselves on opposite sides of the valley, and with perfect ease recited the commandments antiphonally." *The blessings and the cursings.* See Deut. chaps. 27, 28. To each of the curses the people were to say Amen—so let it be. It is probable from the instructions (Deut. 27: 12, 13) that the tribes on Gerizim responded Amen to the blessings, and the tribes on Ebal to the curses.

The following extract from a recent volume, "Past and Present in the East," will prove of interest. The genial Rev. Dr. Hoge, of Richmond, Va., an excellent Presbyterian pastor, was the author's travelling companion:

"Ebal rose behind us, the white road between it and Gerizim leading straight into Shechem now Nablous, about half an hour off. We spent a day there, and after ascending to the summit of Gerizim, tested the acoustic property of the valley between the two hills, on which were set the blessings and the cursings. I was on the slope of Mt. Gerizim while Dr. Hoge went some distance up that of Ebal—the space between us being between half and three-quarters of a mile. Indeed, as I saw the doctor ride down from the spot on Gerizim where we stood, cross the valley, and creep up the side of Ebal till his horse looked no bigger than an ant, it seemed almost foolish to make the experiment we contemplated. I fancied that it would be impossible even to hear his voice over the chasm beneath us. Seeing he had fairly stopped, I read aloud slowly one of the Psalms for the day. Then I paused. I had understood the doctor to say that he would recite the thirty-first psalm, and turned to it in my Prayer Book, Great was my surprise when from that little dot on the hillside, I heard in his voice across the valley, 'The Lord is my shepherd,' etc. 'It is the 23d!' I exclaimed to his friend whom he had left with me. This was a severe test, and it was made more so by a party of Turkish soldiers who hearing me, came out of some barracks which lay beneath us, and began talking. When I rejoined the doctor I found he had heard me plainly. What a scene and 'service' it must have been when the blessings and the cursings were said by the thousands under Joshua from those hills!"

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

Then Joshua built an altar unto the Lord. He was in the very midst of the conquest of the land, with all the cares and anxieties of a great military campaign on his hands and surrounded by enemies; yet he took time to erect an altar to God. Everything must give way to the worship of the Lord. Whatever else must stop duties to God must be attended to. There are some people who think they have no time for religious duty. Work presses so upon them that they cannot even pause on the holy Sabbath to worship the Lord. And as for daily prayer in secret or in their families, such services are not even to be thought of. Here is a good lesson for all such people; Joshua could stop in his career of conquest to take the whole nation, even the women and children, on a long journey to the very heart of the land to spend a season in solemn worship and in renewal of their covenant with God. No matter what the exigencies of our life we should never omit our religious duties.

He wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law. The basis of every covenant we make with God must be the divine law. There is no use in our giving ourselves to God in any kind of consecration if we do not intend to follow his commandments with all fidelity. God will make no other terms with any one. All professed love for him, all professed devotion to his service, which is not attested and proved by obedience amounts to nothing. Strong emotions, songs of praise, loud protestations of loyalty are of no avail if we are living in disobedience of the divine laws. God wants every one of his children to have his commands written, not on plaster tablets, but on their hearts.

All Israel . . . stood . . . half of them over against mount Gerizim, and half of them over against mount Ebal. That is just the way every sermon divides the people who hear it. It puts them in two classes. Every Sabbath-school lesson does the same. Wherever the gospel goes it separates those who hear it. At the last day, too, when Christ comes again, there will be two great companies, just as there were that day at Ebal and Gerizim, one on the side of blessing and the other on the side of cursing. It is a very important question to each one of us whether our place is now on Ebal or on Gerizim, for this will determine our place on that great final day.

He read . . the blessings and the curses. He did not leave out the curses. There are some

people in these days who like to read the blessings but who skip the curses. They think the words are too harsh and severe to be spoken in human ears. It ought never to be forgotten that the fulfillment of the curses of the divine law on those who disobey the commandments is just as sure as the fulfillment of the blessings upon those who keep his words. No one can make a covenant with God and leave out the curses as the alternative of the blessings.

LESSON POINTS.

1. God should be recognized at every point as the owner and giver of all our blessings. v. 30.

2. In every covenant with God we must consecrate ourselves to him as offerings on his altar. v. 31.

3. In every covenant with God we must engage to do his will and keep his commandments. v. 32.

4. In making covenant with God we must enter into *personal* engagement with him—every individual. v. 33.

5. In entering into covenant with God we must not forget that the curses upon disobedience are just as sure as the blessings upon obedience. v. 34.

6. God offers to every one a choice between the blessings and cursings that are written in his word. v. 35.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

How to Teach.

To enable me to hold the subject as one thought, as well as to give unity of teaching and impression, I would outline these verses in some such manner as this—

National Bible Assembly—its { Design, Scenes, Lessons.

I. *Design of this National Bible Assembly.* What was this? How would such an assembly honor Jehovah? How would it honor his word? How would it tend to elevate the people above such sins as they were tempted to? In what way would it make them realize that their duties to Jehovah were above all else? The design was to bring the entire nation to a solemn act of worship, to deepen the impression of his law upon all, and publicly to renew this covenant with God.

II. *Scenes.* Have a good map. Locate Ebal and Gerizim. Describe the vale of Shechem, here two hundred yards wide. Which is Mount Ebal? How high above the valley does it tower? What the nature of its sides? It and Mount Gerizim form a natural amphitheatre. Where is the ark to be placed? On which mountain is the altar to be erected? Deut. 27 : 4; Josh. 8 : 30. Which was the mount of curse? See Deut. 11 : 29, 30; 27 : 13. The mount of blessing? How many people were probably present? Six hundred thousand men, besides women and children. Why were the children not left in the camp at Gilgal? How were the tribes divided? Which tribes were ranged on the slopes of Gerizim? Which on Mount Ebal? In what were the exercises of this assembly to consist? 1. Offering burnt offerings. 2. Offering peace offerings—an enthusiastic thanksgiving service. 3. Writing the law on the stones. 4. Reading the blessings and cursings. In this service what was there for any Hebrew to *see?* What to *hear?* What to *say?* Why did the people respond "Amen?" What impression would this service make on all? What impression would it make on the young?

III. *The Lessons.* 1. What is the lesson as to attending the public reading of the Scripture? Why should we reverently listen to the Bible in public? What advantages have we over the Israelites in regard to the Bible? How much of the Bible did they possess? 2. What lesson here as to the importance of religious duties over all others? Why is pressure of business not a valid excuse for neglecting the prayer-meeting? Illustrate from actual life the blessedness and spiritual profit of turning aside from worldly affairs to attend God's worship. 3. What is the worth of the word of God to *our nation?* Bring out the mention of the benefits to the country of the study and teaching of the Bible. What are you doing to advance Bible study? What are you giving for mission Sabbath-school work? 4. What great assembly shall at last be gathered—one part for blessing, the other for curses? On which side shall I stand?

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The lessons are peculiar this month, in that they afford opportunity for vivid story telling, and can be pictured on the blackboard with very few marks.

For instance, the two mountains may be outlined, with dots for the people, a square in the valley for the ark, then let the children give the details. The scene might be further illustrated by the children themselves, allowing them to stand on opposite sides of the room and recite responsively some of the beatitudes.

In my own class I wish to give special time to

the building of the altar, with the commandments written in the plaster. After the *facts* are clearly before the scholars, I desire to apply the truths taught to our present lives.

Let the golden text be carefully repeated, and then outline two roads on the board leading to the right and left. On the right print the word "BLESSED," on the left the word "CURSED."

By questioning the class call out the fact that God has plainly pointed out two roads with two leaders, and two distinct final homes to reach. On one of these roads his constant blessing follows us, on the other are the solemn curses or punishments pronounced on all who disobey.

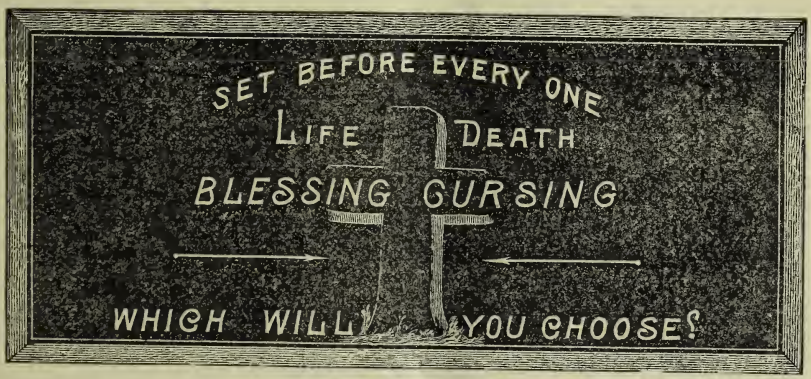
Joshua built an altar to offer sacrifice to God. Suppose we take that pictured altar for ours, what shall we bring to put on it for God? Not lambs or goats any more, for they were only to remind the people of the great Sacrifice that has been offered once for all. What will he accept from us? I think that carefully taught children can be led to say that God wants the heart. They may first mention hands, feet, money, etc., in which case I should print those words above the altar, but continue questioning until I had developed the fact that the spring of all action is from the heart; and to have the action right the heart must belong to God, so that the child will *want* to have his feet, hands, etc., work for God. As this thought is developed outline a heart on the altar.

Let the grand aim of the lesson be to lead the children to make this offering *now*. Notice the recitation quoted on *Westminster Primary Leaf*. I find great help in using it with lessons of this character. Teachers who make use of it should be careful to explain the meaning of the word "consecrated," *i. e.*, *set apart* for God to use.

ILLUSTRATION.—"John had a gold dollar which he set apart to give to the missionaries. After that had he a right to use it for marbles, balls, kites, etc.?" You will probably find your class divided in opinion, some arguing that John had a right to change his mind. In which case add this proposition: "Suppose John's father gave him the dollar to use for that purpose, had he then a right to use it as he pleased?" The children will promptly decide this question. Then ask them who gave them being, and for what purpose they were made. In other words, teach that to give the heart to God is only returning him his own. Can one be honest and not do this?

Dear primary teachers, don't be afraid that this is too strong meat for the babes in your classes. There are really no essential truths of Christianity that you cannot teach the little ones if only you carefully study ways of putting them in simple language.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



SUGGESTIONS.—The cross is our altar. We do not need to go to a high mountain to hear God's law. Christ died on the cross, and every heart that will repent of sin and choose him will be filled with blessing. The whole congregation, the women, the little children and the stranger may choose life and blessing and have them. Do not forget the great day, when a vaster multitude will be gathered than was on Ebal and Gerizim. There will be the "right hand" and the "left hand" of the Judge. It will be "Come ye blessed" or "Depart ye cursed." Life or death. Which will it be *for you?* Urge your school to a decision that all may choose life to-day. Delay is dangerous.

Directions for Coloring.—"Set before every one," green shaded with yellow; "Life" and "Blessing," orange shaded with white; "Death" and "Cursing," brown shaded with red; lower line, white shaded with red; cross, white.

ABOUT NEW BOOKS.

..The April JOURNAL OF CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY is a superior number. Prof. F. L. Patton writes in his usual happy way on the "Genesis of the Idea of God;" Prof. George T. Ladd on "Inspiration;" Prof. Benjamin N. Martin on the "Recent Scientific Philosophy of Society." One of the most popular of the articles in this number is that of "The Antiquity of Man Historically Considered," by Prof. George Rawlinson, Oxford, England. Prof. R. does not believe with some recent speculation that man has lived 100,000 years on the earth—65,000 years of savagery, 35,000 years of barbarism, before the 5,000 years, more or less, of civilization began. The article is of great value. The editor, Prof. John A. Paine, writes of "The True Mount Lebanon." Prof. P. is one of the most learned men of our country in sacred geography and archæology. He visited Palestine as archæologist of the first expedition of the Palestine Exploration Society, and has spent the eight years since "in studies seeking to confirm and elucidate Scripture by its own geography." His conclusion is that Gebel esh-Shaikh, the traditional Mount Hermon, is the real Mount Lebanon. This journal is realizing its promise under the editorship of Prof. Paine. It is published at 30 Bible House, New York, at 75 cents a number (quarterly), or $2.50 a year.

..SEBA'S DISCIPLINE. By Marie Oliver. Seba Armstrong is a young Christian girl desirous of living a useful life. She is led in a path of great self-denial in which her character ripens into rich beauty. The incidents of the story reveal much of the ruin and suffering wrought by intemperance. The story is written in a vivacious and interesting manner, as is the author's wont. This is the third of a series—"Ruby Hamilton" and "Old and New Friends" preceding it; and readers of the former volumes may be pleased to know that some of the same people with whom they have become acquainted reappear here. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. 16mo, pp. 471. Price, $1.50.

..The Rev. J. Glentworth Butler, D.D., has transferred his valuable volumes, known as the BIBLE READERS' COMMENTARY, to Funk & Wagnalls, of New York (12 Dey Street). The title has been changed to BIBLE WORK, as the term "Commentary" has proved misleading as to the character of these volumes, of which two on the New Testament are out. The first Old Testament volume will soon be published.

..ST. ULRICH; or, Resting on the King's Word. By E. A. W. A tender little story which will leave pleasant impressions on the reader's mind. The principal title locates the story, and the secondary gives the key to the lesson taught. Philadelphia: S. S. Union. pp. 93, illustrated. Price, 75 cents.

..SCHAFF-HERZOG ENCYCLOPÆDIA. Vol. II. When the first volume of this work appeared we gave it favorable notice. The second volume is now out. This encyclopædia is not a mere translation of the German work which forms its basis. Much that would not be of interest to American students is omitted, and much new matter is added. The scope of subjects is wide. It is not merely a Bible dictionary, but extends over the whole field of ecclesiastical history and of doctrinal and practical theology. To Sunday-school superintendents and teachers the work will prove of great value, as scarcely a question arising concerning any person, place or doctrine in connection with the lessons will fail of an answer in its pages. Some of the subjects treated in this volume are: Gnosticism, Infidelity, Inspiration, Jesuits, Jews, Job, John Knox, Liturgy, Livingstone, Luther, Marriage, Miracles, Missions. The encyclopædia is published by Funk & Wagnalls, New York, and is sold *by subscription only*. The price is $6.00 per volume. The third and last volume will be ready late in this year. (Order direct.)

..JOHN PLOUGHMAN'S TALK; or, Plain Advice for Plain People. By Rev. C. H. Spurgeon. Few men have said so many things as Mr. Spurgeon, and said so few foolish things. His "John Ploughman's Talks" are not sermons by any means, but they are about as full of good common sense as anything he has ever written. Most of our readers are already familiar with them, but if any are not they should hasten to get this little book. New York: Carter Brothers. Price, 75c.

..The Carters have issued a cheap edition of MOSES AND THE PROPHETS, by Prof. W. H. Green, D.D. Price, 50 cents.

..PARABLE OF THE SHREWD STEWARD. By George Dana Boardman, D.D. A lecture on the parable in Luke 16: 1–13. Full of fresh thoughts. Paper. Price, 16 cents. TITLES OF A PASTOR'S WEDNESDAY EVENING LECTURES ON THE NEW TESTAMENT. By the same. Philadelphia: S. S. Union. Price, 15 cents.

..HOLY VOICES. By the Rev. E. S. Lorenz and Rev. J. Baltzell. A hymn and tune book for the Sabbath-school, from the United Brethren Publishing House, Dayton, Ohio. It has in it some good things, but alas for the indifferent and worse! No doubt a school might have "a good time" over—

"Sunday-schools are singing, France and Spain and Rome;
Hear the joyous music, songs of heaven and home.
Where the martyrs suffered, holy seed is spread;
Gather up these rubies, dyed in life-blood red.

"Sunday-schools in Chili, reaching down the coast;
Mexico is leading, gallant little host.
Glad Brazilian children, praise to God shall sing;
Far off Patagonia answers, Christ is King."

There is sound sense, if not very exalted poetry, in—

"When you begin, my little friend,
Finish, finish;
Ne'er stop until you've reached the end,
Finish, finish;
Be it a lesson hard to get,
Don't take the time to scold and fret,
Nor think of aught besides while yet
It's unfinished.

"Be it a toy you've tried to make,
Finish, finish;
Let old dull jack-knives bend and break,
Finish, finish;
And ere to Sunday-school you go,
Your thoughts upon your lesson throw,
Nor cease your efforts till you know
That it's finished!"

Is it not about time to have something higher than this for the worship of the young? But there are better pieces in this collection, and notably "Immanuel's Land," by the brave old covenanter, Samuel Rutherford, expelled from Amworth Church in 1636, commencing "The sands of time are sinking," which is here credited to Annie Ross Cousin, 1857. But we must put up our jack-knife before it bend or break.

Any of these books may be ordered from the Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1334 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.

THE WESTMINSTER TEACHER.

VOL. XI. AUGUST, 1883. No. 8.

—*Attention is called to the announcement of the Westminster Sabbath-school Hymnal, on pages 318, 319.*

—August is not a very inspiring month, but an account will have to be rendered for it.

—One thing to do in vacation time is to make plans for the autumn work so as to come back to it all aglow with zeal and energy.

—Another thing is to get many an honest look into your own heart while resting from busy activities, so as to find out just how matters stand between you and God.

—The only excuse for a vacation is that one needs rest, and the only justification of a vacation is better work after one comes back again from it. So the way of spending a vacation is a matter for serious thought.

—Secretary Worden is busily engaged in perfecting plans and arrangements for the Bible Correspondence School, which is to be opened in the autumn. The General Assembly has given it hearty endorsement. Next month full announcements will be made.

—The last General Assembly voiced the interest of the whole Church in the Sabbath-school work, in its enthusiastic meeting and in its warm and earnest resolutions. Nothing touches the heart of the Church more than "a little child in the midst," and no cause receives more earnest commendation than that which refers to the children.

—The Presbyterian paper published at Sydney, in far away Australia, has a long and warm article in praise of the Sabbath-school work being done by the Presbyterian Church in the United States. It urges the use, by Australian Christians, of the helps to Bible study issued by the Presbyterian Board, its Question Book and periodicals, as just what is wanted by earnest Sabbath school workers and their pupils.

—Mr. A. Gray, Secretary of the Sunday-school Institute, of South St. Louis, sometime since read a strong paper before that body on the question: "To what extent can discipline be carried out in our Sabbath-schools?" He maintained that discipline should be enforced as in public schools. The question is an interesting one, but whether or not it is possible to carry out Mr. Gray's high ideal, there will be a difference of opinion. There is no question that order should be maintained in every Sabbath-school; the difference of view will be as to the method of securing it.

HELPS FOR YOUNG CHRISTIANS.—"We have had a blessed season of awakening among our young people, and a number of them have given their hearts to Christ and entered his service. Can you recommend some book or books, practical, pleasantly readable and fitted to aid them in their strife with sin and the world?" We can, and will suggest: "Heavenward Bound," by Olive A. Wadsworth, intended to aid young converts in their walk with God in the world, especially those young in years as well as in grace, (price 60 cents); also, "Week Day Religion," by the Rev. J. R. Miller, D. D., a book which has proved very useful as well as acceptable to young Christians, (price $1.00); and, "The Closer Walk," by the Rev. Henry Darling, D. D., a more methodical treatment of the believer's sanctification through a close, habitual walk with God, (price 50 cents). All these are good for the purpose indicated.

Attaching the Children to the Church.

IN another column one of our pastors has a word to say with regard to the attendance of the children at the church services. The subject is one of very great importance. No matter how well the young are taught in the Sabbath-school they should also early become attached to the church in its services and fellowship. The school does its work well only when it leads the scholars to and into the church.

It seems to the writer, however, that we must go back well-nigh to the beginning and recast our ideas of the relation of the children to the Church. In theory we are right, but in practice we ignore our own theory. Our theory is that the children of believers are born in the Church, in covenant relations. If we truly believed our own creed we would expect our children to be renewed by the Holy Spirit at a very early age, and to grow up as Christian boys and girls. Instead of this, however, we bring them to receive

baptism and then too often turn them outside the fold to run their chances until they are grown up, when we begin to preach to them the duties of repentance and faith, and pray for their conviction and conversion. Far too many of us scarcely expect child-conversions, whereas if we practically believed our own doctrine of the covenant, we should always expect our children to enter the kingdom of grace in their early, tender years, not knowing the time when they were not Christians.

The first step, therefore, in gathering the young into the church and keeping them there, is to believe that the children of Christians are never out of the church; to expect their renewal at the dawn of life; to regard them from the beginning as God's children; to treat them as such, and to mould all our culture and training upon this belief. A thorough application of our own doctrines regarding this matter will give a new basis to all our theories of church responsibility and duty, and will go far toward solving this question. We need but to carry out to their logical issue the doctrines which we already hold with regard to the offspring of believing parents, bringing up our baptized children from infancy as belonging to the Church and heirs with us of the blessings of the covenant.

Accepting this doctrinal basis, how shall we apply it? It is not enough to bring our infants and give them to God in baptism, thus recognizing the truth that they are his and receiving upon them the covenant seal. God puts them back into our hands and says, "Take them and train them for me." They are then to be brought up for God as his children. Here the work of Christian nature begins; it belongs first of all to parents, then to the church itself. In all this training, however, the foundation truth should never be lost sight of that they are God's children now, and are to be taught how to live as such. When a little child of three or four years had been baptized at home one evening, in the presence of a few friends, she looked up into her mother's face, with a great joy blazing in her eyes, and said: "Mamma, I am God's child now." She had been taught the meaning of the sacred rite, and the impression will be likely to remain on her mind as long as she lives that she was given to God and is "God's child." She will grow up, therefore, with true and wise home and church nurture, not as a heathen child, to go on in sin a certain number of years and then be converted with a terrible wrench, but as God's child from the beginning, to be taught her duties as such and to be led out into the paths of love and service.

In carrying out this duty of training, the responsibility distributes itself. The pastor has a share. It is his part to preach to the parents and set before them the true nature of the covenant—that it embraces believing parents and their children; that the latter are born in the church, needing regeneration, but having the promise of it even in infancy, and that the whole system of parental home nurture should proceed upon this basis. Let him also preach to the children, showing them that they belong to God, and should live to please him and do his will. Parents also have a share, the largest share, in this responsibility. Although their children belong to God, even *because* they belong to him, they are to be *trained* for him. The Sabbath-school has a share of the responsibility; its part is to aid the parents in their work of teaching God's word to their children, and of leading them into full and complete Christian life. The church also has a share. It should open its doors to the children. It should provide a place and a part for them in its services and in its fellowship. It should provide such guidance and training for them, and such influences, as shall bring them early, and hold them till maturity, under the power of its teachings, its sanctities, its warm love, its whole spiritual life of restraint and of inspiration.

To meet this responsibility the church must make a place in its stated and regular ministrations for the great throng of boys and girls who really belong within its doors. Whether this requirement is best met by a weekly five-minute sermonette for the children, or by a monthly children's service, or by putting little bits into every sermon for the young people, or by making all the preaching plain and simple enough to interest and profit them, each pastor must decide for himself; but it seems very clear that if the children are to be attached to the church, in its services, a portion must in some way be provided for them. There must be food for the lambs, put low down, within their reach.

It is not by the sermon alone, however, that children may be interested and profited in the Sabbath services. The reading of the Scripture lessons may be so brightened by fitting words and suggestions thrown in, as verse by verse is read, as to make this part of the worship intensely interesting and helpful to them. One hymn may be selected and sung in each service as "the children's hymn." In the prayers they may be tenderly and particularly remembered. A pastor who loves children, and whose heart is truly warm toward them, will find countless ways of putting into his services many little bits of sweet food for them, so that they will love to come to the church and will heartily enjoy the worship.

There are other parts of the church-life besides the Sabbath services in which the children should be interested and trained. They should have a share in the church work. They should be wrought into its social life. They should be attached to the church in love and loyalty. Much can be done in these directions by a wise system of young people's associations, with their prayer-meetings, their working committees, their mission-bands, and their other means of kindling and maintaining interest and activity. Children and young people should very early be led into work for the Master and for his Church, and in such associations this end may be attained.

One thing, however, must be said, namely, that whatever methods are adopted, nearly all depends upon the pastor as the centre of all the church life. No plans will accomplish anything save as there is a man behind them, with a big heart, a ready hand, a tireless energy and a spirit in full sympathy with the children and with the objects to be attained. The pastor who would attach the children to his church must be a true lover of childhood and youth, who will first attach them to himself and then lead them into the church and to Christ. The pastor who really loves children and wants them in his church will be likely to find some way to attach and keep them. It has been said that "A Christ-loving pastor is a child-loving pastor." The pastor who looks after the lambs will have no lack by-and-bye of strong sheep in his flock; but he who neglects the little ones must not be surprised if they neglect him when they get older, and, worse than that, neglect Christ and drift away from the fold into the world.

Modern Money-Changers.

BY KATE CALLA.

"THE first of a series of three lectures will be given in this room on Wednesday evening of next week, for the benefit of our library fund. The teachers have all been supplied with tickets, and as we are sadly in need of new books, I hope they will be very industrious and successful in selling them," was the announcement made by our superintendent one afternoon at the close of Sabbath-school. No such spur was needed. We were all willingly enlisted in the service. The deplorable condition of the library had been a serious drawback to our work for some time. Most of the teachers were opposed to paying the expenses of the school by entertainments, but as the voluntary contributions of the church were insufficient for the purpose, the lectures had become a necessity. Then, aside from our interest in the object to be attained, there was a great deal of good-natured rivalry as to who should do most in aid of it. The night before the lecture we compared notes. "Miss Curtis, how many tickets have you sold?" was asked of one who was usually foremost in any undertaking. "Only five."

"Only five! Why what was the matter? I thought you would be ahead of us all."

"I should have tried to sell more, but I couldn't go out last week at all."

"You were at church both Sundays, weren't you?"

"Yes; I made no effort to dispose of my tickets then."

"There you made a mistake. It is always easier when all the church people are together. I sold fifteen the first Sunday."

"Excuse me, but I don't approve of that practice, prevalent though it is."

"I am sure I can't see why."

"Is selling tickets any different from selling meat, groceries or books?"

"Of course, if the tickets are for a charitable purpose."

"I don't see the difference. Mr. Blake, Mr. Harris and Mr. Marshall do it, and they are all elders."

"That does not make it right."

"The Bible allows works of necessity and mercy."

"This is neither, since the money will do us just as much good if the tickets are sold during the week."

"But if we can't sell them then?"

"We are expressly commanded not to do evil that good may come."

"Is this evil? It strikes me that it is just as much a part of our Sunday-school work as teaching our classes."

"'The money-changers and they that sold doves' in the temple might have made the same plea, and probably did, but our Lord drove them out."

The discussion was interrupted at this point, but if Miss Curtis had not convinced all her hearers she had certainly aroused convictions of duty in the minds of some.

The Voice of a Synod.

IT is often the case that "Resolutions," in the Synods where our ministers and elders convene, are to be positively distinguished from "action," in their results at least; but of late there has been abundant evidence that, with regard to the Sabbath-school work, these resolutions "mean business." Hence we record with

pleasure the resolves of the great Synod of Pennsylvania, echoing, as they do, the expressed views of many other Synods. On recommendation of its Sabbath-school Committee the Synod resolved:

1. That all the Sabbath-schools within the jurisdiction of the Synod be urged anew, and persistently, to use the helps and books furnished by our Board of Publication.

2. That teachers' meetings shall be regularly held wherever possible, and that in them, Normal class work be combined with the study of the lesson.

3. That Church sessions, who are responsible for the kind of work done in the Sabbath school and for the direction of it, shall assume their rightful control in their several churches, and, further, shall prevent the unnecessary diversion of the contributions from our schools into unauthorized channels.

4. That all the Presbyteries of the Synod be recommended to appoint Sunday-school committees, and that these shall co-operate with the Board in its statistical and general work in holding District and Presbyterial Institutes, so far as it may be practicable and profitable, and in securing due attention to this cause at the regular meeting of the Presbyteries.

5. That all our schools be urged to contribute to the Missionary Sunday-school work of the Board.

Dr. Morrow's Scholar.

BY ERNEST GILMORE.

"YOU may leave this Sunday school now, and you needn't be slow about getting out of the room either, and you need *never come* back again either, *never*, do you hear?"

It was young Dr. Morrow talking to one of his Sunday-school boys, a rude, ungoverned and seemingly ungovernable boy, who thoroughly enjoyed disturbing the whole class, not only with his inattention but also with his actions.

Dr. Morrow's patience had been worn threadbare during the past few weeks, and now that Jim Dunbar had succeeded in getting the whole class, with one exception, laughing, and that one exception crying, (because a bee which Jim had held imprisoned in a coiled handkerchief had been let out cautiously into his ear and it had stung him,) the last thread of that much suffering virtue gave out, and Dr. Morrow, in his anger, wished that Jim Dunbar would never cross his path again.

The fun all died out of Jim's face as he heard the stern command. One quick, reproachful but mortified glance into Dr. Morrow's angry, reproving face and then the boy slowly arose and started to leave the room. Just before reaching the door he looked up at a beautiful motto over the arch. It had never looked so lovely before—at least that was what Jim thought: — "Suffer the little ones to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." That was the motto.

Jim thought of many things as he crossed the threshold and wandered down toward the river. Dr. Morrow had explained that beautiful motto to him and now some of his thoughts ran after this fashion.

"He said *I* was one of the little fellows *the Saviour wanted*, but I guess he's mistaken. I'm too big, most eleven, 'sides that Dr. Morrow said I should never come back again—so *I'm forbid*, you see—any way I guess *I* don't belong to the kingdom else I wouldn't be so mean, that's a fact. I wanted to be good though, real good, but somehow, I don't just know how, an' the bad keeps a comin' out all the time. I guess I won't even try to be good any more. What's the use? I 'aint got anybody to tell me how, and 'sides Dr. Morrow says folks can't be good 'less they get near the Saviour an' I can't get near Him 'cause I dassent go back to the school, an' the Saviour never comes to our house, never."

However, as the moments flew by, Jim thought no more about the Saviour, but amused himself by throwing sticks and stones into the river, digging holes in the bank and frightening a timid child who came in search of wild flag. He did not go home until he became so hungry that he could not do otherwise. Your heart will go out in pity toward Jim as you enter his home. It is the abode of squalor and wretchedness. His father lies on a rude bed, asleep in drunkenness. His mother sits, leaning back in an old wooden rocker, her eyes fixed mechanically on the blank wall. She starts a little as Jim enters, and drawls forth:

"You're late, Jim."

"Don't seem to make any difference whether I'm late or early—things always look the same," mutters Jim, throwing down his old cap, and drawing near a grimy table pushed against the wall, upon whose one raised leaf, guiltless of table-cloth, the remains of a miserable meal lay scattered.

"Don't be sassy, Jim," drawled his mother.

"I 'aint sassy, but I'm hungry—what ye got to eat, mother?"

"Ye can see for yourself. What you botherin' y'er tired mother for?"

Yes, Jim could see for himself, could see some dry crusts and half of a sour pickled cucumber and a glass of beer. He looked at them in disgust.

"We've got potatoes, mother—a whole peck of 'em—why didn't you bake some?" he asked.

"Cause I didn't feel like it—Sunday's a day of rest."

Jim crunched the dry bread and drank the

beer; as for the remains of the pickle he threw it across the room.

Dr. Morrow lived in the suburbs. The walk home was usually pleasant; now in his perturbed state he did not enjoy it. He even left the usual path and crossed a belt of woods, he felt so out of sorts, but here, too, God seemed to be speaking to him. Mosses and ferns peeped out at him from shady nooks, and lovely pink azaleas, and little pure white flowers nodded to him cheerfully. His thoughts were troubling him. He had done right of course in sharply reprimanding that tiresome Jim Dunbar, but had he done right in forbidding him ever to set foot in God's house again? Supposing God should treat his children so?

Then Dr. Morrow, without knowing why he did it, reached down and picked a bunch of wild violets which he held in his hands passively until he emerged from the woods and saw his beautiful home before him. A bountiful dinner awaited him. He was hungry and enjoyed it; and yet as he lingered over the last refreshing course, Jimmy Dunbar still held his place in his thoughts. His anger had all vanished now; his conscience reproved him for not looking into Jim's home for some months. He wondered what poor, thin little Jim had for dinner; he almost wished he would cross his path *just now*, he would like to give him a little of his abundance.

After dinner Dr. Morrow dropped asleep in his comfortable library chair. He had scarcely entered the land of dreams when he saw a face of surpassing beauty watching him, then a voice said lovingly, yet beseechingly, "Feed my lambs." Then he walked on, his pathway strewn with roses, and pretty soon he saw the lovely face again and heard the gentle voice repeat, yearningly, "Feed my lambs." Then, from over a blossoming hedge he soon heard the voice again, saying, oh, so lovingly, "Suffer the little ones to come unto me and forbid them not." He looked and saw the Saviour pointing to another pathway, one strewn with thorns and stones. It was far in the distance, and yet he distinctly saw a little traveler forcing his way along wearily and painfully. For a moment the small, pinched face turned to him beseechingly, the arms were held out pleadingly, and then the boy turned his face away. But that moment had been enough for Dr. Morrow to recognize the face as Jimmy Dunbar's. He groaned aloud and then awoke. The afternoon sun was streaming into the library windows; all aglow were the pictured faces of the "Madonna and Child," upon the wall. He looked at the child's face.

"*He* came into the world to seek and save the lost—how dare *I* judge a child so harshly?" he thought sorrowfully.

The Sabbath was not yet over when there came a rap at Jimmy Dunbar's door. It was Jimmy who opened it, and over his white, discouraged face, a scared look crept as he recognized Dr. Morrow. What was he going to do? Put him in the "lock up" perhaps, for letting that hateful bee sting little Dan Phelps. No, that was not Dr. Morrow's intention. He took his hand kindly and said, huskily, "You did not do right this morning, my boy, *neither did I.* I have forgiven you, Jimmy; you forgive me and we'll both do better in the future. Come to Sunday-school as usual, Jimmy. I'm a little stronger than you and I want to help you climb up to your Heavenly Father." Then Dr. Morrow went into the wretched little room, and went out again with tears in his eyes. But there were no tears in Jim's eyes as he unpacked a great basket of fruit and untied a package of picture papers from Dr. Morrow. There was a deep joy in his heart and he said feelingly, "Oh, how good Dr. Morrow is, how he pities a fellow that is down. After all, I don't wish I was dead, I'd rather try to get into the kingdom."

Years have passed since then; Jimmy is in the kingdom, one of the faithful ones too. His mother followed after him, and now even his poor father is taking his first feeble steps in the narrow path that leads to "life everlasting."

III. The Superintendent in Lesson Time.

BY R. W. WOODWARD.

THERE can be no better point of observation for the superintendent during the time of lesson study than the desk. While the school is absorbed in its main purpose, in the conduct of which he is not occupied, he has superior opportunities for acquiring a definite knowledge of each teacher and scholar. In this there can be nothing obtrusive, for from the position indicated he can quietly notice in just what quarter things are apparently moving satisfactorily, and also in just what other particular places they may be moving quite the contrary.

Doubtless in many schools there are teachers who think they are doing their best, and yet who wonder why they do not succeed; and others, who accomplish gratifying results so easily and pleasantly, that *they* wonder why others find teaching so wearisome and apparently fruitless. Now the secret in either case cannot be learned by the superintendent in any one session, yet from what he sees he may obtain a clue which shall enable him to assist the one by what he learns from the other.

For instance, if he would be helpful to the

teacher who conducts the lesson entirely on the lecture plan, and then wonders why his boys are silent and frequently absent, he will be better able to inform him in a kindly way of the difficulty, which, hid from the teacher, is visible to the superintendent in the desk. Or if he would be helpful to that devoted teacher who is well nigh discouraged by the spirit of caste which has manifested itself in her class, he may learn how to become so by observing from his elevated position in what manner and by whom it is shown.

Thus by observation he will notice difficulties of which he might not otherwise be aware, and yet which unchecked would surely cause pain and largely nullify the teacher's influence over the entire class. The dispositions of the teachers and their personal characteristics will also be apparent. He will note the zeal of some and the half-heartedness of others. One will be fertile in expedients to hold attention, and by slate or pad, with the use of illustrations, win over the most indifferent and lodge some lesson of truth, at least in the mind if not the heart. Another having in his class a bright but mischievous boy, will begin the lesson, and just as he secures the attention and arouses the interest of the majority of his class, this particular boy succeeds either by his manner or by ridiculous answers to some question in distracting the attention of the others, overthrowing the teacher's plans and scattering all he had sought to impress upon their minds. The teacher makes an effort to recover the lost attention, but is unsuccessful. He makes one or two more faint attempts to regain control of his class, and failing, permits the time to drift away and the lesson consequently to become a failure, when a little more tact and perseverance might have saved it. At another time he will note the earnestness and deep solicitude expressed in the look and manner of some teacher, whose heart yearning over a listening scholar sees perhaps for the first time that this one for whom many prayers have been offered is now turning to Christ. Though he may not hear a word that is spoken he will be sure that the truth is being pressed upon the heart, and involuntarily his prayers will join the teacher's efforts for the immediate conversion of this soul.

So every Sabbath as he looks over the school, while the superintendent will see some things which will be neither pleasant nor encouraging, he will also see many others that will cheer his heart and put new life within him as he realizes the importance and the blessedness of the work to which he has been called.

There are other sources open to the superintendent, such as the quarterly reports of the teachers and his conversations with them. But this one source of acquiring a knowledge which may increase his helpfulness and efficiency he will learn to value more than all others, and so prizing it will see that it contributes something to his usefulness each week.

In addition to his observation from the desk the superintendent should pass about the room more or less during the time of the lesson study, and so gain a more accurate idea of the work being done. While I agree with those who maintain that the teacher should never be disturbed during the study hour, I do not agree with them when they go so far as to say that he should never walk up and down the aisles during this time. In the case of the mischievous boy just mentioned, the superintendent observing the indications of trouble in the class can quietly pass by it, and his mere presence will act as a restraint upon the boy.

If the freedom of the aisles is not abused the superintendent may pass about the room and no one be disturbed, but as a consequence better work be done by all.

I do not approve of having the superintendent regularly teach a class. Occasionally, however, in the absence of a teacher the superintendent himself may take the vacant place, and so learn something of the spiritual and mental condition of the class. By doing this he will also keep fresh in mind, from experience, the difficulties which beset the teachers in winning and holding attention and imparting truth, and be the more ready to sympathize with them from a practical standpoint. Another advantage to be gained by the superintendent in teaching now and then will be the strengthening of his influence over the scholars, as he comes in more direct contact with them, and the establishing more closely of the tie of friendship which binds him to them.

Thus by the wise occupation of the time alloted for the study of the lesson the heart of the superintendent will be kept warm in his work, and when the time comes for the closing services he will be ready to take them up with alacrity and zest, and so conduct them that the influences of the hour shall all be exhilarating, wholesome and helpful.

God Blesses Good Books.

THE teacher of a public school had been converted. Her training had been adverse both to conversion and to aftergrowth in grace. The influences of her home were thoroughly ungodly. From the relation of some difficulties in her experience, a colporteur of the Board of Publication was led to place in her hand that excellent volume, "Religions Ex-

perience," by Dr. Archibald Alexander. He afterwards learned that she had been greatly benefited by that admirable spiritual guide. Not only so, but, having received freely, she had given freely. She placed the book in the hands of an acquaintance, long a backslider, and who was wasting away with consumption—who by it was brought back to his first love. Who can tell how often God may multiply the good seed thus sown. A very small sum made possible the gift of this book, which in a few months was blessed to the comforting of one and the reclaiming of another of God's people. Eternity alone will reveal the whole increase. Even a small contribution to its missionary fund may enable the Board, through some of its colporteurs to plant a precious seed, whose fruit may hereafter wave like Lebanon. Can any one make a better investment than by sending an offering to that fund?

Getting the Children to Church.

BY REV. L. M. COLFELT.

ONE of the ways in which the teacher can help the pastor is by pressing upon the scholars' attention the duty and privilege of attending public worship. The principal question now with ministers of the gospel is, How shall the children be gotten to the church services? Our fathers had a summary way of answering that question which it is questionable whether we have yet improved upon. They got children to church just as they got them to learn the Catechism, by the exercise of authority. They felt that whether the services were adapted or not to the capacities of children the habit of going to church was a matter of infinite importance. It is true that restraint and imprisonment were too often endured by the children in the house of God. It is true that prejudice and hatred were excited in the minds of some children against the whole service to which they were thus compulsorily led. We well remember ourselves counting the number of our fingers a hundred times during the dull service, and numbering the panes of glass in all directions, up and down, across and back again. We well remember how the old clock and the pulpit divided many a wistful glance between them, and how nothing sounded so much like "good tidings of great joy" as the apostolic benediction.

All this is natural and true, but, after all, "by their fruits ye shall know them." The compulsory study of the Catechism made strong, intelligent Christians, and the compulsory method of getting the children to church developed a habit of church-going to which we are strangers in this age, and the absence of which is threatening the continued power and influence of the church more than any other cause. True, the minister may be to blame for overlooking too much the children's portion in the Sabbath worship, but it is easy to overlook when the children are not there. True, he must preach with reference to them and hold special services for them. But after all there must be something sadly wrong when so large a proportion of young people brought up in the Sabbath-school forsake the sanctuary upon attaining mature life. Let the minister inquire into this matter. But as Sabbath-school superintendents and teachers let us ask "How far are we implicated in the responsibility for this result?"

The surest way of getting the children into the church is to convert them into it. To this extent teachers are implicated. But what of the large number who are not converted? How shall they be allied to the church? Something, yes, a great deal may be done by the teacher in fostering in the minds of the young the duty of attending church. I say *duty*, for we have largely forgotten that matter, and have been putting the emphasis too much on the *privilege*. In every family where the children are in health and are above five or six years old and do not go to church at least once a Sabbath, the sense of duty in reference to God's house must be lowered and needs building up again. Perhaps we cannot reach the parent, but the children in the classes are ours to make upon them whatever good impression we will.

Let the superintendent and each teacher allude frequently to the subject of public worship and the ministry of the word; point out not only the benefits but the duty of attending the church services and the evils of neglecting the same, always taking care to enforce counsel in the matter by the strong influence of personal example. The result, I feel sure, would be very helpful to the minister and would be much more favorable than at present. For after all that is said, and that worthily, in favor of subordinate means, the world is still to be converted by "the foolishness of preaching." Preaching is the especially appointed instrument for the salvation of men; and it is under the earnest and impressive appeals of the faithful ambassador of Christ that teachers are stimulated and the hearts of the young are aroused and won over to the side of the Saviour and his Church. A faithful, earnest man in the pulpit has immense power in aiding the teacher in the great end of stimulating the scholar to high and holy purposes. And what will so encourage and freshen his heart and his ministrations as the presence of the young?—*From an address to S. S. Teachers.*

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

THIRD QUARTER.

1. July 1.—Joshua, Successor to Moses. Josh. 1: 1-9.
2. July 8.—Passing over Jordan. Josh. 3: 5-17.
3. July 15.—The Plains of Jericho. Josh. 5: 10-15 and 6: 1-5.
4. July 22.—Israel Defeated at Ai. Josh. 7: 10-26.
5. July 29.—The Reading of the Law. Josh. 8: 30-35.
6. Aug. 5.—**The Cities of Refuge.** Josh. 20: 1-9.
7. Aug. 12.—**The Last Days of Joshua.** Josh. 24: 14-29.
8. Aug. 19.—**Israel Forsaking God.** Judg. 2: 6-16.
9. Aug. 26.—**Gideon's Army.** Judg. 7: 1-8.
10. Sept. 2.—The Death of Samson. Judg. 16: 21-31.
11. Sept. 9.—Ruth and Naomi. Ruth 1: 14-22.
12. Sept. 16.—A Praying Mother. 1 Sam. 1: 21-28.
13. Sept. 23.—The Child Samuel. 1 Sam. 3: 1-19.
14. Sept. 30.—Review.

Lesson VI. **THE CITIES OF REFUGE.** August 5th, 1883.

Josh. 20: 1-9. Memorize vs. 1-3.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us."—Heb. 6: 18.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Num. 35: 1-15.....*The Law of Refuge.*
T. Josh. 20: 1-9 .....*The Cities of Refuge.*
W. Heb. 6: 11-20.....*Fleeing for Refuge.*
Th. Ps. 46: 1-11.....*God our Refuge.*
F. Ps. 142: 1-7.....*Thou art my Refuge.*
S. Rom. 7: 18-25.....*Who Shall Deliver Me?*
S. Matt. 11: 25-30.....*"Come unto Me."*

TOPIC.

Christ the Sinner's Refuge.

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Law of Refuge. vs. 1-6. **2. The Cities Appointed.** vs. 7-9.

Time.—B. C. 1444. **Place.**—Shiloh, a city of Ephraim, the resting-place of the ark (chap. 18: 1), in the centre of Canaan, twenty miles north of Jerusalem, twelve north of Bethel and ten south of Shechem.

Catechism.—Q. 29. *How are we made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ?* A. We are made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ, by the effectual application of it to us by his Holy Spirit.

Q. 30. *How doth the Spirit apply to us the redemption purchased by Christ?* A. The Spirit applieth to us the redemption purchased by Christ, by working faith in us, and thereby uniting us to Christ in our effectual calling.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 305: "Jesus, lover of my soul." Other hymns, 304, 321, 331, 335.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

INTRODUCTORY.—After the assemblage at Shechem the work of conquest went on without interruption, as detailed in the intervening chapters. The land was distributed among the tribes. It is supposed that about seven years were occupied in this work of subjugation. To the tribe of Levi no distinct portion of land was given, as this tribe was set apart for the offices of religion, and was to have its support from the nation at large, receiving tithes of the whole produce. Forty-eight towns, each with a circle of meadow around it for pasturage, were appointed in different sections of the country for the residence of the Levites. Six of these towns were cities of refuge.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

1 The LORD also spake unto Josh'u-a, saying, [Josh. 5: 14; 7: 10.]

2 Speak to the children of Is'ra-el, saying, Appoint out for you cities of refuge, whereof I spake unto you by the hand of Mo'ses; [Ex. 21: 13; Num. 35: 6, 11, 14; Deut. 19: 2, 9.]

3 That the slayer that killeth *any* person unawares *and* unwittingly may flee thither: and they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood. [Rom. 8: 1, 33, 34; Heb. 6: 18, 19.]

4 And when he that doth flee unto one of those cities shall stand at the entering of the gate of the city, and shall declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city, they shall take him into the city unto them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them. [Ruth 4: 1, 2; Job 5: 4; Jer. 38: 7; Ps. 26: 9.]

5 And if the avenger of blood pursue after him, then they shall not deliver the slayer up into his hand; because he smote his neighbor

unwittingly, and hated him not beforetime. [Num. 35 : 12.]

6 And he shall dwell in that city, until he stand before the congregation for judgment, *and* until the death of the high priest that shall be in those days; then shall the slayer return, and come unto his own city, and unto his own house, unto the city from whence he fled. [Num. 35 : 25.]

7 ¶ And they appointed Ke'desh in Gal'i-lee in mount Naph'ta-li, and She'chem in mount E'phra-im, and Kir'jath-ar'ba, which *is* Hebron, in the mountain of Ju'dah. [Josh. 21 : 21, 32; 1 Chron. 6 : 76; 2 Chron. 10 : 1; Josh. 14 : 15; Luke 1 : 39.]

8 And on the other side Jor'dan by Jer'i-cho eastward, they assigned Be'zer in the wilderness upon the plain out of the tribe of Reu'ben, and Ra'moth in Gil'e-ad out of the tribe of Gad, and Go'lan in Ba'shan out of the tribe of Ma-nas'seh. [Deut. 4 : 43; 1 Kings 22 : 3; Josh. 21 : 27.]

9 These were the cities appointed for all the children of Is'ra-el, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them, that whosoever killeth *any* person at unawares might flee thither, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, until he stood before the congregation. [Num. 35 : 15.]

1 *The Lord also spake.* After the completion of the work of conquest, when the tribes had settled down in their several portions. See Deut. 19: 1, 2, where the time for the allotment of these cities was fixed. In the study of this subject of the cities of refuge, compare Num. 35 : 9–34 and Deut. 19 : 1–13, where the original command with detailed instructions is found.

2. *Appoint out for you cities of refuge.* Literally, *Cities of reception*, that is, of fugitives. The word is almost equivalent to our word asylum, which denotes a sanctuary or refuge from which one who has fled into it cannot be taken away. These cities of refuge were to be chosen from the forty-eight Levitical cities. Num. 35 : 6.

5 *The slayer that killeth any person unawares and unwittingly.* In Num. 35 : 16–23 the distinction is carefully drawn and illustrated between wilful murder, which should find no shelter even in the cities of refuge, and accidental killing, in which these cities should furnish protection from the hand of the avenger. One who had thrust another in enmity or hatred, or had lain in wait for him to smite him, should find no shelter; he should surely be put to death. But if one had thrust another suddenly without enmity, or had cast something upon him without lying in wait for him, or should smite him with a stone without seeing him, not being his enemy before nor having sought his harm, then the cities of refuge should become a shelter for him, beyond whose gates the avenger could not pursue him. *Refuge from the avenger.* In the earliest days the forms of justice were very rude. According to the very ancient command given in Gen. 9 : 6, the shedding of human blood was to be avenged by human hands. Any one was at liberty to execute this law. Later, the duty of avenging the shedding of blood was laid upon the nearest kinsman of the person slain. He was permitted to kill the murderer openly or secretly, without notice or delay, wherever he might find him. It is readily seen that such a method of executing justice would often lead to the greatest injustice. The person charged had no opportunity for trial. There was no distinction recognized between wilful murder and accidental homicide. Family feuds were thus perpetuated, for the avenger was himself in turn liable to be stricken down by the kinsman of the man he had killed. The object of this provision in the Mosaic law was to put a check upon these forms of injustice, and so to regulate the custom of blood revenge, that while the guilty should not escape the innocent should be sheltered.

4 *He that doth flee unto one of those cities.* When any one had killed another, though purely by accident, he must flee at once to the nearest city of refuge. Roads were to be prepared leading to these cities. Deut. 19 : 3. According to the Jewish writers it was the duty of the government to repair these roads annually in the month Adar, removing every obstruction that might hinder the speed of the fugitive. No hillock was to be left, no river was to remain unbridged, and the road was to be at least two and thirty cubits in width. At every turning and at every cross-road posts were to be kept with boards bearing the words, *Refuge, Refuge*, that the person fleeing might never mistake the way. *At the entering of the gate.* It was here the judges of the city held their sittings. Before them the slayer was to stand and declare his cause as soon as he entered. The elders were to look into his case and receive him provisionally into the city to await his formal trial. This first inquiry was only preliminary, and when the avenger had tracked him to the city and appeared to claim his right of blood revenge, witnesses should be called and the case thoroughly investigated "before the congregation," *i. e.*, before the local court, which consisted of the elders of the city. Num. 35 : 12, 24. If he was found guilty of wilful murder he should be delivered up to suffer the penalty of his crime; but if it was proven that the killing had been by accident, unintentionally, he should remain under the protection of the city of refuge.

5 *They shall not deliver the slayer.* Not in

any case until he had received trial and had been proven guilty, and if proven innocent not at all.

6 *Until he stand before the congregation for judgment.* The rulers and representatives of the city acting for the whole population as a court. *Until the death of the high priest.* It is the case of the innocent manslayer that is here contemplated. When tried and acquitted of intentional murder he was not therefore at liberty to return home, but was to remain in the city of refuge until the death of the high priest then in office. The law was very explicit in its requirements. If he at any time went outside of the borders of the city, the avenger of blood, finding him, was at liberty to slay him. See Num. 35: 25–28. He became, therefore, an exile from his home, and virtually a prisoner. This requirement marked the grave nature of manslaughter, even when unintentional, and taught the people the sacredness of human life. It may have been also in part for the safety of the manslayer himself, as he might still be in danger from the passion of the pursuer if sent out from the protection of the city of refuge. If, however, on the trial it was found that the act had been premeditated and intentional, no such protection should be given to the slayer, but he should then on the requisition of the elders of his own city be delivered up for punishment. See Deut. 19: 12, 13. Thus the cities of refuge were not intended to shield any criminal from deserved punishment, but only to secure to all fair and just trial. In the case of guilt proven no money ransom was to be allowed; nor in the case of accidental homicide was the permission to return home before the death of the high priest to be purchasable at any price. See Num. 35: 31, 32. *Then shall the slayer return . . . unto his own city.* When the high priest died he was set free, and the avenger had no longer any right to touch him.

7 *They appointed.* Literally, *Sanctified, set apart*, implying a peculiar sacredness in these cities. On each side of the Jordan there were three of these refuges. A glance at the map will show how wisely these cities were chosen so that to every part of the land one of them should be easy of access. *Kedesh.* The most northerly city in the lot of Naphtali. The name means *sanctuary.* It was the home of Barak. Judg. 4: 6, 10. Its modern name is Kades; it is ten miles north of Safed. *In Galilee.* In the district afterwards called Galilee. *Shechem . . . Hebron.* Kedesh was in the north, Shechem in the centre, and Hebron in the south. Of the latter, *Kirjath-arba* was the original name, so called from Arba, the progenitor of the giant Anakim. It was afterward Hebron. It is the oldest town in Palestine. Its location is twenty miles south of Jerusalem. It has now 10,000 inhabitants.

8 *On the other side Jordan.* On the east side, in the portion assigned to the two tribes and a half. These cities had already been chosen and set apart by Moses. Deut. 4: 41–43. *Bezer.* At the south of Eastern Palestine. *By Jericho eastward.* Opposite Jericho, in the level, uncultivated region that stretches from the Jordan toward the desert of Arabia. The site of Bezer is not with any degree of certainty identified. *Ramoth in Gilead.* A great fortress in the central portion of Eastern Palestine, identical with Ramoth Mizpeh. Josh. 13: 26. *Golan in Bashan.* The most northerly of the three cities on the east of the Jordan. Even its site is not now known, though once it was a place of great influence, giving its name to a whole district, Gaulonitis, once densely populated but now almost an empty wilderness.

9 *For all . . . and for the stranger.* The merciful provisions of this system were not confined to the Israelites, but were extended to all who dwelt with them in the land. Of such there were always many. These were the "mixed multitude," who came out of Egypt with the people (Ex. 12: 38); the remains of the original inhabitants of the country, never wholly extirpated; captives taken in war and fugitives, hired servants and merchants. See 2 Chron. 2: 17. *All* had the privileges of asylum in these cities.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

The Lord also spake . . . Appoint out for you cities of refuge. It was the Lord's thought, not man's to provide these cities of refuge. Human life is very sacred in the sight of God. The original command was also his, that "Whoso sheddeth man's blood by man shall his blood be shed." Thus he built a strong wall around every life. But the nations had perverted that divine command until all justice was lost sight of. If by the purest accident one man caused the death of another, perhaps of his best friend, he was stricken down by the blood avenger as mercilessly as if he had slain the other in cold blood. Then the Lord interfered to throw another shield about human life. The point here is that this merciful provision originated with God himself, and was not a mere kindly thought of Moses or Joshua. It was in the

heart of God also that the thought of a refuge for the sinners of a lost and guilty world had its origin. It was because "God so loved the world" that "he gave his only-begotten Son."

That the slayer that killeth any person unawares . . . may flee thither. These cities were not intended to shield the guilty. The heathen nations had their temples, groves, altars and even cities, to which offenders might flee for protection; but in these no distinction was made between the guilty and the innocent. Even wilful murderers might hide within the gates of the *asyla*, and there was no way to bring them to justice. But there was no such indiscriminate protection provided in these cities of refuge. They were designed only to shield the innocent manslayer. He who had killed another intentionally might flee to one of these cities and the avenger could not then strike him down until he had been tried; but when it was shown to the judges that the slaying had been a murder, deliberate and intentional, the murderer was at once given up to receive punishment. The intention of these cities was to shield the innocent and to secure fair trial to all. This justice and mercy mingled in the arrangement. In Christ there is the same mingling of justice and mercy. The refuge is open for all sinners, and there is no one who can ever claim to be innocent; but only those whose guilt has been washed away in the blood of the Lamb can find shelter even in Christ.

They shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood. There is an avenger of blood pursuing every one of us in this world. The curse upon every sin is death. The law is inexorable in its demands. There is no escape from the penalty. According to the strong language of Scripture, sinners at the judgment-day will call upon the hills and the rocks to fall on them and hide them from the wrath of the Lamb, but will call in vain, for there will be no refuge. Men may hide for a time, or may escape punishment for a time, but they cannot escape from the avenger. It is when we understand the terrible meaning of this truth that we are prepared to appreciate the glad word that announces a refuge from sin and from guilt. Christ is our refuge from the avenger. "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus."

He that doth flee unto one of those cities shall stand at the . . . gate. The slayer must flee to the refuge. He would find no protection until he had reached the gate. If the avenger overtook him on the way he could strike him down. The city afforded him no refuge while he remained far from it. He must flee to it. He must not loiter on the way, but must make all possible haste to get to its gate lest the pursuer come upon him. Christ is a refuge, ever open to the sinner, but neither is he a refuge to those who do not go to him. He stands and says: "Come unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth," but if we do not run to him we shall not be saved.

A great deal is said in the old Jewish books about the roads to these cities of refuge. They were to be broad and good, and were always to be kept in the best of order. Then they were to be plainly marked with guide-boards, showing at every turning and wherever there was any possibility of the fugitive making a mistake, which was the right way. All this most happily illustrates the great pains at which the Bible is to show the way to Christ, so that no one, not even the smallest child or the simplest and most ignorant person, can possibly err in seeking the right path. The way itself has been prepared at great cost, and is so easy and so perfect that the feeblest foot need not stumble in it. Every obstacle has been taken out of it, every rough place has been made smooth, every hillock has been leveled down, and every valley has been bridged over. The stones have been gathered out of the path, so that no one can stumble who walks in it. Then at every turn there is a gospel sign-board telling which way to take to the refuge. No one can ever say that he could not find the road.

If the avenger of blood pursue . . . they shall not deliver the slayer up into his hand. The avenger could not pass beyond the limits of the refuge to touch a hair of the head of him who had fled to the city. No more can the law lay a hand upon him who has fled to Christ for refuge. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it and is safe." No power can ever drag the believer out of his refuge. Jesus said of his own: "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand."

And he shall dwell in that city. He must not leave it on any pretext. He was under its protection only while he remained within its limits. If the avenger found him beyond these he was at liberty to strike him down; he had forfeited his right to shelter. Here again the analogy is striking. Christ is our refuge only while we abide in him. It is not enough to run into this refuge once and leave our names, and then go out again at liberty to run wherever we please. We must stay under the shelter; we must abide under the covert of his wings; we must dwell in the secret place of the Most High. Anywhere outside we are exposed to all the perils

of temptation. We cannot claim the protection of the Lord while we are running over the devil's grounds.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Like the cities of refuge, Christ, the sinner's refuge, is divinely appointed.

2. The cities of refuge were so selected that one was near to every point in the country; so Christ is accessible to all and far off from none.

3. The way to the refuge was made as easy as possible, and was always kept in order; the way to Christ is plain and smooth, and no one ever can mistake it who reads the guide-boards.

4. The slayer must flee to the refuge, or it would give him no shelter; the sinner has something to do; he must come to Christ.

5. The slayer was safe in the city of refuge; the sinner who flees to Christ is safe in him and cannot be snatched away by any power in the universe.

6. The slayer must abide within the city, and if he went outside he forfeited the shelter; the sinner must abide in Christ, and if he wanders away from his refuge he is in deadly peril.

7. The cities of refuge were for all, of whatever nation; the Lord Jesus is a refuge for all the earth.

[The above points refer to the cities of refuge as illustrating the sinner's refuge in Christ; some of the other suggestions from the passage are:]

8. In the sight of God human life is sacred; therefore it has been surrounded by so many walls of protection.

9. Wilful and deliberate murder is to be punished by the death of the murderer; neither money nor great influence should be able to buy off the murderer, or deliver him.

10. Every criminal, however, is entitled to a fair and impartial trial before he is punished.

11. The law should not be taken into private hands for execution; this should be left to the properly constituted courts and authorities.

12. Even the carelessness that results in the taking away of life is not altogether blameless. Even the innocent or accidental manslayer was made to suffer for it by being kept virtually a prisoner for a period.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

BY THE REV. JAMES A. WORDEN, D.D.

Familiar as is this lesson to teachers, it may be new and fresh to their scholars.

APPROACH.—Call for a brief summary of the history between last lesson and this. Especially bring out the fact that the conquest of Canaan was completed. The position of the apportionments of the tribes ought to be pointed out on the map. Allow the scholars briefly to describe our present laws protecting human life, our customs of punishing murderers, etc.

ANALYSIS.—I would cluster the whole lesson about the two ideas—

THE AVENGER OF BLOOD.
THE CITIES OF REFUGE.

I. *The Avenger of Blood.*—The scholars may not readily understand the matter of "blood revenge." What did God command as to punishing murderers? Gen. 9: 6; Lev. 24: 17; Ex. 21: 12. Here bring out the sacredness with which God has surrounded human life. Set forth the unsettled state of society in those times; that they had not the police officers, sheriffs, judges or courts which we now have. Who then would punish a murderer? The man nearest of kin to the one slain. Illustrate this by the customs still existing among the Persians, Abyssinians, Druses, Circassians and the Arabs of to-day. This custom prevailed among the children of Israel. Moses and Joshua did not originate it.

What avenger of blood pursues the sinner? 1. The law of God, which we have broken. What does every sin deserve? 2. Our own conscience.

II. *The Cities of Refuge.*—Make it clear what kind of manslayer had a right to the protection of these cities. Emphasize the fact that Moses' law provided no shelter to *murderers*, that they could not buy off justice for money, or in any way escape. Num. 35: 31. Enlist the class in the scene described in Deut. 19: 5. The two men cutting timber, the terrible accident, the sad death, the awful feelings of the manslayer. The man he has killed may be his best friend. His setting out for the nearest city of refuge. The avenger of blood hears of the accident, pursues; the race for life; the manslayer reaching the suburbs of the city; his reception by the elders of the city who have come out; his story to them, etc. Speak of Jesus Christ as the sinner's refuge. From what is Jesus a *refuge?* Isa. 32: 2; 4: 6. In what places in the Bible is he called a refuge? Deut. 33: 27; Ps. 46: 1; 91: 2; Isa. 25: 4. If the manslayer fled to some other city than those of refuge, what could the avenger of blood do? There is no salvation out of Christ. How were these cities located? How is Christ near the sinner? Rom. 10: 8; Ps. 34: 18; Isa. 55: 6. How were the roads to the cities of refuge to be kept? What

kind of a road is there to Christ our Refuge? Isa. 35: 8. What should ministers and teachers do to keep the road clear? If the manslayer went outside the limits of the city of refuge what might be done to him? If we leave Christ our Refuge what fate shall be ours? Heb. 10: 38.

Questions on next Sabbath's lesson to be assigned to-day:

1. What are some of the main facts in Joshua's life?
2. What is the meaning of the words, "Fear the Lord?"
3. Why should we choose to serve the Lord?
4. What promises have professing Christians made?
5. What sacrament has Christ given to be a sign of our covenant with him.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

BY J. HOWARD SEAL.

SUGGESTIONS.—The word "Refuge" only to be put upon the board previous to the desk lesson in the form of a sign-post. The lesson is a picture of the road to Christ Jesus. (1) Show how like these cities he is the "*appointed*" Refuge. Divinely appointed (Isa. 53: 6; John 3: 16; Rom. 4: 25); and while these texts are being read print the word "Appointed." (2) He is an "*ample*" Refuge. Cities of refuge provided only for sins of ignorance; Christ provides for all sins. John 1: 29. He is sufficient to meet every case (Isa. 1: 18; Ps. 51: 7; Heb. 9: 26); and while reading print the word "Ample." (3) He is an "*accessible*" Refuge. These cities were so selected that in no part of the country could the manslayer be very remote from one of them. The gates always open, night and day. Roads were kept in excellent repair. Bridges over every stream. So Christ is accessible to all who will flee to him for refuge from sin (Isa. 27: 5; Zech. 9: 12; Matt. 11: 28; John 6: 37; Isa. 55: 7; Rev. 3: 20); and while reading print the word "Accessible." Print the letters O and R over and under Refuge, as in diagram, and draw outline of the cross. Make the application, the cross of Christ our Appointed Refuge, our Ample Refuge, our Accessible Refuge, and print, "Flee to it." Those who take refuge in Jesus can never perish. They are as secure as the Saviour himself. John 10: 28, 29. "The avenger might, perhaps, fail to lay hold on the slayer, even though he were not in the city; but judgment must overtake the sinner out of Christ. There is no possibility of escape if there is the thickness of a gold leaf between the soul and Christ." Oh, then, flee to Jesus, dear scholar.

Directions for Coloring.—"Refuge," green shaded with yellow; "Appointed," white; "Ample," orange; "Accessible," light blue; the rest plain white.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

BY MRS. G. R. ALDEN—"PANSY."

A blackboard map, carefully locating the six cities of refuge, with their names printed on the outline, will greatly help the children's memories and hold attention. Incidentally, Bible geography may often be taught in the primary class without robbing the lesson of its spiritual power.

Having called from the class the lesson facts select one of the cities, and imagine a man fleeing thither, his angry pursuer just behind him. The story will have increased interest if within the city chosen you make a few lines to represent an open gate, and a mark for a man waiting to receive the one in danger. Also outline the road as you explain how carefully it was

kept, and tell of the guide boards pointing the way.

Application.—This is so obvious that it hardly seems necessary to call your attention to it. Yet the question that will interest the earnest teacher is, How shall I present Christ as a Refuge so plainly that the child need make no mistake?

Object Illustration.—Call a young child to you and tell the story of the father who was walking out with his little girl, she a few steps ahead of him, when he saw rushing toward them a mad dog. Instantly he stepped between the child and the dog, receiving the wound from the angry animal in his own flesh, thus saving his child. This story will be more vivid if in telling it you step forward and place yourself between the child whom you have called forward, and a supposed danger, to illustrate the father's act.

Blackboard Illustration.—Over the entire space occupied by the cities of refuge make a solid cross of red crayon. Print above it in bright letters—

CHRIST OUR REFUGE.

Imagine the road that you have outlined to represent the journey of life, and let the children tell you what to name the guide boards which you have set up pointing out the way. Lead them by questioning to name one "The Bible," another "The Sabbath-school," etc. Help them to see how carefully God has pointed out the way.

A few moments may wisely be spent in noting the contrasts. Sometimes one who tried failed to reach the city in time. But no one who really wanted to reach Jesus ever failed.

Other contrasts will suggest themselves, to be developed according to the wisdom of the teacher. Remember to explain again just what you mean by hiding in Jesus. He is the "hope set before us," as mentioned in the golden text, and you will need to link those words to Christ in such a way that your scholars in thinking of the verse will think of Jesus.

Lesson VII. THE LAST DAYS OF JOSHUA. August 12th, 1883.

Josh. 24: 14-29. Memorize vs. 14-16.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Choose you this day whom ye will serve."—Josh. 24: 15.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Josh. 23: 11-16.....*Joshua's Warning.*
T. Josh. 24: 14-29.....*Joshua's Last Days.*
W. 1 Kings 18: 19-39.....*"How Long Halt Ye?"*
Th. 1 Kings 3: 5-15.....*Solomon's Choice.*
F. Luke 10: 38-42.....*Mary's Choice.*
S. Rom. 8: 8-17.....*Confession and Faith.*
S. Rom. 12: 1-8.....*Reasonable Service.*

TOPIC.

The Great Decision.

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Choice Offered. vs. 14, 15. **2. The Decision Made.** vs. 16-21. **3. The Covenant Renewed.** v. 22.

Time.—B. C. 1426. **Place.**—Shechem.

Catechism.—Q. 31. *What is effectual calling?* A. Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit, whereby, convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, he doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the gospel.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 311: "People of the living God." Other hymns, 225, 322, 323, 327.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—After the appointment of the cities of refuge the Levites were provided for, forty-eight cities being set apart for them. Chap. 21. The work of conquest being now completed the two tribes and a half whose portion lay east of the Jordan, having assisted in subjugating the land for the other tribes, returned to their own inheritance. Chap. 22. Nearly eighteen years of peace and prosperity now followed the years of war. Joshua was growing old, and knowing that his end was near he gathered the people together to give them a parting charge. It was at Shechem that this assembly was held. Shechem was in the valley between Ebal and Gerizim. (Lesson V., July 29.) No more sacred spot could have been selected, as by its associations it was linked back to all the past history of the people. It seems to have been a great mass meeting of "all the people" (vs. 1, 2), that is, of representatives of all the tribes, perhaps of all who could come. In the first part of his address Joshua recounted the history of God's dealings with the people, from the call of Abraham down to the time of the completion of the conquest. He then gives them his farewell counsel.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

14 ¶ Now therefore fear the LORD; and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in E'gypt; and serve ye the LORD. [Deut. 10: 12; Ezek. 20: 18.]

15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that *were* on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Am'or-ites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD. [Ruth 1: 15; 1 Kings 18: 21; Gen. 18: 19; Acts 11: 23.]

16 And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the LORD, to serve other gods;

17 For the LORD our God, he *it is* that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of E'gypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed: [Isa. 46: 4.]

18 And the LORD drave out from before us all the people, even the Am'or-ites which dwelt in the land: *therefore* will we also serve the LORD; for he *is* our God. [Ps. 116: 16.]

19 And Josh'u-a said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the LORD: for he *is* an holy God; he *is* a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. [Lev. 19: 2.]

20 If ye forsake the LORD, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good. [Ezra 8: 22; Acts 7: 42.]

21 And the people said unto Josh'u-a, Nay; but we will serve the LORD. [Ezra 19: 8; Isa. 44: 5.]

22 And Josh'u-a said unto the people, Ye *are* witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you the LORD, to serve him. And they said, *We are* witnesses. [Job 15: 6.]

23 Now therefore put away, *said he*, the strange gods which *are* among you, and incline your heart unto the LORD God of Is'ra-el. [Judg. 10: 16; 1 Sam. 7: 3.]

24 And the people said unto Josh'u-a, The LORD our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey. [Neh. 10: 29.]

25 So Josh'u-a made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shech'em.

26 ¶ And Josh'u-a wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak, that *was* by the sanctuary of the LORD. [Deut. 31: 24.]

27 And Josh'u-a said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us: for it hath heard all the words of the LORD which he spake unto us: it shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God. [Deut. 31: 19, 21, 26.]

28 So Josh'u-a let the people depart, every man unto his inheritance. [Judg. 2: 6.]

29 ¶ And it came to pass after these things, that Josh'u-a the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD died, being a hundred and ten years old. [Judg. 2: 8.]

14 *Now therefore.* In view of all that God has done for you. *Fear the Lord.* Not in the sense of dread or terror, but of deep reverence. Ps. 2: 11; Prov. 1; 7. *Serve him in sincerity.* Not merely in form but really, with the heart; not in part only but wholly, with all the powers; not in appearance or profession but truly. See John 4: 23, 24; 1 Cor. 5: 8; 2 Cor. 1: 12; 2: 17. *Put away the gods which your fathers served.* The words of Joshua here clearly imply that idolatry was still practiced, perhaps only in secret, among the people. *The other side of the flood.* That is, beyond the Euphrates, in Mesopotamia, referring to the ancestors of Abraham, who were idolaters. v. 2. Tradition says that Terah was a maker of idols, and that Abraham was persecuted in Ur for refusing to be an idolater. *In Egypt.* Implying that during their stay in that land they had worshiped idols. See also Ezek. 20: 6–8. It is very evident that idolatry had never altogether ceased among the people, and that Joshua knew of its existence even at this time. See also Gen. 31: 19, 34; 35: 2; Lev. 17: 7; Deut. 32: 16; Amos 5: 25, 26. Now, as a condition of blessing and prosperity, Joshua calls the people to put away every trace of it, and serve the Lord only and with a pure and true heart.

15 *If it seem evil.* If the service of God does not seem to you to be the very best, you are free to reject it. There must be entire voluntariness in this matter. There would be no compulsion. *Choose you this day whom ye will serve.* They were at perfect liberty to cling to their idols if they thought best to do so. They could not, however, serve both these and the Lord. They must weigh the matter well and decide which they would rather serve. Joshua calls them to settle the question and choose one or the other. He does not of course imply that it would make no difference what choice they made, nor that they were under no more obligation to one than to the other; he wished to bring them to a decision, and to a fixed and final choice of the true God. See 1 Kings 18: 21. *As for me and my house.* Whatever they might do his choice was made both for himself and his family. Compare Gen. 18: 19.

16 *The people answered.* Joshua's earnest challenge deeply impressed them. Every feeling of loyalty to Jehovah was aroused in their hearts, and the thought of giving him up for idols was rejected with most emphatic expression.

17, 18 *He it is that brought us up.* There

rises before their eyes the memory of what God has done for them, what they owe to him. They enumerate five reasons for gratitude and loyalty to the Lord. (1) He had brought them up out of Egypt, from bondage. (2) He had wrought great signs, miracles and power in that land, proving his greatness and divinity. (3) He had preserved them in their journey through the wilderness amid many dangers and enemies. (4) He had driven out the Amorites, the most formidable of the original inhabitants of Canaan. (5) The Lord was their God. "He is our God."

19 *Ye cannot serve the Lord.* He would remind them of the deep and full significance of the decision they were making. He does not want to discourage them, but would have them count the cost and think well of what was involved in serving the Lord. He knew how easy it was to be carried away by enthusiastic feelings, and to make vows in the excitement of such a moment as this which would be forgotten when they went back to their real life. He spoke, therefore, in this startling manner to check their hasty impulsiveness and their too easy confidence in their own loyalty, and to lead them to make thorough work. So he sets before them the holy character of God, and the nature of the service he requires. *An holy God.* Absolutely holy in himself; therefore nothing unholy can be tolerated in his sight. See Lev. 19: 2; 1 Sam. 6: 20; Isa. 6: 3. *A jealous God.* Frequently in the Scriptures God is represented as married to his people, and as requiring unbroken fidelity on their part. The thought here is that if they chose him as their God he would not endure idolatry, as no other god could be permitted to share their devotion and love. Holiness itself is jealous, in that it can endure no sin of any kind. *He will not forgive.* See Ex. 23: 21. The meaning is not that God never forgives sin, but that they could not keep their sins and at the same time serve him acceptably. It is a very emphatic way of saying that unless they gave up their idols and all their sins they could not serve the Lord.

20 *He will turn and do you hurt.* His favor was conditioned upon their faithfulness. Although he had done so much for them already, if they were untrue to him and served strange gods he would change his attitude to them and punish them.

21 *Nay; but we will.* The people reiterate their determination to choose the Lord.

22 *Ye are witnesses against yourselves.* They making the choice themselves, were making it knowing what it involved. He wanted them to remember that if they should ever fall away and then suffer the penalties at God's hands, they themselves had accepted the conditions of this covenant, and that they could not blame the Lord. *We are witnesses.* That is, they solemnly accepted all the conditions and voluntarily became witnesses against themselves if they proved unfaithful. This form of words by Joshua and the people was the making of a solemn covenant.

23 *Therefore put away.* They had now made their covenant, and must at once begin to fulfill their part. *Which are among you.* Clearly implying that there were idols secretly worshiped among them.

24 *The people said.* For the third time (vs. 16, 21) they aver that they will be true to the Lord and will obey only his voice.

25 *So Joshua made a covenant.* This was a ratification and renewal of the covenant which had been made at Sinai (Ex. 19: 20), and which Moses himself had renewed in the plains of Moab. Deut. 29: 1. *Set them a statute and an ordinance.* He declared to them what God required of them in view of the covenant they had now made. See Ex. 15: 25.

26 *Wrote these words.* That is, he wrote a full account of what had transpired at Shechem at this time, a minute or record of the transactions of that day. *In the book of the law.* The roll of the law of Moses which was laid up in the sanctuary. See Deut. 31: 24–26. *A great stone.* As a memorial of the solemn covenant just ratified. This kind of memorial was common in ancient times. See Gen. 28: 18; 31: 44–46; Ex. 24: 4; Josh. 4: 3. *Under an oak.* Rather, "the oak," or oak-grove. See Gen. 12: 6, where "plain" should be "oak," and 35: 4. It is probable that it was the same tree in all of these cases. *By the sanctuary.* Not the tabernacle, which was at Shiloh at this time (chap. 18: 1); but a consecrated space, a spot sacred for some reason. The remains of the old altar of Abraham and Jacob may still have been there; the altar which Joshua himself had built there, at the time of the ceremonies upon Ebal and Gerizim, may still have been standing. Chap. 8: 30. There is no mention of any offerings in connection with this renewal of the covenant, but may it not be that a new altar had been set up and sacrifices offered upon it, as at Sinai (Ex. 19: 20), and that *this* altar is referred to as "the sanctuary?"

27 *This stone shall be a witness.* See also Gen. 31: 48, 52. Standing there on the spot on which the covenant had been ratified, and as a memorial of the event, it became a witness. *It hath heard.* A poetical figure of speech. *Lest ye deny.* When they were tempted to be un-

faithful to God they should remember this stone standing there at Shechem, and should not yield to the temptation.

29 *Joshua . . . died.* His farewell act was this charge to the people. His death must have occurred soon after this.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

Put away the gods which your fathers served . . . and serve ye the Lord. They could not do the latter until they had done the former. There was no use talking about serving the Lord while they were secretly bowing down to idols. Some may think that this part of the lesson may be skipped, inasmuch as no body worships idols in these days; but we had better not omit it on that account. It is not at all likely that there are any images hidden away in our houses as there probably were in the houses of some of these ancient Israelites; yet there may be idols nevertheless. Anything that we put in the place in our hearts which God ought to have is an idol, whether it is an image of wood, or stone, or gold, or whether it is money, or a desire for fame, or a love of pleasure, or some secret sin which we will not give up, or an unsanctified ambition. If God does not really occupy the highest place in our hearts something else does, and that something else is an idol. We like to talk about the idolatries of the heathen, and hold up our hands in holy horror at the thought that any persons could ever so degrade themselves as to worship such idols as they worship; we had better do a little honest work nearer home and see what we are worshiping. What is in God's place in our hearts? Now, whatever it is, here is the exhortation: Put it away and begin to serve the Lord. Get the Lord into his rightful place. Enthrone him on the highest seat in your heart. Let him rule. Give him the honor, the worship, the love, the service.

If it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord. Strange that it could ever seem evil to any one to serve our God! Yet there are a great many people who so regard it. They think that a religious life is not the best life to choose, that it is a life of self-sacrifice, of cross-bearing, of unpleasant duties, of restraints, of burdens. They say they cannot give up the things of this world to follow Christ. They look upon a Christian life as the turning away from all that is bright and beautiful and joyous and inspiring, and the burying of one's self away in a life of gloom and shadow. They think that it would be a great mistake to make choice of such a life in preference to the bright, happy, unrestrained life of this world. Not many people reason aloud in just this way, but this is about the real drift of their thoughts and feelings. Practically this is what it comes to—that the service of God is evil, and that the service of this world is better. It will not be unprofitable to look somewhat closely into this question before we turn away from it. *Is* it evil to serve the Lord? *Is* the world's service any better, any happier, any sweeter, any richer in its rewards? Think a little what the service of God really gives: Pardon of sin, peace, the sense of God's favor, divine help at every point, precious promises for every experience, victory over every enemy, the presence of the Lord in the valley of shadows and eternal life beyond. Set over against this inventory that of this world. What has it to offer? A few pleasures, with thorns for a pillow afterward; a few cups of indulgence, with bitter dregs in the bottom; a few victories, that yield no permanent result; a few gains, that leave the hands empty at the last; a life of unrestraint, that in the end binds the soul in chains; a dark death-hour, and a hopeless hereafter. Of these two pictures which is the evil?

Choose you this day whom ye will serve. He does not mean to say that it will make no difference what choice they make, that it will be the same in the end. Nor does he mean to say that they are perfectly free to make their choice, and that if they choose Baal their obligations to God will cease to be binding. They cannot in any such easy way get clear of God. We are not placed in this world between two gods, with full liberty to make choice which we will serve. We owe allegiance to God as our only rightful Lord and Sovereign, and we can never throw off that allegiance. We may refuse to recognize it; we may live on as if there was no God anywhere in the universe, giving him no love, no obedience, no worship, but we do not thereby get clear of him or of his claims upon us. We may disregard his laws, but we shall find ourselves at the last fast bound in their penalties. In this sense there is no liberty of choice between God and Baal. But still we have our choice. God never compels allegiance. He tells us what our duty is, what his claims are, what he desires of us; but he leaves us free to decide for ourselves whether we will serve him or serve the world. We cannot serve both. It must be the one or the other. We must serve some god, for no one can be godless; every human soul must worship. The choice that Joshua demanded here is one which God demands of every soul. Choose; choose *this day;* choose whom *ye* will serve.

As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. It is a grand thing to be able to stand up in the face of all the world and dare to do right though all the world do wrong. This is a courage which every young person needs in these days. No matter what the crowd does I will do my duty. All the boys smoke, but I am not going to do it. All the rest go to the theatre, but I am not going to go. All the others swear, but I will keep my speech reverent. The crowd is running after sin, but I am going to cleave to Christ, though I am the only follower he has. Too many people take their religion from their neighbors rather than from God's word. It takes some moral courage to be true when all others are false, to be honest when all the others are dishonest, to be pure in heart when all the others are drifting away into impurity. The true thing to do in all circumstances is not to ask what any other one is going to do, but to ask what God wants us to do and then fearlessly do that.

Ye cannot serve the Lord, for he is an holy God. That is, ye cannot serve him and go on as ye have been doing—secretly serving idols. We cannot serve God and keep our sins; we cannot serve him and continue to cherish our unsanctified lusts in our hearts. We cannot serve God and mammon. It is very easy to resolve to serve him, but when we come to do it it requires all our heart and all our strength of purpose. Joshua did not want to discourage the people, but only to make them stop and think what they were doing. Sometimes young people say they want to become Christians when they have never really thought what they were doing. It is well to remember that God is a holy God, that he is a jealous God, that he will not tolerate sin, that if we forsake him and go after other gods he will turn against us and do us hurt. These facts, however, should not deter us from choosing God as our God, but should deter us from making any fickle start after him from which at the first discouragement we shall turn back. God is not a hard Master. His service is easy. But we must follow him closely, with all our heart, and with pure purpose and unwavering fidelity. We cannot serve him in any other way and find joy and blessedness in the service.

If ye forsake the Lord . . . he will turn and do you hurt. We cannot keep our sins and enjoy the favor of God. He never changes; he is always a God of love; but he is also a God of justice, and his attitude toward men is either that of mercy or judgment, according to their bearing toward him. The same pillar of cloud and fire was light to the people of God and darkness to their enemies. If we are true to the Lord and do his will we will find in him mercy and grace; but if we rebel against him and serve other gods, we shall find in him wrath and severity. If we want the favor of God and his blessing we must do his will.

This stone shall be a witness . . . lest ye deny your God. The spots in which we make our covenants with God become witnesses to these covenants. Where was it you promised God to live for him? Where was it that you resolved to follow Christ, to love him, to confess him before the world, to come to his table? Perhaps it was on a sick bed when you thought you might not live. Or it may have been in a classroom when the lesson was very tender and some members were giving their hearts to God; you said to Christ that you would do so too. You remember the spot; have you done what you promised to do? Or where was it that you knelt down and cried to Jesus to save you? Where was it that you first stood up and confessed yourself a Christian and then took your first communion? These places are all witnesses of your covenant. Every time you see such a spot you should remember the solemn resolve you made there, and ask yourself whether you are faithful to what you promised.

LESSON POINTS.

1. The service of God must begin in holy fear, that is, in reverent and obedient love. v. 14.

2. The service of God must be sincere and true. He will accept nothing less. v. 14.

3. If we would serve the Lord we must put away all other gods, for he will not share our hearts with any other god. v. 14.

4. We are not to follow our fathers in any evil ways. v. 14.

5. Our service of God must be voluntary; freely chosen by ourselves. v. 15.

6. Every one of us has the same choice to make that these people had to make, between the gods of the world and the true God. v. 15.

7. Every one should settle the great question of his duty to God regardless of what any other person may do. v. 15.

8. There are many reasons why we should serve the Lord. v. 17.

9. We cannot serve the Lord and keep our sins at the same time. v. 19.

10. The very love of God becomes terrible to those who rebel against him. v. 20.

11. When we make covenant with God the first thing is to put away our sins and our idols and give our whole heart to him. v. 23.

12. The spots where we covenant with God are memorials of our engagements to follow the Lord. v. 27.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

Introduce by questioning (1) on the speaker Joshua. Draw from the class by rapid questions the main events in his life. (2) Question on the *hearers*. Who? Their character? (3) Bring out the intervening incidents since the last lesson.

Analyze the lesson, for example: I. *The Appeal*. vs. 14, 15. II. *The Response*. vs. 16–24. III. *The Covenant*. vs. 25–9. Or,

THE CHOICE { DEMANDED. vs. 14, 15.
MADE. vs. 16–24.
RECORDED. vs. 25–29.

Or,

JEHOVAH'S SERVICE { COMMENDED.
CHOSEN.
COMMEMORATED.

Take the one of these three which suits your ideas, or what is better, from these and other suggestions *make a plan of your own.*

PICTURE THE SCENE.—Call for the help of every scholar in minutely describing all the details. The place, Shechem. What had there occurred? Gen. 12: 6, 7; 33: 20; 35: 1–4. Those mountain sides had echoed with the blessings and the cursings. Describe the venerable Joshua, white with years and hoary hairs, now giving his "farewell address," more touching and sublime than our own Washington's. The burden of the old general's appeal was, "*Serve ye the Lord.*"

I. JEHOVAH'S SERVICE COMMENDED.

What were they to put away? What were these gods? What idols must we put away? What choice were they to make? When were they to choose? When are we to choose between sin, the world, and Christ? Recite Joshua's resolve. v. 15. Why must we first decide for ourselves? In what sense could Joshua say *my house* "will serve Jehovah?" Why should our decision for Christ embrace *all under our influence and control?* What can I do to bring my house to decide for Christ?

II. JEHOVAH'S SERVICE CHOSEN. vs. 16–24.

How did the people respond to Joshua's appeal? What five reasons did they give for their choice? vs. 17, 18. What reasons can you give for choosing and serving Christ? How did Joshua reply to their fervent promises? See Luke 14: 23. What severe warning did Joshua utter against forsaking Jehovah? Why was this needed? "Put away the strange gods which *are among you?*" Why should young Christians be plainly told of the difficulties and dangers? How did the people stand the test? What does Joshua affirm they had become? Why is it well to lead persons publicly to commit themselves to Christ's service? How does this whole narrative show Joshua's faithful dealing? How the sincerity of the people? What good is there in a strong, earnest *resolve?*

III. JEHOVAH'S SERVICE COMMEMORATED. vs. 25–29.

What is a covenant? Between what parties was this covenant made? What is the peculiar sacredness of a covenant with God? In what book was this covenant recorded? Why? What witness did Joshua select? Why? What covenant has every baptized child sealed on him? What should every baptized child do with that covenant? What covenant has every professing Christian made with the Father, Son and Holy Ghost? Why are the sins of God's covenant people worse than the sins of others? Why should not that fact keep us back from taking on us Christ's covenant?

Assign these points in next Sabbath's lesson:

1. The Canaanites which dwelt in the land.
2. Baal and Ashtaroth.
3. What idols now tempt God's people?
4. How do the Canaanites dwelling in the land illustrate sins dwelling in God's people?
5. How is victory in the conflict with our Canaanites secured?

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

A few moments spent in reviewing what the scholars know about Joshua will be a fitting introduction to this lesson. They are now about to bid him good-bye, and to learn what last words he had to speak to his people. Print in large letters the word "CHOOSE." Let class tell what Joshua called on the people to choose, and when he wanted them to make the choice.

Four marks made in the shape of bars will stand for the number of times they repeated the promise to serve the Lord. Print on each line, "WE WILL," letting class finish the sentence.

A stone may be legitimately used as an object lesson. Select a good sized one, and set it up on your table, and you will be sure to have the attention of the most restless, while some one tells of the stone set up under an oak.

I think you will also find it worth your while to prepare a little banner of bright paper, and print on it the motto of the Israelites—

"WE WILL SERVE THE LORD."

Every primary teacher should have a set of stencil plates at her command for such work as this. Put the banner away carefully, for you will need it in the very next lesson.

Call from the scholars the number of reasons which this people gave for their choice, and it will be a pleasant and profitable application to

allow them in the same connection to give reasons why they themselves should serve the Lord, the teacher making a blackboard list of their answers.

Application.—Of what was Joshua afraid? Teachers will find that their children believe themselves entirely free from the sin of idolatry, and therefore superior to these Israelites. This lesson can be so taught as to enlighten them on this point.

1. Make an altar outline with a heart lying on it. Let it represent the heart of a child who says he has given himself to Jesus. Then show by two or three briefly told incidents how habitually the child prefers his own pleasure to that of others, and as you make each incident plain print in the heart the word "MYSELF." Whom is that child really serving?

2. Four bars mark the promises which ought to have hedged in the Israelites. How many would have to be made to mark the promises of your children that they would begin now to serve the Lord? Or the number of times that they have said, "I love Jesus?"

3. Suppose the little banner should be hung in your class-room, and Jesus should come so that all the children could see him and ask those who meant to serve the Lord to come and stand under the banner, how many of them would go? Jesus is surely present, and calls each child to-day to say: "I will serve the Lord." Who will?

I have suggested four distinct trains of thought, hoping that my fellow-workers might be able to get a hint from one of them for this full and exceedingly important lesson.

In my own class I shall try to close with the reminder that we are all serving either God or Satan.

The symbol cards prepared by Mrs. Crafts fit this last thought, and are eminently calculated to help impress its seriousness.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD

SUGGESTIONS.—On the board, previous to desk lesson, "*Service is demanded*" only to be placed. This is a lesson of service. Nearly every verse makes direct allusion to it. Joshua would impress it on the minds of the people. So must we. God wants service. A man might say, "I don't worship idols; I don't cheat my fellowman, etc.," but even though one may have good thoughts about God these are not all. "Service is demanded," now as then. Heb. 10: 25. Print on board, "Whom to serve." The Lord wants us to serve him. Print as in diagram, "The Lord." Then print, "How to serve." In sincerity. Feigned service is an insult. Occasional service wrongs him. Recognition of him now and then won't suffice. It must be constant, and it can only be so by *putting away* the old sinful habits, love of the world, etc. Some were then actually living in the very sin against which Joshua was warning them. v. 23. "Put away the strange gods which *are* among you." A long life and a close walk with God satisfied Joshua there was safety in deciding for the Lord. He pledged himself and his *household.* Parents often know what is best for their children and would choose for them—but the children? "A reverential fear of God begets purity of heart and integrity of life. Some of the people were living double lives, worshiping God openly and serving idols secretly." Must serve him in sincerity. Print, as in diagram, "In sincerity." Then close lesson by printing, "When to begin," and the answer, as in diagram, "This day," impressing the importance of immediate decision.

Directions for Coloring.—"Service is demanded," red shaded with white, heavy letter; "Whom to," white; "How to," orange; "Serve," green shaded with white; "When to begin," light blue; the rest in white.

Lesson VIII. **ISRAEL FORSAKING GOD.** August 19th, 1883.

Judg. 2: 6–16. Memorize vs. 14–16

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers."—Judg. 2: 12.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Judg. 2: 6–15....*Israel Forsaking God.*
T. Judg. 2: 16–23...*Israel's Sin—God's Anger.*
W. Isa. 40: 18–31....*The Folly of Idolatry.*
Th. Isa. 1: 1–20.....*Judgment and Mercy.*
F. Ps. 106: 34–48 ...*Oppression and Deliverance.*
S. Ps. 81: 1–16.....*"Their own Counsels."* [*Perish.*
S. 2 Pet. 3: 8–16....*Not Willing that Any should*

TOPIC.

The Covenant Broken.

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Influence of Holy Teaching. vs. 6–9. **2. The Effect of Bad Associations.** vs. 10–13. **3. The Evil of Departing from God.** vs. 14–16.

Time.—B. C. 1444–1406. **Place.**—The land of Canaan.

Catechism.—Q. 32. *What benefits do they that are effectually called partake of in this life?* A. They that are effectually called do in this life partake of justification, adoption, sanctification, and the several benefits which, in this life, do either accompany or flow from them.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 500: "Oft in danger, oft in woe." Other hymns, 206, 255, 456, 474.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—The Book of Judges is so called because it is a history of the exploits of the judges who ruled Israel between the time of Joshua's death and the rise of Samuel. These judges were temporary and special deliverers raised up by the Lord to deliver his people from their oppressors. It has been generally supposed that the book of Judges was written by Samuel. It is not a full and consecutive history, but rather a series of historical pictures and sketches. The passage in the present lesson links back to that of the previous lesson, first recounting the death and burial of Joshua, the faithfulness of the people during the generation then living and the defection of the generation that followed. In vs. 11–16 we have a summary of the history during the whole time of the judges rather than a narrative of the events of any particular period.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

6 ¶ And when Josh'u-a had let the people go, the children of Is'ra-el went every man unto his inheritance to possess the land. [Josh. 22: 6; 24: 28.]

7 And the people served the LORD all the days of Josh'u-a, and all the days of the elders that outlived Josh'u-a, who had seen all the great works of the LORD, that he did for Is'ra-el. [Josh. 24: 31.]

8 And Josh'u-a the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, *being* an hundred and ten years old. [Josh. 24: 29.]

9 And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Tim'nath-he'res, in the mount of E'phra-im, on the north side of the hill Ga'ash. [Josh. 24: 30; 19: 50.]

10 And also all the generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Is'ra-el. [Ex. 5: 2; 1 Sam. 2: 12; Jer. 9: 3.]

11 ¶ And the children of Is'ra-el did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Ba'al-im: [Eccl. 8: 11.]

12 And they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of E'gypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that *were* round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger. [Deut. 31: 16; 6: 14.]

13 And they forsook the LORD, and served Ba'al and Ash'ta-roth. [Judg. 3: 7; Ps. 106: 36.]

14 ¶ And the anger of the LORD was hot against Is'ra-el, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies. [Ps. 106: 40–42; 2 Kings 17: 20; Ps. 44: 12; 89: 30–33.]

15 Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for evil, as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had sworn unto them: and they were greatly distressed. [Lev. 26; Deut. 28; Matt. 23: 37, 38.]

16 ¶ Nevertheless the LORD raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them. [1 Sam. 12: 11; Acts 13: 20; Ps. 27: 10.]

6 *When Joshua had let the people go.* After the assembling at Shechem, as described in our last lesson. It will be noticed that vs. 6–10 of this chapter are almost identical with Josh. 24: 28–31. *Every man unto his inheritance.* It must be remembered that the work of conquest was not absolutely complete. Large tracts of the country still remained in the hands of the Canaanites. The power of these tribes had been broken, but they were not yet all expelled. Joshua in his farewell charge had commanded the people to complete this work. See Josh. 23: 4–13; also Judg. 3: 1–4. The several tribes were now sent to occupy their allotted portions. In the first chapter of Judges we have a narrative of some of the efforts made by

different tribes to expel the original inhabitants, but the work was not done thoroughly; instead of utterly destroying them as they had been commanded to do they let them live, putting them under tribute. These people that remained became "snares" and "traps" and "scourges" and "thorns" unto them as the Lord had said. Josh. 23: 13.

7 *All the days of Joshua.* So long as he lived they were faithful to the Lord, and did not go after the idols of the land nor ally themselves to the people. If Joshua was eighty-three when he led the nation into Canaan, the whole duration of his rule was twenty-seven years, as he died at the age of one hundred and ten. *The elders that outlived.* These were the princes or heads of the different tribes. We have no means of reckoning how long they lived after the death of Joshua. Since they had "seen all the great works of the Lord" during the time of the conquest, the youngest of them must have been at least twenty years old when they crossed the Jordan. If seventy or eighty was the limit of their lives, all of them would be dead in twenty-five or thirty years after Joshua's death. During the lifetime of these men there was no defection. The impression made upon them by the mighty works of the Lord which they had seen, in the overthrow of the nations that had possessed the land, was so strong that it held them faithful.

8 *Joshua . . . died.* See Josh. 24: 29.

9 *They buried him in the border of his inheritance.* When all the tribes of Israel had received their portions an inheritance was allotted to Joshua. See Josh. 19: 49, 50. There he built a city and spent the later years of his life, and there he was buried. Tradition fixes the site of Timnath-serah at Tibneh fourteen and one-half miles north-west of Jerusalem. There are many tombs in the hillside. There is one that is remarkable, and was evidently intended for an illustrious person, which is supposed to have been the last resting-place of Joshua. The Septuagint Version of the Bible says that the stone knives used by Joshua at Gilgal when he circumcised the children of Israel were buried with him, and in 1870 a great number of flint knives were discovered in this reputed tomb of Joshua.

10 *All that generation.* In general, those who had reached the age of manhood when they crossed over Jordan and who had therefore participated in the conquest of Canaan. Yet it is evident that all of these were not dead, for Othniel himself, the first of the judges, is mentioned as active in Joshua's time. Josh. 15: 17–19; Judg. 3: 9. *Gathered unto their fathers.* A common Old-Testament description of dying, which seems to have in it a hint of the gathering of spirits in the world beyond the grave. *Which knew not the Lord.* They had not witnessed the mighty works (v. 7) which gave the former generation such a sense of the divine power and goodness, nor had they any conscious experience of God's love and friendship. This statement prepares the way for what follows. They were not attached to God, nor were they under the strong influence which had held those who had seen his mighty works, and therefore they were led away.

11 *Did evil.* The latter part of the verse tells us in what way they did evil. It was by serving Baalim. The heart will worship something, and when the people had forgotten the true God, did not know him, forsook him, they soon turned to the strange gods that other nations worshiped. *Baalim.* The plural form of Baal, either referring to the many images of this heathen deity which they set up, or to the different offices attributed to this god. Baal was the supreme male divinity of the Phœnicians, as Ashtaroth (v. 13) was their supreme female divinity.

HEADS OF BAAL AND ASHTAROTH.

12 *Forsook the Lord God of their fathers.* The word translated "forsook" has the sense of our expression to ignore one, not to notice him, to be utterly indifferent to his presence. They acted toward the Lord as if he had no existence, not recognizing him in any way. The greatness of this sin is emphasized by the further statements that he was the God of their fathers, the God who had covenanted with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and whose chosen people they themselves were; and that he was the God who had brought them up out of Egypt's bondage, leading them through the wilderness and giving them the land of their present inheritance. *The gods of the people.* Instead of driving out all the inhabitants of the land they had allowed some of them to remain; and soon they began to mingle with them, straying into the groves where they conducted their idol worship, and from this it was easy to begin to join in the voluptuous rites. *Bowed themselves unto them.*

Publicly joined in the forms of the heathen worship, actually prostrating themselves before the idols. *Provoked the Lord to anger.* The expression occurs frequently in connection with notices of the people's idolatry, indicating the enormity of this sin. The very words of this verse remind us of the warnings given by Moses as in Deut. 6: 10–15; 29: 25–28.

13 *Baal and Ashtaroth.* The male and female divinities worshiped by the Canaanites. See on v. 11. The worship of Ashtaroth was conducted in the most licentious manner, with the grossest and most debauching rites.

14 *The anger of the Lord was hot against Israel.* By anger in God we are not to understand uncontrolled passion, but a feeling of righteous indignation against sin. We must not think that God is an easy-minded being who does not care how we act. He could not be holy and not be indignant at sin. He could not love and not be angry at disobedience. The holier he is and the more he loves the greater his abhorrence of evil in his own people. Here his anger is represented as a fire, growing *hot* against Israel as he saw them forsaking him and giving to idols the honor due to him. *He delivered them into the hands of spoilers.* The latter part of this verse explains the former. The spoilers were enemies. The statement is general here, referring not to one time only. Their successes had been gained through the divine favor and help, which were now withdrawn, leaving them to be overcome and plundered by the tribes around them. The book of Judges tells of many such disasters befalling them. *He sold them into the hands of their enemies.* He had brought them out of bondage in Egypt, and now he sold them into the hands of the hostile nations about them because they had apostatized from him. *They could not any longer stand.* In battle. The reason was because God no longer fought for them. This was what had been threatened (Lev. 26: 17, 37), and the reverse of what had been promised in vs. 7, 8 of the same chapter, on condition of obedience. See also Josh. 23: 9, 10, 13.

15 *Whithersoever they went out.* Not only in war but in everything they attempted to do, even in their ordinary daily work. *The hand of the Lord was against them for evil.* The hand is the symbol of power. Instead of helping them and prospering their undertakings the Lord not only withdrew his favor but extended his hand to hinder and distress. How terribly this contrasts with the promise given in Josh. 1: 9! *As the Lord had said.* See Lev. 26: 15–17; Deut. 28: 25. *Greatly distressed.* So that they cried to God for help.

16 *Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges.* This is also a general statement, showing that this passage is a summary of the whole history given in the book of Judges. Othniel was the first of these deliverers. The Lord, though he sorely punished his people for their sins, did not utterly cast them off, but when their distress became very sore he sent deliverance. The word judges, Shophetim in Hebrew, here occurs for the first time in the special sense in which it is used in the history of Israel. It comes from the verb which means "to judge, to decide, and to proceed according to the decision, in disputes between fellow-countrymen and citizens." There were judges already in Israel, but these judges were specially raised up by God for a particular purpose, to deliver Israel from their spoilers and to bring them back to obedience to God. They were not princes or kings, but judges, because their work was only to restore the divine law.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

The children of Israel went every man unto his inheritance to possess the land. Now came the test of their religion. They had listened to the counsels of the Lord's servant and had solemnly promised to do all their duty. It is very easy to make good promises; but it is the keeping of them that proves the sincerity and faithfulness of those who make them. People go to church and hear the sermon, or to the Sabbath-school and go over the lesson; they intend to live very faithfully, and they promise to do so. They even take vows upon them and make solemn covenants to follow Christ, perhaps standing up before the congregation and entering into open engagement to be loyal to him. They intend to keep all their vows, too. Then they go home and engage in the rounds of their secular callings. Duties are taken up, temptations come on, there are struggles with conscience. They mingle with all sorts of people, many of whom are evil in their ways and influence. Now is the time that tries all the promises made and all the good intentions cherished. We will see how these people live at home who made such splendid promises and covenants in the Lord's presence.

The people served the Lord all the days of Joshua. Certainly, for his influence over them was very strong, and while he lived they could not well turn away from God. A good man always has an influence over others. One strong and noble life in a community holds many other lives from wrong. It makes it easier for others to do right. It makes goodness popular in a

certain sense. One grand life in a neighborhood, upright, unwavering, with fixed principles, with unswerving devotion to truth, outspoken for God and fearless in duty, sways an incalculable power over others for good. Evil men dread such a man and sin hides away in his presence; while good men are made more bold and earnest. It is only positive lives that have such influence. Timid and weak people who, though good themselves, are afraid to let their sentiments be known, never rise to any such power. Every Christian minister ought to live such a life in his community that his name would be a strong tower, that those under his influence would be better men and women because they know and love him. Every parent should live such a life that his family would be led to serve God because he did. Every Christian boy and girl should be so true and so faithful in all duties that other boys and girls who know them shall be influenced by their lives to be true and faithful also.

And Joshua . . . the servant of the Lord died. The best of men must die. Even the servants of the Lord must die. No man can stay in this world always. We have no elaborate account here of the closing scenes of this good man's life. Many chapters are filled with accounts of his life, his work, his wise words, and of his activities, but all we know about his death is told in one little phrase. If he had lived in these days his death would have been described with glowing pen. We should have known what his last words were, how he met death, whether with or without fear; what dying testimony he left to the power of divine grace. But not a word have we about any of these things in the account of the death of Joshua. We are simply told that he died. The same is true of all the Bible saints. We have no death-bed scenes, no descriptions of dying experiences. The meaning of this is that it matters very little how a man dies if he has lived well. The living is the important thing. Not very many people have any raptures in the last hour. Many, indeed most, die in unconsciousness. Some, whose lives have been very Christly, die without any remarkable faith or any joyous experiences. And often those who have not lived Christian lives at all seem to have the greatest raptures in their last hours. All this proves that it is living, not dying, that tests one's character. In such a man as Joshua it mattered not whether he had a triumphant end or sank away in the shadows of old age and died without a word of ecstacy. His life was his testimony. He was faithful to all his duties, and there was no need for any further evidence that he was a saved man.

Joshua . . . died . . . and the children of Israel did evil . . . and forsook the Lord. That is often the way. So long as the good teacher or the godly parent or the faithful friend lives it is not hard to do right; but when the human guide is gone the restraining hand is withdrawn, and the child or scholar or friend drifts away from the holy influence. The death of a good man is always a loss in this way in a community; it is the removal of a restraint from evil and an inspiration toward virtue and goodness. Many a child's downward course begins at his mother's grave; the guiding hand is gone and the tender life is swept away by the power of temptation. There was a man whose besetting sin was strong drink. He said to a friend one day: "When I am with you I feel strong; if I could always be with you I should never give way to my terrible passion." Said his friend: "I am nearly always in my office; whenever you feel the temptation getting the mastery over you just come to me, and I will help you." So many a time during the next few years this poor man might have been seen running in great haste toward his friend's office. Once inside in that helpful presence he soon grew strong. The words of encouragement, the warm hand-grasp, the brief prayer, sent him out victorious. Thus it went on for several years, and the oft-tempted man never once fell. But death came to this helpful friend, the office door was closed, and among those who wept at his grave none shed bitterer tears than he who had so often run to him for the sympathy and help that saved him. Soon the temptation came again in all its power and there was no one to whom to turn. In his despair he fell into the old sin and sank down to ruin. No doubt the same story might be written of many another failure in living. The human arm was broken and there was no other to take its place beneath the trembling life; therefore it sank away and was lost. The mistake in this case was that the poor man had learned only the human trust and knew nothing of the divine. If he had known Christ, when his friend died he would of course have missed him and would have found living harder, wanting his help, but he would not have sunk down in utter helplessness. He would then have had the arm of Christ to lean upon and the strength of Christ to support him in his weakness and temptation. Those of us who train and help others should always make sure that they do not lean on us so much that when we are gone they will fall back into sin. While they lean on us with confidence and love, we must make sure that their trust is really grounded upon Christ. Then when we fall in death, or are taken from them, or when they are removed

from us and beyond our help, they will not sink away in despair. They will have Christ though all human help is gone, and that will suffice.

They forsook the Lord . . . and followed other gods. When any one forsakes the Lord the next step always is to turn to some other god. The heart cannot be empty or remain unfilled. If the true God is not loved and worshiped there, there will be some false god in his place. When men give up their church, and when boys stop going to Sabbath-school, they very soon begin to drift away into sinful courses. Only good in the heart can keep bad out. Only God throned there can keep the devil off the throne. The only safe thing for any one is to follow the Lord always so closely that he shall have no time nor room for the world or for sin.

The Lord . . . delivered them into the hands of spoilers. Sin is always a spoiler. These were plundering bands of enemies, who came upon the people and robbed them, carrying away their goods and inflicting upon them all manner of cruelties. Ancient warfare was terrible in its inhumanities. But all this is a picture of what sin is at all times. It robs those who fall into its hands. It strips off their beauty and plunders them of their treasures. Any one who turns away from God falls into just such hands as these. Sin presents itself in many an attractive form, and promises to do great things for those who will listen to its alluring words; but in the end all its promises are proven to be false. It never does anything but destroy men and rob them. He that forsakes the Lord to find better reward will find himself terribly deceived. The prodigal left home to find liberty; but what was it that he found? The Israelites forsook the Lord to be more free and independent, but what kind of liberty did they find?

They could not any longer stand before their enemies. Sin makes people weak. It robs them both of their courage and their power. The boy who once was strong and able to resist temptation with ease, when he has yielded himself to its power soon finds himself weak so that he cannot resist. The drunkard cannot stand any more before his great enemy. It is a terrible thing to sell ourselves to sin. The story of Samson illustrates this truth. Once he was strong and no one can withstand, but when he has turned away from God he is so weak that he cannot stand even before the feeblest foe. It is just the same always. If we heep our hearts pure we are strong; if we yield to sin we are pitiably weak.

Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them. God's mercy never fails. Even when they had forsaken him and had gone away to serve idols, he did not cast them off, but when they cried to him in their great distress he heard them and sent deliverance. He raised up helpers who took them out of the hands of those who had spoiled them. God is doing the same thing continually. Men forget him and run after other gods, and when at last they are down in the depths of shame and woe as the result of their sins, and cry to him for help, he hears their piteous calls and sends help to them.

LESSON POINTS.

1. It is the experiences of real life that test resolutions and covenants. It is easy to promise; but do we keep our promises? v. 6.
2. The way for the Church to possess the world for Christ is for every one to take possession of his own part. v. 6.
3. The influence of one good man is very great in keeping others faithful. v. 7.
4. The best men must die. v. 8.
5. Sin begins in forgetting God; when the knowledge of God fades out in any community or in any life, the next step is sin. v. 10.
6. When we forget God's mercies we will soon forget his laws. v. 10.
7. When one forsakes the true God the next step is after some false god. v. 12.
8. Then the next step is the anger of the Lord, and the withdrawing of his favor and help. v. 14.
9. Sin is a terrible spoiler; it robs and destroys those who are deceived by it. v. 14.
10. When men violate their covenant with God they reap the penalties of the broken law. v. 15.
11. God's mercy never tires. v. 15.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

This lesson is the gloomy prelude to the history of the "Dark Ages" of Hebrew history. They are ages of sin and suffering—supplication and salvation. They extend from the death of "the elders" which outlived Joshua to the monarchy under Saul. Therefore,

APPROACH by reviewing the last six lessons—the ages of victory and glory. At least call for the titles and golden texts. What kind of men were Joshua and "the elders?" What kind of a generation was that which conquered Canaan? What other was so faithful to Jehovah? So obedient to his commands? So courageous against his foes? Recall their grand deeds recorded in the book of Joshua. This lesson is at once the inspired introduction and the in-

spired *summary* of the whole book of Judges. Therefore, its

OUTLINE is really the outline of whole dark story. Two distinguished teachers have written several suggestive outlines of this passage. They may give unity and clearness to these verses in your own mind, even if you do not use them in teaching.

THE PEOPLE DOING EVIL, DISTRESSED, DELIVERED.

Another, PROVOCATION, PUNISHMENT, PENITENCE, RESERVATION,

And FORSAKING FORSAKEN BY LYING TO FORGIVEN BY GOD and A FAITHFUL LEADER LESS PEOPLE

Or take the following:

SIN, SUFFERING, SUPPLICATION, SALVATION, and still more, REBELLION, RUIN, REPENTANCE, RESTORATION.

These are not forced acrostics or fanciful alliterations. They fairly show the true division, and they may serve as a *key* to the whole book of Judges. The history repeats itself again and again. You can show this to your class by having them turn to the 3d chapter—Rebellion, vs. 5-7; Ruin, v. 8; Repentance, v. 9; Restoration, vs. 10-11. So the same terrible steps are gone over in vs. 12-30. So also in the 4th, 6th, 10th and 13th chapters. The experience is repeated in our lesson, only the *repentance* is simply implied in v. 18. Rebellion, vs. 6-13; Ruin, vs. 14, 15; Restoration, v. 16.

I. REBELLION.—What promise did Israel make to Joshua? What were the Israelites to put away? Whom did they promise to serve? What memorial did Joshua erect of this promise? Who broke this promise? Why? In what sense is it written that this new generation "knew not the Lord?" Have the class compare Ex. 5: 2; Ps. 92: 6; Jer. 9: 3; Gal. 4: 8; 1 Thess. 1: 8; Titus 1: 16; Rom. 1: 28. After what gods did Israel go? Who was Baal? Ashtaroth? Baalim? What aggravated their sin and treason? Jehovah was the God of their fathers. He had brought them out of the land of Egypt. As a nation they had promised to serve Jehovah. Of what idols are we in danger to-day? The loves and pleasures of the world. 2 Cor. 6: 14-18; 1 John 2: 15-17; Rom. 12: 2. Covetousness. Eph. 5: 5; Col. 3: 5; Matt. 6: 24. What are some of the motives which we now have to flee from these idols and cleave to Jesus?

II. RUIN.—How did God punish Israel? Mention the names of some of their "spoilers." Judg. 3: 1-8, 12, 13; 4: 2; 5: 1, 2; 9: 6, 7; 13: 1. What is "the anger of the Lord?" His holy and just displeasure at wrong? Jehovah *hates sin*. What does every sin deserve? Why does God punish sin? What are some sins which God often punishes in *this* world? Intemperance, idleness, uncleanness, Sabbath breaking, disobedience to parents, idolatry. Give facts, illustrating punishment of these sins. Use your utmost power to impress every scholar that sin *must* and *will* be punished. Do you *sin?* You must and will *suffer*. Show them that in the *nature of God* and the *nature of things* sin shall receive its wages—death, either here or hereafter, or both. Gal. 6: 7. No truth is it more needful to stamp on the soul of every young person. The whole book of Judges flashes with this solemn warning:

"SINNER—BEWARE THE SPOILERS."

III. RESTORATION.—Have them read v. 16. Who delivers us from the anger of God and "the spoilers?" How did Christ take away our ruin? Gal. 3: 13. What is the origin of his deliverance? John 3: 16; Rom. 3: 24; 5: 8; Eph. 2: 8. What is required of us that we may escape the wrath and curse of God due to us for sin?

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

This lesson can be effectively introduced by exhibiting last Sabbath's banner, soiled and torn, in short, ruined, with this inscription on one of the fragments—

"THEY FORSOOK THE LORD."

Then follows the story in detail—the length of time that had elapsed, the particular sin into which they fell (and in this connection the picture of the idol on *Westminster Primary Leaf* should be carefully examined by class), and the sad consequences.

The bars representing the promises which they made should be shown (the promises recalled), the bars in part erased, and the word "BROKEN" printed over.

This much is easy, and can be presented in such a manner as to hold the undivided attention of the class. The way of presenting the facts must be determined by the teacher; there being two distinct ways, one for a class composed of those able to read and study a little, and the entirely colloquial method of the wee ones. But now, what to do with the *facts* taught is the all important question. I suggest, first, the calling out of ways of forsaking the Lord. This thought gives a chance to review a bit of

last Sabbath's work. The Israelites fell into the very sin which Joshua feared for them. Children, as shown last week, are liable to fall into just such sin. Having in this way started their thinking powers, let them suggest to you other ways.

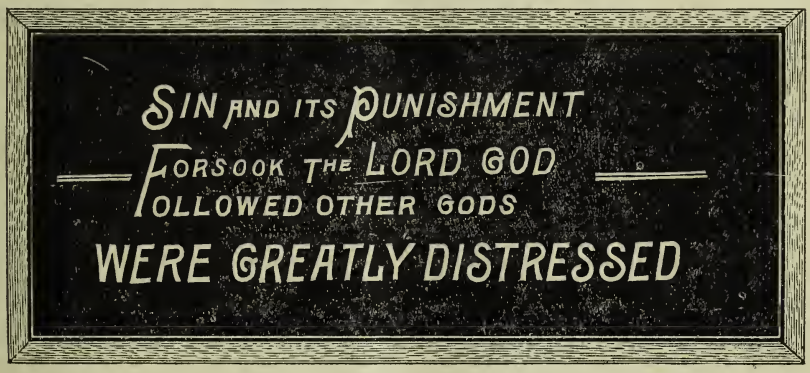
The Consequence.—The same now as then. God's hand must be against those who are not doing his work. Why? Because if they are not working for God they are for Satan; and you would not want God to help Satan. Besides, that is one way in which God reminds people that they are doing wrong, and calls them to come back to him.

Teachers should make earnest efforts to represent the danger of a child against whom God's hand is turned. Draw a great blue arch to stand for all the sweet promises, and make a mark outside for the child who is not serving God. Such a child has come away from the arch. None of the promises are for him.

At this point there is opportunity to contrast the promise-keeping God with his sinful subjects. There is no break in that blue arch, for no one ever heard of God breaking one of his promises; but how many the children have broken. Probably there is not a scholar in your class but has resolved to "be good" all day and broken the resolve many times. Suggest that all shut their eyes and spend one moment in thinking of their broken promises. The solemn stillness that you will thus secure may impress some heart, especially if you have been careful to explain the solemn nature of a promise.

Before your class convenes have printed on the reverse side of the board, or if your board does not revolve print and cover from view with dark paper, the word "NEVERTHELESS," made in as bright and beautiful letters as you can command. It is the golden word of the lesson. After the silent minute expose it to view. God's tender "nevertheless" to the sinner. He is always ready with it for the penitent child. Carefully explain the meaning of the word, and close the lesson with a word of prayer: "Dear Saviour, we have made many promises and broken them. We have forsaken thee. *Nevertheless* forgive us for thy dear sake, and do not let Satan have us for his servants."

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



SUGGESTIONS.—The above may be placed upon the board previous to opening of school, and exposed during the study of the lesson in the classes as a suggestive outline. It may prove helpful to more than one teacher, and aid the scholar to get a hold on the real facts of the lesson. In the desk review the thoughts may be briefly presented by the superintendent and impressed. We are not only told of Israel's promise broken, but also of God's promise (Josh. 24: 20) kept. Notice the effect of bad associations. Said a gentleman: "I asked a friend, who had been a surgeon in the army, why it was that some of our boys came back so much improved in every respect, while some who stood higher socially when they went away were utterly ruined? His significant reply was, It all depends upon the *tent-mates* they have had." Provoking the Lord to anger they alienated their best friend. On the reverse side of the board the following may be presented as a closing lesson:

THEY KNEW
HAD BEEN TAUGHT
HAD PROMISED
BETTER.

May not the same be said of many world-loving professors of this day. Can it not be said of YOU?

Directions for Coloring.—"Sin and its punishment," brown shaded with red; "They forsook the Lord God," green; "Followed other gods," orange; "Were greatly distressed," red shaded with green.

Lesson IX. **GIDEON'S ARMY.** August 26th, 1883.

Judg. 7: 1-8. Memorize vs. 2, 3.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon."—Judg. 7: 20.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Judg. 6: 11-18..... *The Call of Gideon.*
T. Judg. 7: 1-8..... *The Army of Gideon.*
W. Judg. 7: 9-25..... *The Victory of Gideon.*
Th. 1 Sam. 14: 1-23..... *The Victory of Jonathan.*
F. 2 Chron. 20: 14-25.. *God's Victory for his People.*
S. 1 Cor. 1: 21-31 ..... *The Weak to Confound the*
S. Ps. 20: 1-9 ..... *The Lord Saveth.* [*Mighty.*

TOPIC.

The Lord our Defence and Deliverer.

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Army too Large. vs. 1, 2. **2. The Army Reduced.** vs. 3-6. **3. The Army Ready.** vs. 7, 8.

Time.—B. C. 1249. **Place.**—The well of Harod, near Mount Gilboa.

Catechism.—Q. 33. *What is justification?* A. Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ, imputed to us, and received by faith alone.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 666: "Soldiers of Christ, arise!" Other hymns, 1, 511, 518, 958.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—According to the generally received chronology the time of this lesson is nearly two hundred years after the death of Joshua. The history of this period is given, though in a fragmentary way, in the earlier chapters of this book. The first of the judges was Othniel, who delivered the people from the Mesopotamians. Chap. 3: 7-11. The second was Ehud, who delivered them from the Moabites. 3: 12-30. The third was Shamgar, who delivered them from the Philistines. 3: 31. The fourth deliverance was by Deborah and Barak from Jabin and Sisera. 4: 1-24. Then followed the oppression by the Midianites and the raising up of Gideon. 6: 1-40. The people had again done evil in the sight of the Lord, and were delivered into the hand of Midian. For seven years this oppression lasted, and was very sore. 6: 1-6. The people then cried to the Lord in their distress, and the angel of Jehovah appeared to Gideon and commissioned him to deliver Israel.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

1 Then Je-rub-ba'al who *is* Gid'e-on, and all the people that *were* with him, rose up early, and pitched beside the well of Ha'rod: so that the host of the Mid'i-an-ites were on the north side of them, by the hill of Mo'reh, in the valley. [Judg. 6: 32; Gen. 22: 3; Eccles. 9: 10; Gen. 12: 6.]

2 And the LORD said unto Gid'e-on, The people that *are* with thee *are* too many for me to give the Mid'i-an-ites into their hands, lest Is'ra-el vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me. [Deut. 8: 17; Isa. 10: 13; 1 Cor. 1: 29; 2 Cor. 4: 7.]

3 Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever *is* fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from mount Gil'e-ad. And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand. [Deut. 20: 8; Matt. 20: 16; Hos. 1: 7.]

4 And the LORD said unto Gid'e-on, The people *are* yet *too* many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be, *that* of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go. [Ex. 32: 26; Matt. 6: 24.]

5 So he brought down the people unto the water: and the LORD said unto Gid'e-on, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink. [1 Sam. 16: 7; Ps. 66: 10; Mal. 3: 2, 3.]

6 And the number of them that lapped, *putting* their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water.

7 And the LORD said unto Gid'e-on, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Mid'i-an-ites into thine hand: and let all the *other* people go every man unto his place. [Judg. 7: 18, 22; 1 Sam. 14: 6; Isa. 41: 14-16.]

8 So the people took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets: and he sent all *the rest of* Is'ra-el every man unto his tent, and retained those three hundred men: and the host of Mid'i-an was beneath him in the valley. [Judg. 3: 27; Isa. 27: 13; Judg. 6: 23.]

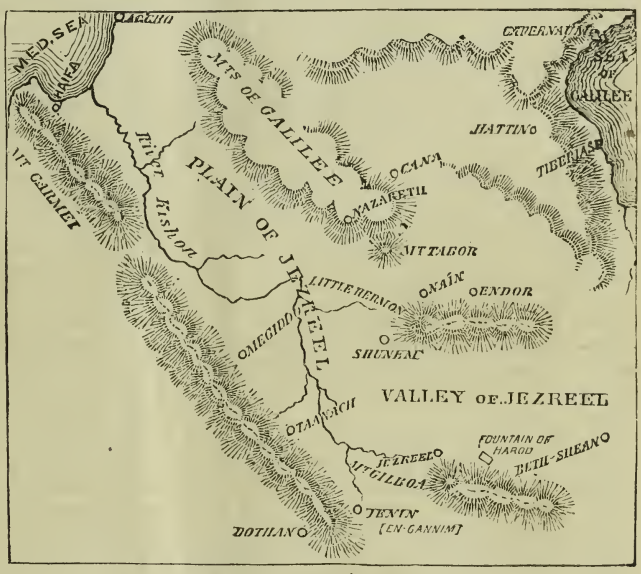
1 *Jerubbaal, who is Gideon.* He is first mentioned in chap. 6: 11. He was engaged in beating out wheat in the wine press. The angel of the Lord came to him there in human form and addressed him as a mighty man of valor, one with whom the Lord was, and told him that he was to deliver Israel from the Midianites. Gideon asked for a sign as proof that the person in human form who talked with him was really the angel of Jehovah. The sign was granted, and the angel disappeared. That same night, obeying a divine command, Gideon destroyed

the altar of Baal and built an altar to Jehovah, offering a burnt offering upon it. The citizens were enraged, and sought him to kill him, but his father told them that if Baal could not take care of his own altar he was no god. At this time and from this circumstance he received his new name, Jerubbaal—Let Baal contend. The Midianites and other nations then gathered against Israel, and Gideon entered on his work as deliverer, blowing a trumpet and calling the people to come with him. Before engaging in battle he asked and received another sign—that of the fleece—in token that he was surely to deliver Israel. All this history we have in chap. 6. *The well of Harod.* The name means *trembling*, and the well was so called, no doubt, because here so many of the people were afraid and returned home. v. 3. It is supposed that *Ain Jalud*, a large pool at the foot of Mount Gilboa, is the ancient Harod. *The hill Moreh.* Probably little Hermon, two or three miles north of Gilboa, across the valley of Jezreel. It will be noticed that the positions of the armies of Gideon and the Midianites are almost identical with those of Saul and his enemies at the time of his last battle. *The Midianites.* So called because they were the descendants of Midian, son of Abraham. Gen. 25: 2.

2 *The people . . . are too many.* There were but 32,000 of the army of Israel, which would seem to have been a small enough army with which to defeat the 135,000 Midianites, but the Lord said there were too many. The victory must be won so unmistakablyby the divine power that not a chance of a natural explanation or a human boast must be left.

3 *Proclaim . . . Whosoever is fearful.* This plan would not only reduce the numbers but would also leave an army of only courageous men. In Deut. 20: 8 it was prescribed that this course should always be taken by the commanders of Israel's armies, and all who were fearful and faint-hearted sent home, lest their want of courage should cause other men's hearts also to faint. In Gideon's case, however, the particular reason for this thinning of the ranks was to remove every chance for human boasting, although both ends were gained. *Mount Gilead.* As the only Mount Gilead in Palestine was east of the Jordan the occurrence of the name here has occasioned some perplexity. Some suppose it should read Gilboa instead of Gilead. Others suggest that there may have been a place of the same name in this region. Others still explain that Gilead was a synonym for the tribe of Manasseh, to which Gideon belonged, and that the phrase was used as a sort of war-cry for the tribe. *There returned twenty-two thousand.* All these were afraid to meet the hordes of the enemy.

4 *Yet too many.* We would say that there surely was now disparity enough—only 10,000 to meet 135,000, but even yet the divine word is that there are too many. *I will try them for thee there.* "Try" is the word used for refining metals by separating the dross from the pure.



SCENE OF GIDEON'S VICTORY.

It indicates that the test which was to be applied would not be a mere arbitrary one, but one that would separate the men on the basis of certain moral qualities.

5 *Every one that lappeth . . . as a dog lappeth.* Instead of falling down on their knees and drinking from the stream, these men stood on their feet and lifted the water to their mouths with their hands, using the hand as the dog uses his tongue, jerking or throwing the water into the mouth. This manner of drinking from streams is very common in the East, particularly when persons are in haste, as much shorter time is required than in bowing down on the knees to

drink out of the brook or fountain. Gideon was to watch the men as they drank, and separate them into two companies by this test. A great deal has been written on the moral qualities indicated by this test. The most simple and natural suggestion is that the lapping instead of bowing down showed celerity and watchfulness. Those who drank in this way were more quick and active in their movements than those who lay down. Then they were more on the alert in the presence of danger, not relaxing their vigilance even long enough to stoop down to drink. The Jewish interpretation is said to be that those who knelt to drink were idolaters, accustomed to kneel before idols. In their eagerness to drink they took the position to which they were habituated. Thus Gideon would be able to separate at once the true friends of Jehovah from the false. The three hundred who did not bow down to drink were the men who had never knelt before an idol. If this explanation is correct it shows a sad state of affairs in Israel, that out of 10,000 men only 300 were faithful to God. However, while this view is subtle it is scarcely as probable as that given above.

7 *By the three hundred . . . will I save you.* The number was small enough now. There could be no possible ground for human confidence or boasting. The promise made here to Gideon is very positive. "I *will* save," said the Lord. Notice also the "I." The Lord himself would win the victory and save the people; it would not be the three hundred that would accomplish the deliverance, brave and soldierly as they were, the picked men of the nation's armies.

8 *So the people took victuals, etc.* The language in this verse is somewhat obscure. The meaning is plainer when read thus: *And they* (these three hundred chosen men) *took the victuals and trumpets of the people* (all the people) *into their hands.* It is not to be assumed that the three hundred took all the provision of the army, but that they supplied themselves with enough for their subsistence; nor that they took necessarily all the trumpets and lamps, but only the number requisite to put a trumpet and a lamp into the hand of each man. Ordinarily the common soldiers did not carry either trumpets or pitchers, only the leaders carrying them; in this case, however, every man was to be provided with one of each. The object of the pitchers was to cover or hide the lamps or firebrands, making a sort of dark lantern. *Every man unto his tent.* That is, all but the three hundred were dismissed, as not required for service. The battle was to be fought with the three hundred.

The method of the battle is described in the subsequent verses. First, Gideon's faith was further strengthened by his being sent by the Lord to the edge of the Midianite camp, to overhear a dream, which, while it encouraged him, showed him also that a panic was beginning already in the hearts of his enemies, that his name was becoming a terror to them. After hearing this dream Gideon returned and at once led his men against the enemy. The attack was made at midnight. The three hundred were divided into three companies. These were sent to different points, and so spread out that they probably encircled the entire camp. The torches or firebrands were concealed in the pitchers until the men had all taken their places. At the signal from Gideon every man broke his pitcher and three hundred torches flamed out in the darkness. At the same moment every man began to blow with the trumpet in his hand. Usually there was but one trumpet and one firebrand to a company in a night attack. To the Midianites, therefore, the three hundred men would in the darkness appear to be three hundred companies of soldiers, and the effect was to strike terror to their hearts. A panic resulted, and the enemy was soon wildly fleeing away, pursued by the people. In the confusion the Midianites slew each other. The victory was complete, and the two princes, Oreb and Zeeb, they took and slew. So utter was the destruction of the Midianites that they appear no more on the page of history.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

The Lord said . . . The people . . . are too many . . . lest Israel vaunt themselves. One of the greatest dangers to which poor, vain human nature is exposed is self-conceit. We so like to boast of what we have done. This is not by any means an obsolete weakness; it is just as strong now as ever it was. If there is a revival in our church we are apt to think it was our fine preaching that produced it. If scholars in our class are led to Christ and converted, we are likely to suppose that it was our earnest and skilful teaching that did it. God takes many ways of keeping us humble, for there is no human feeling that is more repugnant to him than pride. Sometimes he allows us to be defeated; this was the way he cured Peter of his amazing self-confidence. He let him fall into the hands of Satan and be sorely beaten. Peter never boasted again of his strength or ability to stand. After that he was one of the humblest

of men, and because he was humble he was strong. No doubt many a defeat comes in these days because we are too strong. God cannot allow us to succeed, because if we did, with our own self-sufficiency, we would give him no glory but would keep to ourselves all the honor. Oftimes God pursues precisely the same course with us that he did with Gideon's army; he weakens our own strength and wastes our own power until we are reduced to absolute powerlessness, and then he gives us the victory. The true secret of spiritual strength is a feeling of utter weakness on our own part and of entire dependence on the divine help. When we get to this point God is ready to give us the victory.

Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return. Though God wanted only a few men he wanted the best. He would not show his own power by giving the victory to inefficiency and cowardice. So the first thing was to weed out the incompetent. The army would really be stronger with all these sent home than with them all hanging on. There were twenty thousand cowards in that host, and the ten thousand brave men would be stronger alone than the thirty thousand with these along. One coward often makes a score more. Timidity is infectious. Many a church would be stronger if it were weeded out just as Gideon's army was. Its weakness lies in its great numbers. Not because numbers necessarily weaken, but because there are so many half-hearted people on the roll. There are too many in our churches who would withdraw if they could from the army of the Lord. They have lost their hearty interest if they ever had any, and are indifferent, cold, without true consecration, mere hangers-on. They add no strength to the Church, but only hinder the other members and dampen their zeal.

There returned of the people twenty and two thousand. They were afraid of the Midianites who swarmed before them in the valley. They did not believe victory over such a multitude possible. They were sure they should be cut to pieces if they remained to fight with such a host of enemies. So they preferred to go back and be branded as cowards rather than stay to meet the danger. Are there no cowards in Christ's armies in these days? Are there none whom a sneer or a scoff frightens? Are there none who lack the courage to bear insult or make sacrifices or do hard service for their Master? Are there none who would rather give up Christ than suffer loss for his name? True courage will cleave to Christ at whatever cost. It will be loyal to him though loyalty leads to the sacrifice of all earthly things. Are all in his Church thus devoted to him? Are there none who would return to the world if they were to follow the real feelings of their hearts?

The people are yet too many. Ten thousand too many to go to battle with a hundred and thirty-five thousand! But there were two reasons for this second sifting: God would remove the last ground of boasting from the people themselves, who might even yet vaunt themselves as having gotten the victory against great odds; then he would still further sift the quality of the soldiers, rejecting many of those who were brave enough but lacked other elements of the highest soldierly character. Just in the same way God yet ofttimes thins the ranks of his Church when he wants some grand work done. Christ himself kept the number of his disciples small by continually presenting the hard demands of the service he required of his followers. He declared all along that he who would come after him must take up the cross. He talked about the baptism with which he was to be baptized, and asked those who proposed to follow him if they were ready to accept that. When ardent souls came, offering to follow him whithersoever he would lead, he spoke of his homelessness, without where to lay his head, and asked: "Can you accept that for your worldly expectation?" He made it as hard as possible for men to be his disciples, requiring them to leave all and take up a cross, the symbol then of the deepest shame, and follow him, without one worldly hope. Thus he kept the ranks thinned out all the time, and the number very small of those who followed him. So it came at the last that he had but twelve apostles (and one of these turned traitor and sent him to the cross), and a little handful of faithful women who clung to him with loyal love. Surely it was a forlorn hope with which to begin to conquer this world, but it was enough. That little company was true at heart and ready for any sacrifice or toil in their Master's name. And we know that with that holy band he did indeed conquer the world. The history of the Church furnishes many illustrations of the same thing. The numbers have been reduced, and reduced until men's hearts sank in despair. Some fled away in cowardice, some turned traitor to the cause, some proved inefficient and incompetent, leaving but a handful remaining to represent the cause of the Lord. Then these were reduced to poverty, and were hunted, despised, persecuted. There seemed no hope of anything but the utter destruction and extinction of the sacred cause. Yet with these few God has met the world and conquered it. The same is true in the personal history of thousands

of Christ's followers. Trials and losses come and they are stripped bare and crushed into the dust. All the elements of power, as men rate power, are taken from them. Then they learn that God can do more with them in their forlorn weakness than he could with all their strength. "When I am weak then am I strong," said St. Paul, long ago, and his experience has been repeated thousands of times since. God does not like to use human strength to do great things; he would rather use human weakness.

Bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there. The men did not know that they were on trial. God is always trying us. He tries every one before he sets him to do any kind of work for him. He never entrusts anything to the hands of any person until he knows that the person will do it well. So he tries his servants beforehand in such ways as will reveal their fitness or unfitness for the duties required. These trials are made when we are utterly unconscious that we are being tested. They are being made when we are doing our simplest duties, when we are quietly moving about in the commonest walks of life. Here the way the men drank water from the brook was the test of their fitness for the work of conquering the Midianites. It seemed to make the smallest difference in the world how a soldier might drink, whether by bowing down with his face in the water or by lapping up the water with his hand as he stood; yet it was a difference that settled the question of fitness or unfitness for the great work before the army. It is in just such little ways and in just such matters of everyday and commonplace action, conduct and manner that God is always testing us and deciding whether we are fit or unfit for the greater works for which he wants men. By the way a boy lives at home, by the way he treats his parents, by the way he performs his duties at school, by the spirit he shows in the playground, by the diligence or the want of it which he displays in the store or office in which he is first employed—by the way he acts in all these relations and duties the question is being settled to what greater work or responsibilities the Lord will call him in after days. So every young girl, by the way she deports herself in her girlhood, at home, at school, at play, and in all the days of youth, is settling the place in life she shall fill in the days of womanhood and strength. God is always trying us and selecting the men and women he wants for the important duties of life from those who stand the test. This should make us careful how we live every moment, for we cannot know when these tests are being made, or what future honor or glory may depend on the way we do the simplest, most commonplace thing to-day.

Every one that lappeth . . . shalt thou set by himself. The practical lesson here is that little things test character, little things done unconsciously, the way we do the commonest and simplest things. There is character in the way people walk, in their hand-writing, in their hand-shaking, and in all the most familiar actions of everyday life. A coarse jest tells of coarseness in the nature. Carelessness in little things reveals a careless man. A merchant chose one of a number of boys who had answered an advertisement, because while waiting in his office the boy picked up a pin that he saw lying on the floor. This little act showed a boy with careful habits.

LESSON POINTS.

1. When God wants a man for an important duty he always looks for a busy, not an idle man. Chap. 6: 11.

2. When God has a great work for one of his servants he tries him first in a smaller work. Chap. 6: 25–27.

3. When there is important work to be done we should rise early to begin it. v. 1.

4. God likes to work with the weak things of this world. v. 2.

5. Men are apt to boast of the things *they* do and not think of God as the real Doer. v. 2.

6. When God has a great work to be done he wants only brave men to take part in it. v. 3.

7. God tries men before he uses them, and often he makes his tests in the smallest things.

8. Character is revealed in the simplest things.

9. Every one is constantly on trial, even when he knows it not. vs. 4–6.

10. A few men whom God has chosen are stronger than an army of ordinary people. v. 7.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

APPROACH.—1. Call for the name of the first judge. Judg. 3: 9. What deliverance did he work for Israel? 3: 9–11. Name of the second judge? 3: 15. How did he save Israel from the Moabites? 3: 12–30. Tell the short story of Shamgar. Who was Deborah? 4: 4, 5. Whom did she associate with her? What deliverance did they work for Israel? 4: 6–24. How long had Israel rest after the victory of Deborah and Barak? Into what did they again fall? Who then became their spoilers? Thus by questions bring the history down to the beginning of the oppression by Midian. Have the scholars describe the raids of the enemy. 6: 3–6.

2. It will be necessary briefly to bring out the facts connected with Gideon's call. 6: 11–26,

Question on his name, meaning in Hebrew "tree-feller," "a warrior." His change of name. 6: 32. Jerubbaal, or enemy of Baal. His father, his home, his work and character, his first exploit, his trial of God by the fleece, etc. As this is the only lesson concerning Gideon, you will be excusable for making the introduction longer than usual, *in order to include his entire previous history.*

LESSON PLAN.—A simple and easy plan is this—

COWARDS DISMISSED. vs. 1–3.
CHARACTER TESTED. vs. 4–6.
CHAMPIONS EQUIPPED. vs. 7, 8.

I. COWARDS DISMISSED.—1. *From Gideon's Army.* How many soldiers had Gideon at first? Where did they camp? What host was on the hill north of them? How many enemies were there? What did God say of Gideon's army? Why were they too many? How did God order Gideon to reduce the number? What command had Jehovah given? Deut. 20: 7. Why was this good generalship? What special reason is given in v. 2?

2. *From Christ's Army.* In what great war is the Church to-day fighting? What are our chief enemies? The world, the flesh, Satan. Eph. 6: 12. Who are for Christ?

"The Son of God goes forth to war,
Who follows in his train?"

Every faithful Christian, every true minister, missionary, earnest teacher. Who come up "to the help of the Lord against the mighty?" Whom does Christ order to the rear? The timid, the cowardly, the fearful and unbelieving. Luke 14: 25, 26; John 6: 66. Under what circumstances is it desirable to send back all cowards and all who are afraid to work and suffer? When an undertaking of hardship and difficulty is begun. 1 Sam. 14: 6. Why is God careful to exclude all boasting? Rom. 3: 27; Jer. 9: 23, 24; 1 Cor. 1: 31; 2 Cor. 10: 17; 1 Cor. 15: 28.

II. CHARACTER TESTED.—To how many were the ten thousand still further reduced? How was the test made? On what accounts was the manner of the soldiers' drinking a test? A true soldier when the enemy's army was so near, would not long leave the ranks, even to get water. He would be so *earnest* for battle that he would dash a little water to his mouth and press on. An experienced soldier learns to exercise great *self-control* in drinking. It is a *little* thing which tested Gideon's army. Look for little habits. In what little things does God test *us?* Luke 9: 62. "No man having put his hand to the plow and *looking back* is fit for the kingdom of God." "Remember Lot's wife." Heb. 12: 16, 17. On what principle is this test based? Luke 16: 10. Illustrate the necessity of testing the character of Christ's workers by the tempering of steel, particularly of *watches*, which are, after being finished, put into the coldest ice chest then into the hottest oven, so that into whatever climate they are carried they will endure the change.

III. CHAMPIONS EQUIPPED.—To how many would God give the victory? What other illustrations are there in the Bible of God saving by a few? Judg. 15: 14, 15; 1 Sam. 14: 13–16; 2 Sam. 8: 8–18. Whom does he still choose to achieve the mightiest results? 1 Cor. 1: 26–31. With what were Gideon's army armed? vs. 8, 16. Describe Gideon's victory. In our warfare against the world and Satan what is our trumpet? *Preaching and teaching* the word of God. What is our lamp? God's Spirit within us. What is symbolized by the earthen vessel? The human soul and body, by which the light of life is conveyed to men. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us." 2 Cor. 4: 7. What lessons are here for Christian teachers in Sabbath-schools?

Points in the lesson for Sabbath, September 2d, to be assigned:

1. What are the facts of the history between Gideon's victory and the birth of Samson?
2. Who were the Philistines?
3. Narrate the facts connected with Samson's birth?
4. Narrate his exploits against the Philistines.
5. Who was Dagon, and how was he worshiped?
6. What was the secret of Samson's strength?
7. How are we to judge Samson and his life and death?

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

At the outset the primary teacher needs cautioning against the fascinations of this story. It is so long and so full. There is danger that, unless you make most careful preparation, you will consume your entire time in telling and hearing the story. You will be surprised and humiliated by the sound of the bell that closes your work before you have reached a single personal thought. Now confess, Has not this often been your trying experience?

The main secret of avoiding it lies in most thorough preparation. I often think of the minister who preached long sermons because he had not time to prepare short ones. There is

important truth hidden in the thought. Many teachers, especially among the primaries, find the time allotted to their lesson too short, *because* they have used many words where few would have done, and have confused the brains of their children with infinite detail instead of one or two vivid word-pictures.

Let me tell you as briefly as I can what I want to try to do with this lesson:

1. To call the story from class, being careful to draw out many voices, confining the answers within very brief sentences.

2. To go outside of the lesson-story, and give a vivid description of the success of the three hundred. Describe the crashing of pitchers, the flash of light, the blare of trumpets, etc.

3. To call from class their ideas as to why God wanted the victory won by so small an army, and as to why such simple measures prevailed.

4. To teach certain facts in the lesson by the use of a very simple blackboard outline. Thus: Make many dots in the sin-color, covering a large part of the board, to represent the Midianites. Make few dots in white crayon (white to represent God's people), to stand for the three hundred. Draw many lines leading from these dots—lines which shall completely surround the Midianites as well as wind in among them. Let the lines grow heavier as they reach the top of the blackboard, where I mean to have the following words printed and covered from view until the moment that the story reaches the point where they should be revealed:

"FAITH IN GOD."

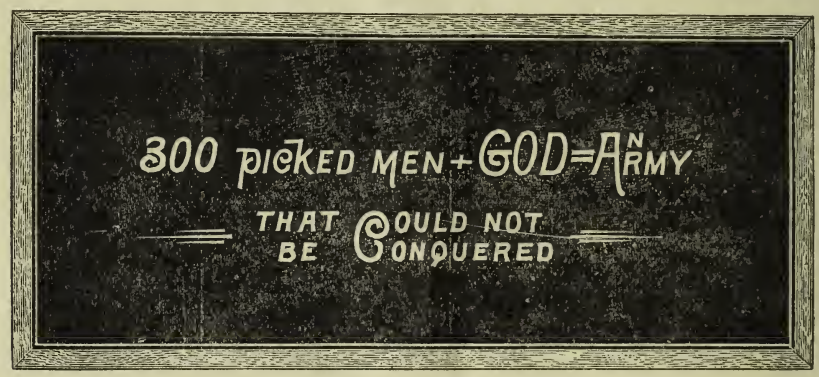
This, then, is the secret of power. And herein lies the central thought of the lesson—Gideon's faith, as shown by his exact obedience. All that his faith had to rest upon was the promise: "By the three hundred . . . I will save you." It proved a sure foundation for him.

A very pretty closing exercise for this lesson can be made by giving out certain strong foundation verses the Sabbath before for the children to learn, each child a verse, to the number perhaps of a dozen, then calling for their recitation while you make what shall represent a stone wall on the board, with the first word of each verse printed on its stone as the child recites it.

FINAL THOUGHT.—What a wonderful God is ours! Shall we not trust him?

Gideon showed his trust by obedience. Shall we?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



SUGGESTIONS.—God will give Israel the victory, and he is determined it shall be seen that *he gives it*. Israel should have no opportunity to say, "Didn't we do it?" There is no place in God's work for fearful or fickle men. Such men would not only impede progress, but if victorious in the end would glorify themselves. It would be well in the review to give the following illustration to lead to the lesson intended by the diagram on the board:

32,000 men all told — 22,000 cowards = 10,000 willing men.
10,000 willing men — 9,700 rejected men = 300 picked men, then
300 picked men + God = an army that could not be conquered.

Some come forward with enthusiasm, but show their unfitness when thoroughly tested; they stop to indulge their desires when they should be on the march. They show no burning zeal, no eager self-denial. So it is to-day. We may be among the three hundred if we will. We can conquer any enemy if God be with us and we *be with him*.

Directions for Coloring.—"300 picked men," white shaded with brown; "God," green shaded with yellow; "An army that could not be conquered," orange.

THE WESTMINSTER TEACHER.

VOL. XI. SEPTEMBER, 1883. No. 9.

—If you have been off on vacation now is the time to begin to show what it has done for you.

—Editorial matter gives place in this number to the full announcement of the Bible Correspondence School. Particular attention is directed to this new and interesting scheme for home study.

—One Sabbath this month may be the best date for the Rallying Day. The thing is very simple. Provide some special exercises, and make the effort to have every teacher and scholar present. Begin with a full school, and with enthusiasm, and you will feel the impulse all the year.

—The heart-life of the teachers gives its tone to the school. Warmth there will give good results in the classes. Now is the time therefore for renewal of consecration, for fresh kindling of the fires of devotion, for coming up close to the Master and for the beginning of better work. Why not make this new year of work the best we ever did?

—Only a little while ago he was a baby, but now he is shooting up into a tall youth. Life is before him, with its duties, struggles and dangers. What are you doing to fit him for it? "What *shall* I do?" you echo back. Give him an education, whatever else you may or may not do. Let it be the very best education you can provide. Suppose it does cost much and you do not see how you can afford it. You had better give him his patrimony in a good education now than keep it to put dollars and cents into the hands of an ignorant man by-and-bye. Send him to school. Where? Perhaps the public school is the best place; but there are some things the public school will not do for him. If possible every boy should have at least some training in a good boarding-school. Make sure it is the best, with elevating and refining influences; above all, that he will there learn *how to live* as well as how to solve problems and write and speak correctly.

—She is now a bright, happy girl, fast springing up toward womanhood. What kind of education should she receive? Perhaps you are rich, but you have no positive assurance that she will always have wealth. She may some day have to work with her own hands for herself and others. Prepare her now for meeting such a lot if it should fall to her. Give her such an education and training that she will be able to take care of herself and of others, if it ever becomes necessary. It will not make her any the less a lady, even if she lives all her years in luxury. You expect her to be a wife and mother. Educate her, therefore, to fill these positions with wisdom and intelligence. You want her to marry "well." You must make her worthy of the kind of man whom you would choose for her husband. She must be refined, cultured, accomplished, able to talk of something beside the miserable gossip of society, if she is to become the worthy wife of a noble man. She must be a companion for him, his equal, interested in what interests him. If she is to be a mother she must be educated for the duties and responsibilities of motherhood. In any case, therefore, she needs the very best education you can give her. How are you going to provide for it? Find the best school in the land and enter her there. Be sure the training is for real living and not for play and fashion; that it will build up in her the true womanly character, and not merely give her an outside polish; that it will make her strong, noble, Christlike, helpful, and not a mere butterfly.

The Bible Correspondence School.

BY THE REV. JAMES A. WORDEN, D.D.

ONE of the greatest needs in our Sabbath-school work is qualified teachers. Each of our faithful teachers longs for more teaching power—a broader Bible learning and more effective methods of Bible instruction. If our Bible work is to meet the demands of the intense activity of the age, our teachers must have a training to fit them rightly to divide the word of truth. How shall this training be given?

The marked success of recent efforts in certain lines of learning in which teachers and taught communicate by mail has suggested the application of the same method to what is in reality the highest education. When large numbers of students, in order to advance their knowledge of a dead language can organize and pursue a

course of successful instruction by postal correspondence, surely Christian learning, so much more important, can be advanced by the same method. The Board of Publication, charged by the General Assembly with the responsibility of elevating and improving Bible work in Presbyterian Sabbath-schools, upon the recommendation of its Standing Committee on Sabbath-schools, has formally considered this work, and has approved this general plan of organization by the Secretary of Sabbath-school work:

OUTLINE PLAN.

I. The name of the organization is "The Bible Correspondence School," conducted by the Rev. James A. Worden, D.D., Secretary of Sabbath-school Work of the Presbyterian Board of Publication.

II. Its object is to train men and women for work in the Sabbath-school.

III. The members consist of Sabbath-school officers, teachers and scholars, and all others who promise to study the lessons, who shall send their names to the Secretary of Sabbath-school Work, No. 1334 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, through their pastor or superintendent.

IV. The lessons will treat the most necessary and helpful subjects of Bible learning and Bible teaching.

1. The course of lessons will run parallel to the International Series of Sabbath-school Lessons. It will give instruction in those periods of Bible history and those books from which the International lessons are chosen. It will furnish a perspective and connected knowledge of those events and writings, portions of which are selected for study in the regular Sabbath-school lessons.

2. The lessons will be in two parts, the first part treating a Bible topic as just described, and the second part giving suggestions on methods of teaching and practical work.

3. Four of these double lessons will be issued each month.

V. The President of this Correspondence School in each congregation shall be the pastor or the superintendent of the Sabbath-school. In case of the inability of these to act they are requested to appoint a suitable person and report his name at once by postal card. The names of the members are to be secured and recorded by the President, and by him forwarded to the Secretary of Sabbath-school work. The lessons will be forwarded to the President in time to be distributed before the beginning of each month.

VI. Each member is expected diligently to study the lessons at home. Wherever practicable, weekly or monthly meetings of the members should be held for the discussion of the lessons.

VII. *Special Examinations.*

1. Every member is expected each month to present in writing to the President answers to the test questions attached to the lessons.

2. The President will compare these answers of the member with the printed answers furnished him confidentially, will mark in writing all needful corrections and return the corrected papers to their writers. He shall also each month forward the grade of each member to the Secretary.

3. An annual written examination will be held upon the lessons of the year.

VIII. *The School Year and Terms.*

1. The school year will extend from the first of November to the first of May.

2. The annual dues for text leaves, postage and tuition will be (for clubs of five or more) 50 cents each; for isolated members, whose papers must be corrected and returned by the Secretary, 75 cents each. These dues must be paid before the member is enrolled.

THE ADVANTAGES OF THE SCHOOL.

1. It will furnish to the members weekly contact with an experienced teacher.

2. It will give the members the option of pursuing the course in social organization or in the quiet of home.

3. It will be a new and fresh method of advancing Bible study and teaching.

4. It will furnish its members text books with complete courses of study in popular and scientific form.

5. Its course of study will furnish a necessary supplement to the International Series of Lessons, broadening and deepening the teacher's knowledge of that course.

6. It will furnish a new bond between the pastor or the superintendent and the more inquiring minds of the school.

7. It will bring the teacher who may be far away from any other means of training into pleasant communication with the goodly society of Christian students of the Church in this land.

8. It will be furnished to all at the trifling cost of text leaves and postage and mailing. The annual dues will barely cover the cost, and if there should be a surplus it will be turned over to the Sabbath-school Mission Work.

9. The repeated examinations will test the student's acquirements, and give him in accurate form the practical results of his labors.

10. The plan will unite young and old, near and far, in the delightful study of the same Bible lessons.

11. This plan has received the unanimous approval of the Sabbath-school Committee of

the Board, and of the Board of Publication itself. It was endorsed by the conference of Presbyterial Sabbath-school Committees held at Saratoga Springs, May 23d, 1883. On that day the General Assembly unanimously passed this resolution:

"The General Assembly approves the proposed organization by the Board, through its Secretary, of the Bible Correspondence School, in the interest of better training of teachers."

HOW TO ORGANIZE IN ANY CHURCH.

1. Let the pastor be requested to preach a sermon on the need, the benefits or methods of Bible study, and explain the plan of the Bible Correspondence School.

2. Let the pastor and superintendent determine who shall be the President in that congregation.

3. Let a meeting be called of the Sunday-school officers, teachers and older scholars, for organizing a local Bible Correspondence School.

4. After a full explanation of the plan let each give his name and dues to the President, to be forwarded as soon as the list is complete to the Secretary of Sabbath-school Work.

5. An executive committee should be appointed to secure a place of meeting and make all necessary arrangements for the meetings.

6. A Secretary should be appointed to record all the proceedings of the school.

Scripture Under the Microscope.

BY THE REV. W. M. BAKER, D.D.

TAKE to-day the vote of Christendom upon the question, "What is the most hopeful sign of our times?" Almost unanimously would fall the ballot: The most encouraging thing to-day is the fact that, to a degree beyond anything ever known heretofore, the children of Christendom are studying the word of God. That they are studying it, their many millions grouped together upon the same Sabbath over the same passage of Scripture, is a right royal proof of the unity of the Church; but that they are studying that passage more exclusively and thoroughly than ever is proof more royal still of the grounding of that one Church so upon the Rock that we may already bid defiance to whatever may be, the rains, the winds, the floods of the future. Here is a getting at the pure and original honey and the honeycomb. Here is a striking down and down into the deepest fountains in the soul of all Christian feeling, an informing and enlightening of the intellect, a making of bone and meat and muscle for some grand aggressive advance, and all along the line, upon the realm of darkness.

It is not the children alone—the two generations just before them in the procession of life are made, as their teachers, one with them in this new and thorough study of God's blessed word. The teachers are compelled to study it as never before if they are to keep enough in advance of the children to lift them to a higher level of Scriptural knowledge. Yes, and here is a hitherto unknown pressure brought to bear by children and teachers upon the minister. If a pastor is to hold his own as a man of God, perfect because thoroughly furnished unto all good works by superior knowledge of that inspiration which is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness, he must, in his turn, keep well in advance of his churchful of men, women and children, whose feet stand almost already where stood those of the clergy of the last generation. With every passing Sabbath a preacher has less power to play the part of Balaam and lead his people into deadly error, so able are they coming to be to detect him in his initial swerving from inspired truth.

This increased concentration of Christian people upon the study of God's word has created libraries of by far the best commentaries the world has ever had, commentaries terse, clear, precisely to the point. Herein is an incitement as well as an aid in Biblical scholarship. While it is good to use the best of these, yet is there, in addition thereto, a more excellent way. No one who has ever made faithful use of the marginal references but will say that the comparing of spiritual things with spiritual is the best way. It is only the Divine Spirit who can explain the Spirit Divine. Men do not help out an electric lamp by clustering ever so many candles about it; they let on more electricity, more, that is, of the same kind of light. Converge upon any one verse the light of all other passages germain to the same subject, and you give to that verse a tenfold force and clearness.

Now this is in part what is intended when we speak of studying Scripture under the microscope. Look at a needle under a magnifying lens, and although it be the finest a man can make, it seems like a rough shaft of steel; whereas a needle made by the hand of God, the sting, let us say for instance, of a bee, is a miracle of smooth sharpness. Compare under a lens the finest satin with a rose leaf; while the last is the perfection of tissue the other is as canvas. That is one proof of the fact that while every other printed page is the handiwork of man, it is God who creates every leaf, marvellous as that of a rose, of his word. Scripture will bear the microscope! Out of all the pages

of man's making, as numerous almost as the leaves of the forest, there is not one that will. It has been the happy fortune of the one who writes these lines to have made during many years a close study of what are called the *Ten Theophanies*, that is, the ten instances in the Old Testament in which Christ anticipates his incarnation, and shows himself, as a man yet God, to now this person and then that, from Abraham to Daniel. In doing this he has had to turn upon certain passages all the light he could get, specially that in very many other parts of the Bible. To him it has been a work of the keenest delight, so amazingly does Scripture, and Scripture as under the microscope, bring out, confirm, explain, illustrate Scripture, and in ways the most unexpected and satisfactory. This is mentioned merely to illustrate the uses of this mode, not to specify any particular point made in those Ten Theophanies. Let one only be presented here as but a specimen of many. This may not be new to others; it is to the writer.

In the Psalms, as often in the Old Testament, the people of God are represented as applying the possessive pronoun "my" to God. "I will also praise thee with the psaltery, even thy truth, O my God: unto thee will I sing with the harp," is but one of very many places in which David refers to his heavenly Friend. Every chord of harp and soul recurs to that one word "my" over and over again; it is an essential music of which he never wearies. Can you mention one case in which any disciple, even that John who leaned his head upon the bosom of Christ, applied to him the word "my"? Unless I mistake there is not one instance of this until after the death and resurrection of the Son of God. You would naturally suppose that the disciples would shrink more than ever from such a phrase after their Lord had put between himself and them the awful abysm, as it were, of his death, his three days' absence in another world, his resurrection from the dead. But, no. That seemed somehow to bring them nearer to Christ, to give them an intensity and reality of personal possession never felt before. Mary is fluent enough, for instance, when she sees at the sepulchre a man whom she mistakes for the gardener. "They have taken away *my* Lord," she says. When it breaks upon her who it is, she has but this to say, as she falls at his feet, "*My* Master!" On the cross Jesus had cried out, "My God, my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" Now he says to her, "I am not yet ascended to *my* Father. Go to *my* brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto *my* Father, and your Father; and to *my* God, and your God." So it is with Thomas. He had doubted what was told him by the disciples of the risen Redeemer. Now Jesus stands before him. He is not a Spirit, he is a man, a man whom he had seen die, had seen dead; a man who urges upon him the wounds by which he had died. For the first time the Godhead of this man, with whom he had companioned all these years, breaks upon him, all his soul breaks in return through his lips toward his Lord. "*My* Lord!" he exclaims, "and *my* God!"

Am I mistaken? Is there not a world of, perhaps before unnoticed, meaning in this that even our Lord's disciples came into a closer, more personal possession of him after and by reason of his death than before? There are many other and more striking uses of the microscope in studying Scripture, which the writer hoped to have pointed out, but his allotted space is already more than taken up.

Samuel's Little Coat.

BY THE REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER, D.D.

SMALL incidents in God's word often teach great truths. One of these incidents was the manufacture by a good woman's hands of a tiny garment that went to dust and ashes thirty centuries ago. In the second chapter of the First Book of Samuel we are told "his mother made him a *little coat*." The good mother who made the little mantle was Hannah—thrice-honored name in the annals of womanhood. The lad who wore it was Samuel, who grew up from a beautiful boyhood into the holy prophet, and the honest, fearless chief-magistrate of Israel. Hannah consecrated him to God from infancy (just as all godly parents do who make infant baptism a holy binding rite), and placed him in the tabernacle. Every year she made for him a little coat, and took it up to Shiloh when she went to offer her annual sacrifice.

We will answer for it that the garment which this sensible mother wove for her darling boy was a becoming one. She would not have made the child a doll to be overloaded with finery, after the fashion of thousands of fond and foolish parents. As if God had not made the little creature beautiful enough—they must needs overload it with the upholsterings of costly attire, and then torture its graceful freedoms under the tongs and screws of artificialities. On a certain Sabbath some such parents have brought these very children to God's house and formally consecrated them to him in baptism. All the rest of the time they are devoting their offspring to that *other* trinity—fashion, finery and frivolity!

This overdressing of the body *strikes through* into the heart. How can a stop ever be put to the crop of fops and extravagant fashion-mongers, if children are to be trained up into this slavery to externals from their cradles? How can our children be taught self-denial, frugality, humility and the love of Jesus, while their forms are smothered under the trappings of pride and extravagance? We are quite certain that when the devout Hebrew mother made a little coat for her lovely boy, she remembered that he was "lent unto the Lord," and not to the "lust of the eye and the pride of life."

Another meaning may be put upon this "little coat" without any undue violence to Scripture. In the Bible dress is often made an emblem of character. "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." "Be ye clothed with humility." Faithful disciples are described as they who have "not defiled their garments." Nor is it a mere pun to remind you that the word *habit* signifies both dress and the disposition of the mind to good or evil. The *habit* of obeying God is the very essence of holiness.

Now we parents not only clothe our little ones; we also provide, in no small degree, the habits of their hearts and lives. We help to clothe them in garments of light and loveliness, or else in garments of sin and shame. Our children *put on* the example set before them by parents and by Sunday-school teachers. Not only what we say, but what we do will be repeated in their words and conduct. Our character streams into our children. During the few hours that teachers spend with their classes, as well as during the many hours of parental contact every week, the young hearts are taking photographs constantly which come out in character and behavior. Our irritations irritate them. Our unseemly jests on sacred occasions breed irreverence in them. A trifling teacher of God's book on God's day produces a class of frivolous contemners of sacred things. "Teacher says so," "teacher did so," has, unhappily, left an indelible ink-stain on many a child's memory.

If a boy is handled harshly and *jerked* into obedience he will likely turn out a sullen, obstinate creature; he will be just what rough impatience made him. If our talk is mainly of money, our children will grow up into covetousness; if it is chiefly about dress, parties and self-indulgence, they will harden into slaves of sensuous pleasures. If we give our boys a *dollar* for the toy-shop or the place of amusement, and a *dime* for the missionary-box, we teach them that self-gratification is ten times more important than giving to the Lord. If we live *for* the world, they will probably die *of* the world, and the blood of their lost souls may be found in our skirts! The soul-garments we are weaving they will wear. Long after we parents or teachers are in our graves, our children will be clothed in the characters we helped to form.

Mr. A—— has always regarded it as quite the right thing to offer wine at his table. His sons have tasted it and learned to love it. They became bitten by the "serpent" in the glass, and soon took to stronger and deadlier drinks. How does the father *like the coat* now which he made for his boys?

Brother B—— tells his family at the table that the theatre is not so bad a place as the Puritanical folk make it out; so he goes occasionally when some "star" is shining there. His young people go too, and soon become sensualized by the unclean sights and sounds. By-and-bye a daughter begins to show streaks of coarseness, and the young men follow up the exciting scenes of the play-house over a bottle, or in the chambers that lie hard by the doors of hell! When the mischief has been wrought, how does that father fancy the *habits* he wove for his own children?

Madam C—— is fully persuaded that a dancing-hall is the one only place to acquire elegant manners. So she equips her daughters for the ball-room—even though a "round dance be the last gasp of expiring delicacy." The poor girls become "society girls"—one of the feeblest and most contemptible types of womanhood. If that infatuated mother shall look back from her dying pillow upon the moral (or immoral) apparel she made for her own children, she may well feel that in casting away the "ornament of a meek" and godly spirit for the tawdry fineries of "the flesh," she has clad them in the garments of shame.

This little text about the little coat is full of the most vital suggestions. Teachers, as well as parents, must remember that they are *weaving character*, and the fabrics will last into eternity. We perform this weaving process stitch by stitch, and we do it by little actions and by unconscious influences. Mother Hannah's tunics went to rags and moths and dust; but the boy Samuel's character shines in the Bible-gallery as a raiment of light. The coats we make for the immortal souls committed to our teachings will outlast the firmament; and may God help us to construct such garments as shall grow brighter and brighter among the white robed around the throne. "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels." Be careful, fellow-teachers in school or in home, how you slight the little coats.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

THIRD QUARTER.

1. July 1.—Joshua, Successor to Moses. Josh 1: 1–9.
2. July 8.—Passing over Jordan. Josh. 3: 5–17.
3. July 15.—The Plains of Jericho. Josh. 5: 10–15 and 6: 1–5.
4. July 22.—Israel Defeated at Ai. Josh. 7: 10–26.
5. July 29.—The Reading of the Law. Josh. 8: 30–35.
6. Aug. 5.—The Cities of Refuge. Josh. 20: 1–9.
7. Aug. 12.—The Last Days of Joshua. Josh. 24: 14–29.
8. Aug. 19.—Israel Forsaking God. Judg. 2: 6–16.
9. Aug. 26.—Gideon's Army. Judg. 7: 1–8.
10. Sept. 2.—**The Death of Samson.** Judg. 16: 21–31
11. Sept. 9.—**Ruth and Naomi.** Ruth 1: 14–22.
12. Sept. 16.—**A Praying Mother.** 1 Sam. 1: 21–28.
13. Sept. 23.—**The Child Samuel.** 1 Sam. 3: 1–19.
14. Sept. 30.—**Review.**

Lesson X. **THE DEATH OF SAMSON.** Sept. 2d, 1883.

Judg. 16: 21-31. Memorize vs. 28–30.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The God of Israel is he that giveth strength and power unto his people."—Ps. 68: 35.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Num. 6: 1–8.....*The Law of the Nazarite.*
T. Judg. 16: 4–20.....*The Law Broken.*
W. Judg. 16: 21–31.....*The Death of Samson.*
Th. Ps. 68: 28–35.....*Strength and Power.*
F. Jer. 17: 5–10.....*Cursed—Blessed.*
S. Ps. 144: 1–10.....*The Lord thy Strength.*
S. Prov. 13: 13–21.....*A Companion of Fools.*

TOPIC.

Samson's Greatest Victory.

LESSON PLAN.

1. Samson's Humiliation. vs. 21–25. **2. His Victory in Death.** vs. 26–31.

Time.—B. C. 1120. **Place.**—Gaza.

Catechism.—Q. 34. *What is adoption?* A. Adoption is an act of God's free grace, whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges, of the sons of God.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 876: "No, not despairingly." Other hymns, 361, 369, 393, 444, 783.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

INTRODUCTORY.—The time from Gideon's victory till the death of Samson was about one hundred and twenty-six years. The judges who ruled during that period were Abimelech, Tola, Jair, Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon, and then Samson, who was judge for twenty years. A study of Samson's life can be made in the three chapters preceding that which contains the lesson. He was born at Zorah, of parents who were faithful to Jehovah amid the general apostasy of the times. His birth and his high destiny as deliverer were preannounced. He was to be a Nazarite, "one consecrated" to God. See Num. 6: 1–21, where this Nazarite vow was provided for—although Samson's is the first instance recorded of one thus set apart. Under the power of Jehovah he grew into marvelous physical strength. His wonderful feats are described in these chapters. He was the terrible enemy of the Philistines, and they sought his destruction by every means, accomplishing it through the blandishments of a wicked woman. To her in a weak hour he disclosed the secret of his strength, and when his Nazarite vow was broken God departed from him, leaving him powerless in the hands of his enemies. He was cast into prison and degraded. The story of these last acts in his life is told in our lesson.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

21 But the Phi-lis'tines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Ga'za, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house. [Prov. 5: 22; Jer. 2: 19; Ps. 107: 10–12.]

22 Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven. [Lev. 26: 44.]

23 Then the lords of the Phi-lis'tines gathered them together for to offer a great sacrifice unto Da'gon their god, and to rejoice: for they said, Our god hath delivered Sam'son our enemy into our hand. [1 Sam. 5: 2–5, Jer. 2: 11; Mic. 4: 5.]

24 And when the people saw him, they praised their god: for they said, Our god hath delivered into our hands our enemy,

and the destroyer of our country, which slew many of us. [Hab. 1: 16.]

25 And it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Sam'son, that he may make us sport. And they called for Sam'son out of the prison house; and he made them sport: and they set him between the pillars. [Judg. 9: 27; Mic. 7: 8–10.]

26 And Sam'son said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them.

27 Now the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Phi-lis'tines *were* there; and *there were* upon the roof about three thousand men and women, that beheld while Sam'son made sport. [Deut. 22: 8; 2 Sam. 11: 2.]

28 And Sam'son called unto the LORD, and said, O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Phi-lis'tines for my two eyes. [Jer. 15: 15; Rev. 6: 10.]

29 And Sam'son took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left.

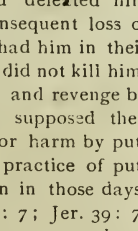
30 And Sam'son said, Let me die with the Phi-lis'tines. And he bowed himself with *all his* might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that *were* therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than *they* which he slew in his life. [Acts 20: 24.]

31 Then his brethren and all the house of his father came down, and took him, and brought *him* up, and buried him between Zo'rah and Esh'ta-ol in the burial-place of Ma-no'ah his father. And he judged Is'ra-el twenty years. [Judg. 13: 25; 15: 20.]

21 *The Philistines.* They were the most troublesome to the Israelites of all the original tribes. They were fierce and warlike, and refused to be exterminated. Indeed, it was not till David's time that they were really subjugated. At the time when Samson lived they were threatening the conquest of the whole country. They made their raids in every direction, carrying off the ripe harvests, and even men, women and children to slavery. Their oppression was very sore. Samson's great achievements were in his conflicts with the Philistines. At last they had defeated him through his own fall and consequent loss of divine favor and power, and had him in their hands. *Put out his eyes.* They did not kill him, wishing to enjoy their triumph and revenge by prolonging his torture. They supposed they had rendered him powerless for harm by putting out his eyes. This cruel practice of putting out the eyes was common in those days. See Num. 16: 14; 2 Kings 25: 7; Jer. 39: 7. The language implies that his eyes were *bored* out, probably with red-hot irons. *Brought him down to Gaza.* Gaza was their chief city. *Fetters of brass.* Literally, *brasses*, or as we say *irons*, in the dual number, implying that they were put upon both the feet. *He did grind in the prison house.* It was very common to require prisoners to grind in their prisons. The mill consisted of two stones, the under one permanent and the upper one to be turned by hand. The occupation of grinding was ordinarily performed by females and by slaves, and hence disgrace was intended when a man was set to do such work. In Samson's case, remembering his former great strength and his past heroic deeds, it was the worst possible insult, and indicated the deepest degradation.

22 *The hair of his head began to grow.* According to the Nazarite vow no razor was ever to come on the head of Samson. Chap. 13: 5. The continuance of the power of the Lord upon him depended upon his faithfulness to his vows; hence, as he told Delilah, his strength would go from him and he would become weak, like any other man, if he was shaven. And so it came to pass that when his locks had been shorn off his strength departed from him. Not that his strength lay in his hair, but the uncut locks were the mark of his Nazaritic relation, and the cutting away of these was the violation of his solemn pledge; hence God departed from him. See vs. 17–20 of this chapter. Now, however, while he lay in his prison, his hair began to grow again. At the same time his heart was turning back to God, and as the symbolic locks grew again the divine power was restored to him.

23 *Then the lords of the Philistines.* The five chiefs or princes who ruled the nation. The time is not marked, and we cannot tell how long Samson had been kept in prison—long enough, however, for his hair to grow again to some length. *To offer a great sacrifice.* They had regarded him as their most powerful enemy, and when he had at last been vanquished and rendered harmless and was lying now a humiliated prisoner in their hands, they proposed a great public celebration to give expression to their joy. *Dagon their god.* Dagon was the national idol of the Philistines. His name signified a fish. According to the representations on the Assyrian monuments the idol bore the human form down to the waist, and below that of a fish. *Our god hath delivered into our hands.* They believed that their god



DAGON.

had caused Samson's defeat, and came with thanksgiving and praise to him. Even from these heathen people Israel might have learned a lesson, and so may we.

24 *They praised their god.* They considered that their god had triumphed over Israel's God in the bringing down of Samson. They seem to have had no hesitation in imputing the victory to their deity, on account of the foul and disgraceful means by which Samson was defeated. *The destroyer of our country.* See, for example, chap. 15 : 5. *Which slew many of us.* See chap. 15 : 15. Doubtless only a small part of his acts are recorded.

25 *When their hearts were merry.* Made so, no doubt, by wine, as the feasting went on. *Call for Samson, that he may make us sport.* They wished him brought into the house of banqueting that they might heap indignity and insult upon him. They would compel him to dance and make sport before them, while they would mock and deride the blind hero. We have here another glimpse of the cruelty of this ancient people in thus heaping mockery and insult upon a fallen and defenceless foe. They were not afraid of him now as he stood before them blind and chained like a wild beast. *He made them sport.* He seems to have submitted to their reviling without resistance, playing the clown before them, singing, dancing and acting the buffoon amid their roars of drunken laughter. He was conscious no doubt of the returning upon him of the power of Jehovah, and so he lured them on until the moment should come when he would use his restored strength to avenge himself for his eyes and for all their indignities upon him.

26 *The lad that held him by the hand.* He was blind, and the lad's duty was to lead him about. It is surmised that this lad was not a Philistine, but possibly was one of Samson's own friends who had been allowed to accompany him as an attendant in his imprisonment, and as such was friendly to him and ready to help him. *Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth.* In the close of the previous verse we are told that "they set him between the pillars." This was doubtless done, because that was the point at which the crowds could best see him as he made amusement for them. He was thus in the very position for the great final act which he was now planning. What he desired of the lad was to guide his hands to the pillars. His weariness after dancing for them furnished a natural enough reason for his desiring to lean upon the pillars to rest himself.

27 *The house was full.* The lower part of the house was filled with persons of distinction of both sexes; all the lords and princes were there. Then on the gallery or flat roof were the common people to the number of three thousand.

28 *Samson called unto the Lord.* His prayer shows that he had returned to the Lord and had been restored to his favor. *Remember me.* He first prayed for himself. There he was in the darkness, in chains, in the hands of cruel enemies. He knew, too, that he had been brought into this condition by his own sins, and hence there was penitence in his prayer. He knew that he had deserved all that had come upon him. Now he pleads with God to have pity upon him, to remember him once more. *Strengthen me.* He knew that his former wonderful strength was not his own natural strength, but a special endowment from God, that he had lost it because God had departed from him, and now he prays for its restoration. *That I may be . . . avenged . . . for my two eyes.* This was the object of his prayer. He wished the old strength again for one moment and for one act. The gospel teaches us that we should not seek vengeance on those who have wronged us; but Samson's light was dim and he should not be judged by the high standard laid down by our Saviour and his apostles. Besides, Samson's position was peculiar, and his prayer is scarcely to be measured by the standards of individual or private life; he was God's servant in a peculiar sense, his mission being to deliver Israel from the Philistines. By his own sin he had fallen into their hands; now he begs that his strength may be restored and that he may be permitted to wipe out the stain of his sin and defeat, in one sublime act of victory over his enemies and the enemies likewise of God's people.

29 *The two middle pillars.* It is impossible to reproduce the exact form of the building in which this festival was held. We know, however, that these two pillars in some way bore up the entire structure, so that if they were removed the whole of the immense fabric would fall in ruinous crash. Dr. Thomson in *Land and Book* suggests that most of the city of Gaza was built on hillsides, with steep declivities, and that this temple no doubt stood over one of these, so that when the central columns were pulled down the whole edifice would be precipitated down the hill in ruinous confusion.

30 *Let me die.* He was ready to sacrifice his own life in making such a destruction of the Philistines His act was not suicidal; his desire was to bring defeat upon the enemies of his people, which he could do only by dying with

them. *The house fell.* The revelry was at its height, when the blind man bowed himself and the pillars gave way, and the building came crashing down, crushing and mangling the vast crowds in indistinguishable slaughter, among the others the lords or rulers of the Philistines. *The dead . . . were more.* This was the greatest deliverance he had ever wrought, surpassing in national importance all the achievements of his life.

31 *Then his brethren . . . came.* He was buried with honor. The whole tribe of Dan probably came to escort his remains to the place of sepulture. The consternation of the Philistines after such a calamity prevented any interference with the great burial procession.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

The child shall be a Nazarite unto God . . . he shall begin to deliver Israel. Chap. 13: 7. He was born for a high and noble purpose. God meant him to be a great deliverer. He endowed him with qualities for a truly heroic life; but as we read his story we see that he failed to fulfill his lofty mission. Life never was a serious business with him; it was only play; he was never more than a magnificent trifler. He did not use his great strength with any sense of his responsibility for it. He did not realize that he had a high mission. He threw away his opportunities. He never became what he was meant to be. Samson was the type of a great many people even in these days. We are all born for a high and holy purpose, with a mission of blessing to others. Yet many fail entirely to be and do what they were made to be and do.

His strength went from him. Chap. 16: 19. That was the end of Samson's glory. The brilliant "might have been" of his life lay now a dishonored thing in the dust. Why did he fall? We have but to read the three chapters that tell his life-story to find the answer to this question. His fall seems sudden; in a weak and unguarded moment he disclosed the secret of his strength to a wicked woman. But in truth his fall was not sudden. Previous to this fatal hour there was a long course of dalliance with sin. Had he lived a pure, true life he never would have become entangled in the mesh of temptations which brought ruin to him. The lesson here is the terrible danger of dallying with sin. A man keeps saying, "I will go only so far. I am strong enough to resist. I can rise in my strength when I please and throw off these withes and ropes." He does so for a time (16: 6–14) and grows confident, but does not know that with every repetition he is growing weaker and the temptation stronger. This is the story of all drunkenness. No man intends to become a reeling sot, but one glass is not much and he can resist. The habit grows; he is not aware of the power it is getting over him. At last he finds himself staggering home some night, or wakes some morning from a debauch. He says: "I must stop this," but alas! the power to stop is gone. He says: "I will break these cords," but he finds himself a paralyzed man. God has departed from him. His sin has shorn his locks.

He wist not that the Lord was departed from him. Chap. 16: 20. Samson slept on Delilah's lap, and the stealthy razor moved silently through his glorious locks. Sin always stupefies its victim while it does its fatal work. Men do not know that their power is passing from them until some great crisis reveals its loss. It is fabled that the vampire bat, while it sucks the blood from its victim, fans it with its soft wings until it falls into a quiet slumber from which it never wakes. So sin works. It deadens the sensibilities. It shuts the eyes in soft slumber. The greater its power over a man the less conscious he is of what is going on within. At length there comes a time when a man needs every particle of his strength. His enemies are upon him. He is aroused to a sense of his danger. He says: "I will arise and shake off these foes." He tries it. He wists not that his power is gone. He begins to struggle, and finds that he is paralyzed. Some shepherds once saw an eagle soar out from a crag. It flew majestically, far up into the sky, but by-and-bye became unsteady and began to waver in its flight. At length one wing drooped, and then the other, and the poor bird fell swiftly to the ground. The shepherds sought the fallen bird, and found that a little serpent had fastened itself upon it while it rested on the crag. The eagle did not know that the serpent was there. But it gnawed in through the feathers, and while the proud monarch was sweeping through the air its fangs were thrust into his flesh and he came reeling down into the dust. It is the story of Samson; it is the story of many a life. For a time the promise is great; then suddenly it falls. Some secret sin has long been eating its way to the heart, and at last the proud life lies soiled and dishonored in the dust.

The Philistines took him and put out his eyes . . . and bound him . . . and he did grind in the prison. That is what it always comes to in the end. Sin flatters and entices, and then it

binds its helpless victim, puts out his eyes and thrusts him into a dungeon, where he is compelled to spend the remainder of his days grinding at the mill, as a wretched slave:

"Ensnared, assaulted, overcome, led bound,
His foes' derision, captive, poor and blind,
Into a dungeon thrust, to work with slaves."

There is no community in which living illustrations of this truth may not be found. There are men who began with splendid promise a score of years ago or more, who are now grinding in some mill as pitiable slaves. Sin is even more cruel than the Philistines; it puts out the *soul's* eyes and binds the *spirit* in chains. Let no one who studies this verse forget that here is where all sin's paths end.

Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again. It was better for him to be shut up in the prison, with all that he had to suffer, than be outside living as he had been living. These great sufferings were God's ways, not so much of punishing him as of bringing him to repentance. It was better that his eyes be burnt out than be gazing in sinful lust. It was better that his feet be in fetters than walking to the door of the strange woman. It was better that his hands be turning the mill like a slave's than be dallying with the charms of sin. It was better that he be the sport of the uncircumcised than playing with the temptress. Shut away in the darkness, humiliated, degraded, he remembered his broken vow, thought of his sins, bewailed his ruined life, and turned again to seek God. The growing again of his hair, the symbol of his consecration, told of his new obedience. He could not undo the past, but he could begin again to obey God. There is a lesson here for any who have fallen. In their humiliation let them not give all up as lost, but return to the ways they have left, and begin to keep the commandments they have broken. God may yet have mercy.

Samson said . . . O Lord God, remember me . . . and strengthen me. So in the darkness he had found his way back to his God. "As soon as he can pray he is the hero again." His prayer is full of the spirit of penitence. He knows how and where he lost his strength and how only it can be restored. He had fallen into his awful plight because he had torn himself out of the hands of God; now he cries to God to take thought of him once more. He longs for a restoration of his old strength, and knows where to seek for it. When one has fallen into sin the only hope is in God.

Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. He had been restored to God's favor again, and wished to do one more heroic deed before he died. He was like the soldier who has fallen into disgrace by cowardice in some former battle, but wishes now to redeem himself, and asks leave of his commander to do some brave and perilous duty in which almost surely his own life must be sacrificed, but in which also he may both do noble service for his country and also prove his own courage. He desired to burn out the shame of his past disgrace in one heroic act, though in that he must die himself. There is a suggestion here to any who may have failed in Christian duty and brought reproach on Christ; let them by a return to God and by a new consecration to service wipe out the shame of their past sin.

LESSON POINTS.

1. One may be born for a high purpose and yet utterly fail in life.

2. One who uses his divine gifts for low and selfish ends will lose them.

3. One who dallies with sin will soon fall into sin's snares.

4. One who chooses bad companions is already half fallen.

5. God departs from those who violate their allegiance to him.

6. When God withdraws his favor spiritual strength departs.

7. Sin drags its victims down to pitiable wretchedness, blinds, binds, enslaves. v. 21.

8 Sinners exult when they can procure the downfall of one of God's servants. vs. 23, 24.

9. Samson's humiliation was better for him than his life of sin; there he sought and found God again. v. 22.

10. When the fallen sinner begins to pray he is not far from restoration. v. 28.

11. It is well if one has dishonored God by sin to seek to wipe out the stain by holy service. v. 30.

12. Sometimes it is necessary to give up one's own life to serve God or one's country. v. 30.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

BY THE REV. JAMES A. WORDEN, D.D.

HOW TO BEGIN.

1. Call for a very brief summing up of the work of each of the judges.

2. This lesson on "*The Death of Samson*" should be preceded by an account of *his life*. Bring out the fascinating story of his home, his birth and training, his wanting to marry a Philistine maiden, his slaying the young lion, the wedding feast and Samson's riddle and its awful end, the three hundred foxes, his slaying

a thousand Philistines with the jaw-bone of an ass, his carrying away Gaza's gates, his fatal love for Delilah. Call out the bare mention of these and then ask—

Was Samson a real servant of Jehovah? Where is he mentioned as such? Heb. 11: 32. Ask for the things in Samson inconsistent with his being a true servant of God; then for those which indicate that he was. From this character you can draw many a warning to that boy in your class—strong, willful, impulsive, whom you love and admire, and yet who is ready to fall into many temptations. Especially apply Prov. 13: 20.

HOW TO TEACH.

I. SAMSON'S SHAME.

1. Ask, *What was the secret of Samson's strength?* His consecration to Jehovah set forth in his Nazarite vow. What was the outward sign of his consecration? His hair. What makes any Christian strong? His consecration to Jesus. Illustrate the power of consecration to Christ by the story of the Dairyman's Daughter, of Harlan Page, and others.

2. *How did Samson lose his strength?* By losing his hair, which was the sign of his consecration. When Samson openly forsook Jehovah, Jehovah forsook him. What lesson is there here for us? Illustrate Samson's loss of power by the weakness of those who have backslidden from God. Emphasize the fact that God's strength will not abide with any who violate Christian purity.

3. *To what depth of shame did Samson come?* Gain the assistance of every scholar in describing the feast of Dagon at Gaza—Samson brought to make sport. This is an illustration of the awful shame of a Christian professor, who by the charms of the world and sin deceived becomes the jest and laughing-stock of worldlings.

Read "Samson Agonistes," by Milton, to realize the humiliation and agony of Israel's poor fallen champion.

II. SAMSON AVENGED.

What signs are there here that Samson partially regained his consecration? His hair began to grow, an outward sign that his heart was turning back to Jehovah. For what did Samson pray? "Remember!" "Strengthen!" How did God answer this prayer? How are we to treat our enemies? Matt. 5: 44; Luke 23: 24. How many foes did Samson slay in his death? v. 30. What foes of ours did Jesus slay in his death? Heb. 2: 14. How does the life and death of Samson illustrate Jer. 2: 19? By what means can we escape from backsliding?

Points in the Lesson for September 9th:

1. Tell the story of Naomi.
2. Let every scholar read at home *the book of Ruth.*
3. Point out all the *places* mentioned in the book.
4. Why does God afflict his own children?
5. Whose ancestress was Ruth?

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

BY MRS. G R. ALDEN—"PANSY."

The Teacher in Class.—Notice this great letter "S" on the board. Why do you think I made it so large? (Encourage discussion, trying to develop from class the fact of Samson's great strength.) Do you know of any wonderful things that Samson did? (If the children are familiar with his story, let them give the startling points; if not, briefly tell of his encounter with the lion, etc.) Why do you think he was made so strong? (Let class suggest reasons. Then explain that God gave strength to him for a special purpose.) Did he always remain strong? (Impress the fact that through sin he lost his God-given strength.)

Now look at this building on the blackboard. Notice these strong pillars. Up here on the flat roof I will make many marks; they stand for men and women. How many do you think were on the roof? Besides that, the house was full of the Philistines, who were God's enemies. What do you think they were all doing there? (Call out the fact that they were holding a feast to celebrate the *victory of their heathen gods in giving Samson into their hands and taking away his strength.*) Samson's sin dishonored God, just as the sin of any child who professes to love him dishonors him to-day. Who is this poor, weak, blind man being slowly led along? How did he become blind? Now all look at your *Westminster Primary Leaf.* See the great pillars breaking and falling. How came this?

Try to develop constantly the desire on the part of your children to give you the facts in the story, thus stimulating them to study. Have a red line to represent prayer, and print on it the golden text.

God in answer to repentant prayer gave Samson the power to show the heathen that *their* gods were vain.

Samson was so sorry for his sin that he was willing to give his own life to help repair some of the mischief.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION.—See this chain

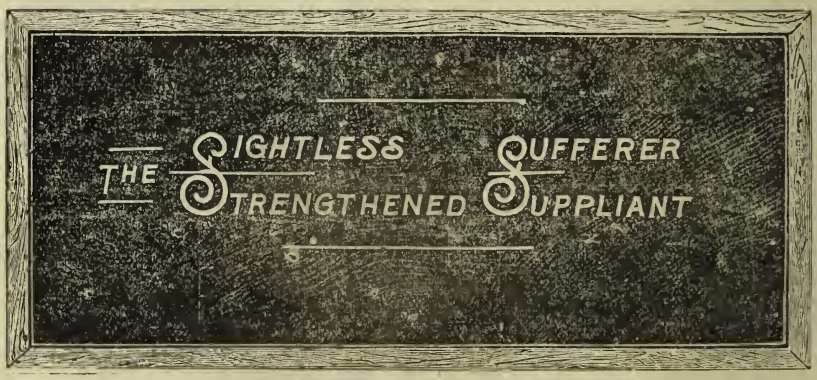
made of the sin-color. I want you to imagine it as very strong, stronger than any chain of iron that you ever saw. See these marks in the links; they stand for men bound by this great chain. Now I will tell you something wonderful: "A little boy only eight years old once broke this heavy chain and set all these men free."

The above illustration is a suggestion to those who would like to develop from the text a temperance lesson. Let the chain stand for the habit of rum drinking, and tell the story of the little boy who prayed to God to show him how to save five men, and every day for six months asked them to sign the total abstinence pledge. One by one they yielded (in telling this it will be more effective if you erase part of a link, and so free first one and then another), until at last they had all signed the pledge and all learned to pray.

The golden text is eminently fitted to link with this development of the lesson, for "The God of Israel is he that (still) giveth power and strength unto his people."

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

BY J. HOWARD SEAL.



SUGGESTIONS.—Review briefly Samson's life, how he lost his strength and his sight. In the lesson to-day we see him the sightless sufferer, the sport of the assembled lords of the Philistines, and the people with them. Some very significant lessons are suggested. While sleeping in the sinner's embrace he lost his power. "Samson wist not that the Lord had departed from him." He had departed so far from God that he felt no difference when God departed from him. Spiritual strength is lost by disobedience and self-indulgence. The world always makes sport of the fallen Christian, points at him with derision and scorn. May we not presume that in his prison confinement he repented of his error? His hair began to grow again; he felt his strength returning, and in supplication to God he fully recovers his power and gains the greatest victory of his life over his enemies. Only by prayer did he regain his former strength. So we, if we have lost spiritual strength, can only regain it by obedience and prayer. Or, if preferred, the following:

EVIL DEEDS
DISPLEASE GOD.
AVOID BAD COMPANY.

Lesson XI. **RUTH AND NAOMI.** **Sept. 9th, 1883.**

Ruth 1: 14-22. Memorize vs. 16, 17.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."—Ruth 1: 16.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Ruth 1: 14-22.....*Ruth and Naomi.*
T. Ruth 2: 1-17.....*Ruth in the Field.*
W. Ruth 4: 1-17.....*Ruth and Boaz.*
Th. Isa. 11: 1-10.....*A Root of Jesse.*
F. Matt. 2: 1-11.....*The King of the Jews.*
S. Mark 10: 17-30.....*Went Away Grieved.*
S. Ps. 34: 1-22.....*Gratitude to God.*

TOPIC.

The Good Part Chosen.

LESSON PLAN.

1. Ruth's Friendship. vs. 14-18. **2. Naomi's Return.** vs. 19-22.

Time.—Cannot be determined with exactness. See Notes. **Place.**—Moab, east of the Dead Sea, about one hundred miles from Bethlehem, where our lesson ends.

Catechism.—Q. 35. *What is sanctification?* A. Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 200: "Jesus, engrave it on my heart." Other hymns, 210, 229, 271, 305, 311.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—After the Book of Judges with its records of strife, violence and crime, this gentle pastoral is like a lovely island at the end of a voyage through wild and stormy seas. The vail is lifted and we have glimpses of domestic life among the chosen people in those troublous times. Very beautiful are the pictures of piety, affection, fidelity and purity, amid the rude scenes of war and strife that characterized the national life of the period. The character-studies are delightful—Boaz the rich farmer, with his strong faith in God, his gentle spirit, his kindness to the poor; Naomi the sorrowful woman, yet faithful to all her lowly duties; Ruth, with her devotion to her husband's memory, her unwavering and self-forgetful attachment to her adopted parent, her noble example of industry, modesty and patience, and her allegiance to the God of Israel; Orpah with her tears and kisses and her clinging still to the old heathen home and life. The story is important historically in that it gives the lineage of David from the time of the passage of the Jordan to Jesse, and also furnishes an important link in the ancestry of our Lord in whose line Ruth the Moabitess had a place.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

14. And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Or'pah kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth clave unto her. [Prov. 17: 17; 18: 24.]

15 And she said, Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister-in-law. [Judg. 11: 24; 2 Kings 2: 2.]

16 And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, *or* to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people *shall be* my people, and thy God my God: [2 Sam. 15: 21; Matt. 8: 19; Ps. 45: 10.]

17 Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, *if aught* but death part thee and me. [1 Sam. 20: 17; 2 Sam. 19: 13.]

18 When she saw that she was stedfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her. [Luke 24: 29; 9: 62; Acts 21: 14; 1 Cor. 15: 58.]

19 ¶ So they two went until they came to Beth'le-hem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Beth'le-hem, that all the city was moved about them, and they said, *Is* this Na'o-mi? [Lam. 2: 15; Matt. 21: 10.]

20 And she said unto them, Call me not Na'o-mi, call me Ma'ra: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. [1 Tim. 6: 7.]

21 I went out full, and the LORD hath brought me home again empty: why then call ye me Na'o-mi, seeing the LORD hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me? [Job 21: 12.]

22 So Na'o-mi returned, and Ruth the Mo'ab-it-ess, her daughter-in-law, with her, which returned out of the country of Mo'ab: and they came to Beth'le-hem in the beginning of barley-harvest. [Ex. 9: 31, 32; 2 Sam. 21: 9.]

The time of the events narrated in this book cannot be definitely ascertained. It was while the Judges ruled (1: 1). Boaz was the great-grandfather of David. David was born 1085 B. C. If Jesse was fifty years old when David was born, and if Obed again was fifty when Jesse was born, Obed's birth would be in 1185 B. C. This would place the story about 1200 B. C., although the time may have been either earlier or later.

A famine in the land of Israel drove Elimelech and his wife Naomi to the country of Moab, where they hoped to escape from trouble. But soon the husband dies and Naomi is left a widow. Her two sons marry women of Moab, but sorrow still follows the mother, for both her sons die. She hears of better times in her own land and resolves to return to her old home. Her daughters-in-law start to accompany her. She thanks them for their kindness to her sons and to her, but begs them to remain in their own land.

14 *They lifted up their voice.* That is, Orpah and Ruth. When Naomi set out to return they both accompanied her, as an act of courtesy, going probably as far as the borders of their own country. She then pressed them to go back home, when they announced their intention to go with her to her own people. Still she urged them for their own sake to turn again. At this point occurs the tender scene here described. The two young widows wept with Naomi. *Orpah kissed her mother-in-law.* She had decided not to go with her away from her own land, into a strange country, and she

kissed her farewell. Naomi had shown her the hopelessness of the future and the sacrifice she would have to make if she went with her; that she had nothing but solitariness and sorrow and poverty to share with her; and when Orpah saw what was involved in going she decided not to go. *But Ruth clave unto her.* All that Naomi had said about the self-sacrifice she would make in choosing to go with her did not alter her determination. If we seek for the motives which actuated Ruth we find them in her devotion to her husband's memory, in her deep affection for her mother-in-law and in her choice already of the God of Israel. v. 16. What Naomi had said about the darkness of the future only strengthened her decision.

15 *Her people and her gods.* Evidently she had not become attached to the God of Israel nor was she ready to give up her idols. The only way in which these heathen women could have any place in Israel would be by becoming proselytes, and she was not ready for this as was Ruth. Naomi again begs Ruth to go back with Orpah. We are not to suppose that she did not desire Ruth to accompany her, but that in the unselfishness of her own heart she wished her to think deeply of her resolution, to consider all that it involved and not to take the step unless she did so with the utmost freedom.

16 *Entreat me not to leave thee.* Her choice was made. She had considered everything. Her love for Naomi was so great that nothing could induce her to go back. The words are eloquent in their tenderness, and most vividly depict her attachment. *Whither thou goest.* See 2 Kings 2: 2–6. *Thy God, my God.* She is ready to give up the gods of her own land, for she has made the God of Israel her God.

17 *The Lord do so to me.* A common form of imprecation, meant to intensify the solemn asseveration or vow made.

18 *She left speaking unto her.* Made no further effort to induce her to reconsider her determination.

19 *They two . . . came to Bethlehem.* Bethlehem was the former home of Naomi, whence, more than ten years before, she and her husband had gone out to escape from suffering. It was here that Rachel died and was buried; it was here that David afterward was born and brought up; it was here that our Lord was born *All the city was moved about them.* Bethlehem was only a small village and such an occurrence as the return of Naomi, in her sad condition, would instantly be known over all the town. Ten years ago she and her husband and sons had gone away, hoping to better their circumstances. Perhaps nothing had been heard from them since that day. The reappearance on the streets of the woman without either husband or sons, in her widow's garb, and accompanied by the young Moabitess widow, could not but arouse a deep interest. *They* (that is, the women, for the pronoun is feminine) *said, Is this Naomi?* An expression of amazement, not at her return, but at the mournful condition in which she appeared, as a solitary widow, sorrowful and broken.

20 *Call me not Naomi.* The name means *pleasant*, or *sweet*, and when she dwelt in Bethlehem it fitly described her circumstances. But the name is no longer appropriate, and instead she should now be called *Mara*, which means bitter. Ex. 15: 23. *The Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.* Her words indicate a crushed spirit which has not yet been lifted up by the comforts of faith, an unillumined sorrow.

21 *I went out full.* Full of happiness, with husband and sons and many cherished hopes for the future. There is a tone of penitent regret in the words. *She* went away; *the Lord* brought her back. Evidently she was not satisfied that her going away was of the Lord's direction. *Home again empty.* Her heart emptied, her joys and hopes taken out of her bosom. Contrast Jacob's words. Gen. 32: 10. Compare Hannah's song. 1 Sam. 2: 5. *The Lord hath testified against me.* Evidently she regarded the sorrows which had befallen her and her family in the land of Moab as an expression of God's disapproval of their removal to that heathen land. He had pronounced against the step. In the bitterness of her spirit Naomi thought her sorrows were divine judgments.

22 *In the beginning of barley harvest.* This statement is made to prepare for the narrative that follows. The time was about the end of April.

The remainder of the book gives the outcome of Ruth's noble devotion. Naomi set about to provide a home for Ruth. The old Jewish marriage customs required the nearest kinsman of a dead husband to marry his widow if childless. Naomi remembered that Boaz, a rich farmer of Bethlehem, was a kinsman of Ruth's husband. She sent Ruth to glean in his fields; perhaps she would find favor in his sight. Boaz saw her and was pleased with her. The result was that he took her to be his wife. Thus she took her place in the line of the ancestors of David and of Jesus.

One of the points of peculiar interest in this beautiful story is that we have a Gentile brought not only into the nation of Israel but also linked into the sacred line of our Lord's ancestry.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

Orpah kissed her mother-in-law. It was a farewell kiss. She had decided to go back to her own people and her gods. She loved Naomi, and had set out with the intention of going on with her to the land of Israel, giving up all for this purpose. She had come with her now to the borders of her own land. Naomi had told her honestly what sacrifice she would make if she went with her. She would give up whatever there was beautiful, hopeful and joyous in her own home and country, and would get only poverty, desolateness and sorrow for her portion, for Naomi had nothing else to promise. Orpah was in a strait. She loved Naomi, and did not want to tear herself away from her. The memories of her dead husband bound her also to the noble mother-in-law. But as she stood there on the border and looked forward and back, her courage failed. Back were country, and home, and hope, and friends; forward were poverty, and toil, and sorrow in a strange land. She hesitated, she wept, she decided, she kissed the mother she had learned to love and said farewell to her, and then turned back toward the old home. She loved, but not enough to carry her away into that life of sacrifice. She wanted to go with Naomi, but she could not give up all else for her sake.

1. *Orpah illustrates much human friendship.* It is devoted up to a certain point. So long as loyalty costs nothing it cleaves with fondness and tenderness. It even clings up to the borders of self-sacrifice. But it is not ready to give up pleasure or profit. When this point is reached it wavers and turns back. You can get plenty of people who will be your friends while you have favors to dispense and while attachment to you makes no draft on their money or their ease, nor breaks into their selfish enjoyment; but if misfortune comes to you, and friendship means forgetfulness of self, and it will cost something to cleave to you, they have only tears and regrets, and you see their backs as they turn away and leave you to go on alone. Orpah has a great many brothers and sisters. There are many "tenderly attached friends" who would do no better if the trial came.

2. *Orpah also illustrates a class of Christ's friends.* We see some of them in the gospel. There was one—a rich young ruler—who came running, who was very eager and earnest in his desire to follow Christ, but who did just as Orpah did when he learned the full meaning of devotion to him. He must give all up, sell all and distribute among the poor, and then go out poor, empty-handed, into a path of hardship, self-sacrifice and toil. He heard the conditions, he weighed the two alternatives—staying at home and keeping all, or going with Jesus and losing all. The struggle was hard, for he loved the Master and wanted to go with him, but he loved himself and his money more. He stood hesitating, looking both ways, then made his choice, said farewell to Jesus with tears, and slowly and in much sorrow went away to keep his money and lose his soul. There are other illustrations in the Gospels—men following Christ a certain distance, until they came to a point where sacrifice had to be made if they continued with him, when they went back and walked no more with him. And there are many such followers in every age. They want to be Christians. They have some conception of a better life. They have some love for Christ, and while no self-denial is necessary they follow him. But when they come to the borders of the old natural life and must give all up and go out with him into the paths of toil and cross-bearing and personal sacrifice, like Orpah, they say farewell, and with grief and sorrow go back to their gods and their possessions while Jesus goes on alone.

But Ruth clave unto her. She saw all that Orpah saw of the cost of faithfulness. She heard all that Naomi said about the sadness of her future—that she had nothing to promise her daughters, that she was going back to homelessness, poverty, hardship and desolateness, and that if they went with her they must expect no better lot than hers. Ruth knew that she was leaving all, and so far as human eye could see was choosing only a life of sacrifice and sorrow. Yet she never wavered for a moment. She heard Naomi's remonstrances and entreaties as she sought to dissuade both her daughters-in-law from such self-sacrifice for her sake; but the earnest words made no impression on her. She saw Orpah turn back homeward, but her own resolution weakened not. She clave to Naomi, and was determined to cleave to her whatever the consequences might be.

1. *Ruth illustrates true human friendship.* It was her strong and faithful love for Naomi that caused her to cleave to her with such unwavering and unalterable attachment. She did not stop to count the cost, nor to weigh the two alternatives to see which would be the better for herself. She did not look forward to ask where her devotion to Naomi would lead her, into what sacrifice or loss, into what discomfort or suffering. Her love for Naomi was such that she would cleave to her though it led her to death. Behold a picture of true friendship. Contrast it with Orpah's friendship. All love is measured by what it will do, or give, or

suffer, or sacrifice. Ruth's stood the sorest test. The lesson is worth learning. Let children study it and learn the kind of devotion to their parents they ought to show. Naomi was Ruth's mother-in-law. Is there no lesson here for daughters-in-law? There *are* Ruths in our modern days. Were it not for the sacredness that belongs to all such friendships and attachments, I could set alongside of this Bible picture another scarcely less beautiful, on which my own eyes have looked with admiration. Let us not turn away from this story without learning once more the meaning of true friendship, and inquiring whether we are in our several places such friends as was Ruth.

2. *Ruth illustrates friendship for Christ.* Orpah loved, wept and went back; Ruth loved, wept and clung. Christ's true followers cleave to him, though he leads them into paths of poverty, toil and cross-bearing. They do not stop to consider the cost of faithfulness. They make choice of him without conditions, and where he goes they follow him. Love for him is the motive, and it is very clear that there can be no other motive strong enough to produce such faithfulness. A sense of duty will not do it. Fear of consequences will not do it. Mere admiration for religion will not do it. Nothing will do it save deep personal love. But love stops at no hardship, no suffering, no reproach, no loss, no sacrifice. Look at the little company of Christ's first disciples, men and women, who gave up all for his sake, and identified themselves and all their interests and hopes with him. Look at Paul, who suffered the loss of all things and endured all things, because the love of Christ constrained him. Christian history is resplendent with the names and stories of countless others who have done the same.

Thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods. Every heart cleaves to its own gods and follows them. If any one turns back from Christ it is because there is some other lord that rules above him. Christ is not supreme; if he were, everything else would be given up for him.

Whither thou goest I will go . . . thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. That is just what every one must be ready to say who accepts Christ and begins to follow him. Wherever he goes we must go. We are to attach ourselves to him so closely, so firmly, so unalterably, that we shall never ask into what experiences he is taking us, whether it will be pleasant or not, whether it will be easy or hard. We must simply cleave to him and follow whithersoever he leads. We make choice also of his people when we choose him. We cut ourselves off from Moab, from our old ties, our old friendships if they are yet in the old life, and we take Christ's people as ours henceforward. We enter a new family, with a new name, a new nature, a new hope, a new home. We must identify ourselves with Christ's Church and followers, separating ourselves from the world. We must take his God to be ours, too, giving up our idols and yielding our hearts fully to the Lord for ever. In short, there must be a full identification of ourselves with Christ, body, soul, spirit, for time and for eternity.

So Naomi returned, and Ruth . . . and they came to Bethlehem. Ruth was never sorry for her choice. She had no thought of reward or gain when she determined to stay with Naomi, but she found both reward and gain. Choosing Naomi's people and God, she found friends, a home, an honored place in the nation, and became a link in the ancestry of Christ himself. Those who do their duty never lose by it in the end. Those who choose Christ are exalted to high honor in the family of God in this world and in heaven. Those who give up this world to make choice of God and his service never say in old age that they made a mistake. It is interesting to follow the histories of Orpah and Ruth from the moment they separated. Orpah went back home to her people and her gods, and we hear of her no more; Ruth came to trust under the shadow of God's wing and we know how she was exalted to honor.

LESSON POINTS.

1. The call for sacrifice tests friendship. v. 14.

2. Orpah—the type of much human friendship.

3. Orpah—an illustration of one class of followers of Christ, who turn back when sacrifice is demanded.

4. Ruth, a model daughter; her conduct illustrative of true friendship.

5. Ruth an illustration of those who follow Christ fully and wholly.

6. Ruth an example of one won from the world by the influence of one of God's people. This speaks well for Naomi's life while in Moab.

7. Ruth's choice was made without reference to any rewards, purely through love for Naomi and for the God of Israel. vs. 15, 16.

8. The true choice of Christ is for life, death and eternity. vs. 16, 17.

9. Those who choose Christ and follow him wholly never regret it in either world.

10. Ruth's choice led to honor; so does the Christian's who takes Christ.

11. God's bitter dealings with his children often lead to greater mercies. v. 21, with the outcome.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

HINTS IN PREPARING THIS LESSON.

1. Read carefully the book of Ruth, then some good introduction to the book.

2. Write a brief outline of the facts—noting all the *persons* and *places* mentioned.

3. Make a list of the oriental customs referred to in this book, *e. g.*, the reaping, the gleaning, the familiar greetings of master and servants, the duty of the nearest kinsman, etc. If any surprise arises at some things done by Ruth and Naomi, call to mind the great difference between those early times and our own, and also the difference in the countries.

4. Last Sabbath you urged your scholars to read the book of Ruth at home. Write out a few general questions to test their knowledge of its facts. What calamity was distressing Palestine? Name of Naomi's husband? Of their two sons? To what land did they go? Whom did Mahlon and Chilion marry? Naomi's sorrow? What tidings came from Palestine? What did Naomi decide to do? To what town did they come? Who was Boaz? How did he become acquainted with Ruth? How did he show her kindness?

5. Form a clear idea of the place and design of the book of Ruth, by telling how a heathen Moabite woman was brought into the true Israel and became an ancestress of Jesus Christ. Matt. 1: 5.

HINTS AS TO APPLYING THE LESSON.

I. ORPAH. Draw from the class all the facts concerning her. Especially call attention to her following Naomi for a time. vs. 9, 10. Yet, what did Orpah finally *do?* She went back unto her people and unto her gods. Why? She could not give up Moab. Who is there now, that in spite of some penitence, some appreciation of and affection for Christ fall short of salvation? The young man went away *sorrowful* from Christ, but he *went away*. Matt. 19: 22. Many persons in every revival are "convinced," are stirred up, talk well, but though "almost persuaded" are "lost." Why? They love Christ, yet they leave him, because they love him not enough, *because they love sin and the world better*. Press this home by questions and illustrations drawn from your own observation.

II. RUTH. *In what particulars was Ruth like Orpah?* Both were Moabitesses. Both married Naomi's sons. Both had to decide whether to leave Moab or not. Both said unto Naomi, "Surely we will return with thee unto thy people." "Both lifted up their voices and wept" at the thought of parting with Naomi. *In what did Ruth differ from Orpah?* Recite from memory vs. 16, 17. Ruth was "*steadfastly minded to go with*" Naomi. What *six points* are there in Ruth's noble resolution? (1) She will "*go*" with Naomi. (2) *Dwell* with her. (3) Naomi's *people* shall be hers. (4) Naomi's *God* shall be hers. (5) She will *die* where Naomi dies. (6) She will be *buried* in the same grave. How do these points illustrate the Christian's resolution to follow Jesus? Death would part Ruth from Naomi. What will it do as to Jesus and us? Rom. 8: 38, 39.

III. NAOMI. Call for her reasons for persuading Orpah and Ruth to return to Moab.

Points in the Lesson for September 16th:

1. What do you know of the First Book of Samuel?

2. Give examples of God's hearing prayer for temporal things.

3. Examples of a mother's prayers and influence.

4. How did Hannah show her thankfulness?

5. Duty of children who have been loaned unto the Lord by their mothers.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The Teacher in Class.—"See, here is the outline of a country named Moab, lying east of the Dead Sea. Here is a road leading from it to a place named Bethlehem in Judea. Here in Moab is a house where used to live a man and woman and their two sons, who had moved from Bethlehem? Do you know their names? After a little time the father died. But the sons grew up and married wives. Do you know the names of the wives? Then, after a time, more sorrow came. The sons died. See these three marks on the road leading out of Moab. They stand for three women. Who are they? Listen, Naomi, the mother, is talking. She is telling her daughters that perhaps they would better not go with her back to her old home, that she has no home for them, she cannot help them. If they are to go with her they must understand that she has nothing to offer them. Now the Moabites did not know the true God, but worshiped idols, and these two daughters who had lived with Naomi so long knew all about this, and were really deciding which god they would serve. What do you think they did?"

In subdivided classes I would suggest that the leader open the story in this way, getting all possible help from her class. Then leave the lesson in the hands of the teachers for fifteen

minutes, previously instructing them to mark the difference in the two daughters. Both are tender and loving. Both lift up their voices and weep. But one weeps and resolves to cling, the other weeps and returns.

At the close of the fifteen minutes the leader, calling the entire class to order, might ask the scholars to complete the story. What mark shall you erase and make again in the country of Moab? Who went on to Bethlehem? Notice especially the words: "Thy God shall be my God." Herein lay the great importance of Ruth's choice.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION.—Here is a circle which stands for a town named "SELF." (Print the name.) All the people in that town please themselves, work for themselves, think about themselves. Right across this line is another place, and I will put the name "JESUS" in the centre of it, for here the people before they do anything, go anywhere, say anything, ask if it will please Jesus. They live for him.

Now all the scholars in this class are asked to go across this line to the side of Jesus. It is not a long journey, such as Ruth had to take. There are no really good and pleasant things to leave, such as she had. There is a beautiful home waiting for everybody who will live on this side. Jesus himself is calling every one to come. Yet I will tell you something that makes me sad. There are many who will not come. They choose to stay on that side and please "SELF." Then there are some who start and get almost to the crossing; then something whispers to them that they are too little, or that maybe they won't have a good time, and they go back, just as I am making this dot back here again, when a moment ago it was almost on the line.

Let all teachers who think that little children cannot be made to understand allegorical teaching of this sort practice, by making themselves entirely familiar with a portion from "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress." Then gather some little ones about them during the week, and tell the story, carefully explaining it. All such, who do their best, will make discoveries.

Press home the thought that there is something for the child to do. He must *choose*. God says choose NOW.

Let me call attention to the fitness of the lesson hymn for repeating and impressing this important thought: "Only a step to Jesus."

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

SUGGESTIONS.—Study carefully the whole book. Emigration to Moab had been disastrous to Naomi. Went full, returned empty. Husband and sons left in Moabite graves. "These deaths may have been judgments on the choice of a heathen home." See Deut. 7. 3. Contrast Orpah and Ruth. Orpah had good impulses, like Matt. 19: 22. Ruth had strong convictions, like Phil. 3 7–11. Orpah turned back readily, like Pliable in "Pilgrim's Progress." Ruth's purpose was fixed, could not be turned. "Orpah kisses her mother-in-law," but Ruth cleaves to Naomi, and chooses her race and religion; shows a love stronger than death, leaves everything for Naomi's God and Naomi's people. Her final argument, "I will go." Ruth and Naomi cross over from the Moab side of the Jordan to the Bethlehem side. Orpah turns back. They separate at the cross. In front of Ruth's name draw a cross to represent the letter T, and the board will read, TRUTH CLEAVES. Impress the lesson it suggests. An outline like the following may be prepared:

DEVOTION,
DECISION,
DIVISION.

Or, FORSAKE THE WORLD,
FOLLOW JESUS.

"THY REWARD SHALL BE GREAT." Matt. 19: 29.

Lesson XII. **A PRAYING MOTHER.** Sept. 16th, 1883.

1 Sam. 1 : 21–28. Memorize vs. 26–28

GOLDEN TEXT.—"I have lent him to the Lord: as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord."—1 Sam. 1 : 28.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 1 Sam. 1 : 21–28...*A Praying Mother.*
T. Deut. 16 : 5–17....*The Yearly Feasts.*
W. 1 Sam. 2 : 1–10....*Hannah's Song.*
Th. Luke 1 : 46–55....*Mary's Song.*
F. Luke 2 : 21–30....*Mary and Jesus in the Temple.*
S. John 14 : 6–16....*Prayer in the Name of Christ.*
S. James 5 : 13–20...*Effectual Prayer.*

TOPIC.

A Picture of a Godly Mother.

LESSON PLAN.

1. Training her Child at Home. vs. 21–23.
2. Dedicating him to the Lord. vs. 24–28.

Time.—B. C. 1171. **Place.**—Ramah and Shiloh.

Catechism.—Q. 36. *What are the benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification?* A. The benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification, are, assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, increase of grace, and perseverance therein to the end.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 91: "To thee, my God and Saviour." Other hymns, 56, 58, 59, 73.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—The name of Samuel is given to this and the following book, probably because they contain the narrative of the life and ministry of this great prophet and judge. In fixing the time of the events here described it must be remembered that Samuel was born about ten years before the birth of Samson. Eli was both priest and judge. The story of this lesson really opens with Hannah's prayer. vs. 9–11. She was without children, and earnestly asked God to give her a son, at the same time vowing to give him to the Lord and to devote him as a Nazarite. Her prayer was granted, and she called the child Samuel, that is, *Heard of God*, or *Asked of God*. The lesson tells how she fulfilled her vow.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

21 And the man El-ka'nah, and all his house, went up to offer unto the LORD the yearly sacrifice, and his vow. [v. 3; 1 Sam. 1 : 11; Lev. 12 : 6–8.]

22 But Han'nah went not up; for she said unto her husband, *I will not go up* until the child be weaned, and *then* I will bring him, that he may appear before the LORD, and there abide for ever. [Luke 2 : 22; vs. 11, 28; 1 Sam. 2 : 11–18.]

23 And El-ka'nah her husband said unto her, Do what seemeth thee good; tarry until thou have weaned him; only the LORD establish his word. So the woman abode, and gave her son suck until she weaned him. [2 Sam. 7 : 25.]

24 ¶ And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with three bullocks, and one ephah of flour, and a bottle of wine, and brought him unto the house of the LORD in Shi'loh: and the child was young. [Deut. 12 : 5, 6, 11.]

25 And they slew a bullock, and brought the child to E'li. [Luke 2 : 22.]

26 And she said, Oh my lord, *as* thy soul liveth, my lord, I *am* the woman that stood by thee here, praying unto the LORD. [Gen. 42 : 15; 2 Kings 2 : 2, 4, 6.]

27 For this child I prayed; and the LORD hath given me my petition which I asked of him: [vs. 11, 22.]

28 Therefore also I have lent him to the LORD; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the LORD. And he worshiped the LORD there. [Gen. 24 : 26, 52.]

21 *The man Elkanah.* We learn something about him in the early part of this chapter. He was a Levite, a descendant of Korah. He is called an Ephrathite or Ephraimite, because he dwelt within the lot of Ephraim, the Levites having no portion and being scattered through all the tribes. See Judg. 17 : 7 for a similar instance. He lived at Ramah, about four miles north-west of Jerusalem. There is a blot upon his name—he had two wives; that this did not add to his happiness is very evident from the narrative. With this exception the record of Elkanah is good. He was a worthy man, living in those evil and ungodly times a life of piety. He took his whole family every year to Shiloh, where the tabernacle was then located, to worship and offer sacrifice. Even upon this holy service, however, his bigamy cast a shadow. See vs. 4–7. Everywhere he went the wretchedness of this double marriage followed him. Hannah was his favorite wife, but she had no children, and had much to endure from the taunts and jealousy of the other wife. At one of these yearly feasts Hannah prayed to the Lord most earnestly that a son might be given to her. She promised also that if her prayer

were granted she would give the child to the Lord all the days of his life, and that he should be brought up as a Nazarite. Her cry was answered, and she called the child Samuel, that is, "Heard of God." *The yearly sacrifice.* Which one of the three great annual feasts of the Jews this was cannot be absolutely determined. *And his vow.* This seems to imply that Elkanah himself vowed to do something if a son were given to Hannah. The custom of making such conditional vows was common in those days. So we find much that is good in Elkanah. He was faithful to his religious duties in very unsettled times. He maintained household religion, taking his family with him to the feasts. He remembered his vows to God and kept them.

22 *Hannah went not up.* The reference here is to a particular occasion. Previous to this she attended the feasts. v. 9. The reason for her remaining at home now was that she did not wish to take her child to Shiloh at all until she could take him and leave him there. The name Hannah is the same as Anna, afterward distinguished in the sacred story. Luke 2 : 36. She was herself a poet-prophetess, her song of praise (chap. 2) being an inspired hymn of very high order, containing the first prophecy of the Messiah under that name. v. 10. *Until the child be weaned.* Usually Hebrew mothers suckled their children until they were two and sometimes three years old. *That he may appear before the Lord.* In the tabernacle. Not until their twenty-fifth year did the Levites ordinarily appear before the Lord for service in the sanctuary, but Hannah would present her son in his infancy to begin his training for holy service. *There abide for ever.* All his life. The words imply an entire consecration of the child to God.

23 *Do what seemeth thee good.* He had full confidence in his wife's good sense, and did not interfere with her plans. Elkanah seems to have been a good husband. *Only the Lord establish his word.* There is no mention in the narrative of any particular word or promise of the Lord respecting this child to which Elkanah could here refer. However, there may have been some special prediction concerning him which is not recorded. Or the reference may have been to Eli's benediction (v. 17), when Hannah told him that she had been pouring out her soul in prayer. Or the answer to Hannah's prayer may itself have been regarded as virtually a word of the Lord, accepting her vow of consecration. *So the woman abode.* She worshiped the Lord by attending faithfully to her child. She did not hire a nurse for him, but brought him up herself.

24 *She took him up with her.* That is, to Shiloh, a distance from Ramah of about thirteen or fourteen miles. *With three bullocks.* For an offering to God. *One ephah of flour.* Authorities differ as to the quantity of this measure. According to Josephus it contained about eight and one-half gallons; according to the rabbins, four and one-half gallons. *A bottle of wine.* The ancient bottles were made of skins, which were drawn from the animals uncut, the holes being tied up or sewed. *The house of the Lord.* The tabernacle. It is probable that walls had been built about it and apartments constructed adjoining the sacred tent, giving it the appearance of a "house." *In Shiloh.* The tabernacle had been located here by Joshua, and Shiloh remained the religious headquarters until the close of Eli's judgeship. *The child was young.* Probably only three years old. See on v. 22.

25 *They slew a bullock.* As a dedicatory offering. The probable scene is thus described. "Elkanah leads the bullock to the north side of the altar of burnt-offering, in the court before the door of the tabernacle, and binds it to the horns of the altar. Hannah brings her child, and lays his hand on the head of the victim in token that it is his representative; at that moment Elkanah, or one of the priests, slays it. Lev. 1 : 5. Its blood is sprinkled and its limbs are burnt upon the altar, as an emblem of the complete dedication of the child to Jehovah." *To Eli.* The high priest. Of his character we shall learn more in subsequent lessons. He was now in the feebleness of old age. He was not, however, even at his best, the man for those rough and evil times, but was too easy and pliant.

26 *As thy soul liveth.* A form of oath. *I am the woman that stood by thee here.* See vs. 9–18. Eli did not at first recognize her, and she recalls to his mind the particular circumstances in which he had seen her on this very spot.

27 *For this child I prayed.* At that time. Here is the answer to that prayer. *The Lord hath given me my petition.* Notice the similarity of the words of Eli's benediction in v. 17. Hannah rejoices to bear this testimony to God's faithfulness as a hearer and answerer of prayer.

28 *Therefore also.* Because the Lord hath given him in answer to my earnest request, and because that in my petition I vowed to give him to the Lord. *Have I lent him to the Lord.* The word translated *lent* occurs only in Ex. 12 : 36 besides, and there it signifies an absolute giving rather than a lending to be returned, as we use the word. Hannah consecrated her child to the Lord for his service for ever. This is implied in the words that follow: "As long as he liveth

he shall be lent to the Lord." She would never recall her gift. *He worshiped the Lord there.* Who did? The commentators puzzle over this statement, telling us that it was not the child, who was too young, but Elkanah or Hannah that worshiped. The Septuagint omits the words, and the Latin Vulgate has it, "*They* worshiped."

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

The man Elkanah and all his house went up to offer unto the Lord the yearly sacrifice. There were two good things about him. He was faithful to God himself, and he trained up his family also in religious habits. He went to church, and he did not go alone, but took all his household with him. Nowadays there are a good many men who send their families to church, or at least do not discourage their attendance, but who never go themselves. This is bad for the men and bad also for their families. Elkanah's plan was the right one. It is very hard for a wife to bring up a family in a godly way when she receives no sympathy and no help from her husband. But it is comparatively easy when both parents are alike devoted to God and interested in the spiritual welfare of their household.

Hannah went not up. Just at this time her religious duties were at home. Her young child required her attention, and she believed that she was worshiping God more acceptably in staying at Ramah and mothering her boy than if she had gone to Shiloh and left the baby in the care of a hired nurse. And no doubt she was right. A mother's first duties are to her children. No amount of public religious service will atone for neglect of her sacred home duties. She may run to Dorcas meetings, and temperance meetings, and missionary meetings, and do very much good among the poor, and carry blessings to many a drunkard's home, and be a great help in the mission school, but if she fails meanwhile to look after her own children she can scarcely claim to have been a successful worker. A mother's first duty is to bring up her own children for the Lord. Whatever she can do for others after that will be acceptable. Many things must be crowded out of every earnest life, things that are very good and desirable in themselves. No one can do everything that needs to be done, and we must select the things we shall do. But it will be a very sad thing if a mother allows the proper care of her own children to be crowded out of her life by the appeals on behalf of other people's children, or the cries of any other human needs in the world.

I will not go up until the child be weaned, and then will I bring him, that he may appear before the Lord and there abide for ever. From the very first she nursed her child *for the Lord.* She looked upon him as God's child, not hers, and herself only as a nurse for God, whose duty it was to bring up the child for a holy life and service. It is easy to see what a dignity and splendor this gave to the whole round of motherly tasks and duties which the days required. This was God's child that she was nursing, washing, dressing, feeding, teaching, rocking to sleep and toiling for. This thought must have been a wonderful inspiration to her when she was weary. Why should not every mother have the same inspiration? Was Samuel God's child in any truer sense, when Hannah was nursing him, than are the babies that thousands of other mothers are nursing to-day? In every mother's ears, when a little one is laid in her arms, there is spoken by the breath of the Lord the holy whisper, if she but have ears to hear the voice divine, "Take this child and nurse it *for me.*" All children belong to God. Every mother is consecrated to the sacred mission of bringing up an infant life for him. Hannah's secret is well worth learning.

Her husband said unto her, Do what seemeth thee good. Elkanah appears to have been a very kind, good husband, gentle toward his wife, not despotic or tyrannical. He had confidence in Hannah's good sense, and was not disposed to obtrude his own dictation in matters that she understood better than he could. Of course those were old fashioned days, but we must remember also that women were not ordinarily held in as high esteem then as now; so it speaks all the better for Elkanah that he was so much of a gentleman to his wife. The point should not be overlooked. Men who are husbands, and young men who expect to be husbands, should make a note of this commendable feature in Elkanah.

So the woman abode and gave her son suck until she weaned him. She looked after the nursing herself. She did not hire a foreign nurse at the nearest intelligence office and commit the child to her skillful care, that she might have a "free foot" for parties and calls and social and religious duties. She preferred to be nurse herself to her own child. She does not seem to have felt it any great deprivation to be kept at home rather closely for a year or two. Evidently she was not one of those women who think children undesirable incumbrances, or the care of children a wearisome drudgery.

When we think who this child was and what he became, it certainly does seem that Hannah did not spend her time unworthily in taking care of him herself. If all children turned out so well, there are surely few occupations to which even the best and wisest woman could put her hand that would yield better results than this old-fashioned mothering. Perhaps it would be better for this world in the future if there were more Hannahs. There is a new-fangled motherhood in these days which thinks itself fortunate just in the degree in which it can escape all personal care for its little ones by committing them to hirelings at so much a week.

When she had weaned him she . . . brought him unto the house of the Lord . . . and the child was young. He was young, but not too young to be given to the Lord. Some of those who were brought to Jesus for his blessing were probably even younger than Samuel when his mother brought him to the tabernacle, for one of the Gospels says they were infants that were brought; yet Jesus did not say they were too young, nor bid the mothers take them away till they were older. He received them into his arms, put his hands upon them and blessed them. Children may be brought to Christ, therefore, before they are old enough to understand the meaning of the act. Indeed, many of the best men the world ever saw have been brought to God just as Samuel was, in their tender years.

Therefore also I have lent him to the Lord. Wherefore? Because God had given him to her she now gave him back to God in a true and whole-hearted consecration. This is just what all true Christian parents really do with the children God gives them. They lend or give them to the Lord. The act of offering a child in baptism implies this. I had baptized a little girl of three or four years one evening, in her parents' home, and as soon as the service was through she looked up into her mother's face and said: "Mamma, I am God's child now." Of course she was God's child before, but this sacred rite was the act of the parents by which they recognized that fact and voluntarily gave her to God. There is a beautiful lesson here for parents, teaching them that they should give their children to the Lord in infancy. They do not know for what God will use them, or how or where, yet they should recognize his right to them and make a voluntary consecration of them to him. There is a lesson here also for children. They belong to God. If their parents are Christians they have been formally given to him. Should not the remembrance of this fact have a strong influence over all such, all through their life? They were given to God; are they living as God's children?

LESSON POINTS.

1. Every father should set his family the example of piety, especially in faithful attendance upon religious ordinances. v. 21.

2. Every godly father should seek to bring up his family in religious habits as well as be faithful himself. v. 21.

3. Sometimes a mother's religious duties may keep her at home. God's first work for her is to look well to the care of her children. v. 22.

4. A true mother will, as far as possible, mother her own child. v. 23.

5. A true Christian mother nurses her child for the Lord, and this makes the toil a delight. v. 23.

6. A true Christian mother dedicates her child to the Lord from its birth.

7. Children should be taken early to the house of the Lord to be trained for his service. v. 24.

8. Children are God's gifts, among his most precious gifts, and among the richest blessings he ever bestows in this world. v. 27.

9. All parents should give their children to God to be used by him in whatever way or place he may choose. v. 28.

10. When children are given to God parents should be willing to have them do whatever God appoints for them. Sometimes he takes them home to heaven; sometimes he calls them to service on the earth.

11. Children who have been given to God should always live as God's children.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

INTRODUCE (1) by questions on the First Book of Samuel; (2) read carefully with the class 1 Sam. 1: 1–20, bringing out Hannah's sorrow and her prayer, and its answer.

I. A PRAYING MOTHER AT HOME. vs. 21–23.

What was the name of this mother? Of her husband? Of her son? What is meant by Elkanah's family going up to offer unto the Lord? Why did Hannah not go? Why are our *home duties* more important than all others?

In what is Hannah an example to all mothers?

1. When fretted and grieved she brought her home-sorrow to God. vs. 10–18.

2. She consecrated her son to God before he was born. v. 11.

3. When God gave her a son, she took care of him herself. She did not farm him out to servants.

"An ounce of mother is worth a pound of clergy," and a ton of "nurses." Why? Her

love is better, her tenderness is greater. Which of us has had "a praying mother?" Let the scholars tell the story of their mothers' influence. It will do them good. Which one of us remembers his mother praying with him alone? What influence have these prayers had over you? To what does God compare his care for his people in Isa. 66: 13? In what respects is God's comfort like a mother's?

In what respects was Elkanah a model husband?

1. Brought his whole family to God's house. vs. 2–4, 21. Why was this right?

2. Spoke comfort to his afflicted wife. v. 8.

3. Joined his vows with those of his wife. v. 21.

4. Lived in holy agreement with Hannah. v. 23. United his prayer with hers.

Teacher, your scholars cannot learn too young the holy duty of Christian living at home.

II. A PRAYING MOTHER IN THE TEMPLE.

The words "the house of the Lord" refer to the tabernacle then at Shiloh. Josh. 18: 1. At what age were Hebrew children usually weaned? To whom did Hannah bring Samuel? In what words did she describe herself to Eli? Why did she not refer to his severe judgment of her in vs. 13, 14? Why should we not rehearse the mistakes of good people? What was Hannah's vow before Samuel was born? v. 11. How did she pay her vows? With what offerings did she accompany her consecration? All that we can say, or do, or offer to God needs Christ's atonement to cleanse it from sin and render it pleasing to God. How have our mothers and fathers consecrated us to God in his house? In what way did Samuel ratify his mother's vows? "He worshiped the Lord there." In what way should baptized children take upon them those vows which their parents took for them?

Special Questions for Senior Classes:

1. What warning against polygamy is in this chapter? 2. How far does a mother's character determine that of her child? Call for illustrations. 3. Does God always hear the believing prayer of parents combined with faithfulness? 4. What home-habits of Elkanah and Hannah are to be imitated?

Special Adaptations for Younger Classes:

1. Describe the tabernacle. 2. Describe the three-year-old Samuel led by Hannah to Eli. 3. Ask what have your mothers done to lead you to the Lord?

Points in the Lesson of September 23d:

1. What are some of God's invitations to the young?

2. Give illustrations from Scripture of very young persons who were pious.

3. Describe all the particulars of Samuel's call.

4. How does God now call children?

5. How does Samuel's childhood prefigure his manhood?

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The Lesson Introduced by an Illustration.—A watchful teacher may sometimes use something in her class routine as an effective illustration. For instance, if you can plan to have on this Sabbath a reward gift of card, or book, or picture, to present to a child, it may be used as a basis of a talk on "lending." You have given this to the child to keep; you have written his name in or on it, and he understands that it is his forever. Have you, his teacher, a right to take it from him in a few days and keep it for yourself? Not a child but will see injustice in this. Suppose, instead of giving it, you had lent it for a year. The boy is to keep it as his own for that length of time. Would you, two weeks from now, have a right to take it from him? A little talk on this wise will make clear to children that they understand the nature of a promise, and that it is sacred in their eyes.

Now to your lesson. It is about a mother who lent something very precious to somebody. An outline that will serve for a reminder of the temple, with marks for Eli and the mother and child, will help your story. Expect class to give the details. This boy Samuel was given in answer to prayer. Make that thought clear. Let the children take their lesson leaves, study the picture carefully, tell you what they see, and explain what they can about the persons. This method of educating children to see long stories in pictures is something that is much overlooked by primary teachers. Make on the board a red line to stand for the mother's prayer, and a white line leading down from its extreme point to the mark which stands for Samuel—*he* is the answer.

What did the mother do? For how long did she lend him? After that, had she a right to take him away and teach him that he did not belong to God? The minds of the children, having been sharpened by the illustration which applied to their own times and promises, will readily catch the thought that the mother had no right to take back her gift.

PERSONAL APPLICATION.—It is this part of the lesson that we should most carefully prepare to teach. The facts are so familiar to

most children that they will need little help in giving them. The question is, What of it? People of to-day are not called upon to leave their little ones in the temple to serve there. Yet Christian mothers lend their children to the Lord as truly as did Hannah.

As Presbyterians we have opportunity to teach a distinct lesson on infant baptism. Probably most of your scholars have seen the babies come to church in their parents' arms, and seen the minister lay his hand on their heads and pray. What is that ceremony? It is the mother saying to the church, "I give my child to God; as long as he lives he shall belong to God. I will never ask him to do anything that God would not like. I will try to teach him of Jesus. I will pray with him, and for him, and do all that I can to lead him to serve the Lord."

Another way. The mother in her closet, praying; gives her child to God, making the same promises. Suppose little Samuel had run away from the temple and refused to obey Eli. Then he would have stolen himself from the one to whom he belonged. Suppose the little boy or girl, given to God in their babyhood, as they grow older, refuse to serve him, put him out of their thoughts and think only of pleasing themselves. Then they are stealing themselves away from him to whom they belong.

How many in this class have stolen themselves from God? Who wants to go back to him? If you can succeed in making this thought clear and tender and solemn, you may be able to close with the prayer of consecration. I hope that by this time all your children know it, and can pray it entire. Let them raise their hands and clasp them when they repeat, "Take my hands, etc." Spread out the hand as in the act of giving, at the words, "Take my silver, etc.," and finally, with clasped hands and bowed head—

"Take *myself*, and let me be
Ever, only, *all* for thee."

It occurs to me just here that I have said not a word about those children who have never been given to God by their parents. Teachers should remember them and impress the fact that they belong to God because he made them, and they have just as much stolen themselves from him, if they are not serving him, as are the others. The way back is the same for all.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

SUGGESTIONS.—Note in their order the following, and place them in same order on the board as in diagram: 1. Hannah's affliction, vs. 5–7 (superintendent read). 2. Yearning. v. 10 (school read). 3. Entreaty, resolve, promise. v. 11 (teachers read). 4. Reward. v. 20 (school read). The lesson shows Hannah's fidelity. When God gave her the child she prayed for, she "lent (margin, returned) him to the Lord." She prayed earnestly, and she gave thanks earnestly. Chap. 2: 1–10. She gave thanks to God and gave the child to God. The best way to show our gratitude to God, is to "thankfully acknowledge his mercies and *promptly fulfill our vows*." How many of us are like the lepers. Luke 17: 17, 18. After the word "Reward" print "This child." "For this child I prayed." The lessons to follow will reveal what a good child he was, and what a good man he made. A praying mother is a great blessing. Do we all appreciate it as we should?

Directions for Coloring.—"Hannah's" white shaded with blue; "Affliction," red; "Yearning," orange; "Entreaty," "Resolve," "Promise," white, green, pink; "Reward," yellow; "This child," green shaded with yellow.

Lesson XIII. **THE CHILD SAMUEL.** Sept. 23d, 1883.

1 Sam. 3 : 1–19. Memorize vs. 10–13.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth."—1 Sam. 3 : 9.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 1 Sam. 3 : 1–19 ..... *The Child Samuel.*
T. 2 Chron. 34 : 1–7..... *The Young Josiah.*
W. Luke 2 : 41–52 ..... *The Childhood of Jesus.*
Th. 2 Tim. 1 : 1–13..... *The Young Timothy.*
F. Matt. 18 : 1–6; 19 : 13–15. *Jesus and the Children.*
S. Eccles. 12 : 1–7 ..... *Remember thy Creator.*
S. Prov. 23 : 13–25..... *A Good Son.*

TOPIC.

A Picture of a Godly Child.

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Child Called. vs. 1–10. **2. The Message Given.** vs. 11–14. **3. The Message Delivered.** vs. 15–19.

Time.—B. C. 1160. **Place.**—Shiloh, at the tabernacle of the Lord.

Catechism.—Q. 37. *What benefits do believers receive from Christ at death?* A. The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory; and their bodies, being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves till the resurrection.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 312: "My Jesus, as thou wilt." Other hymns, 208, 352, 657, 658.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—At the close of the last lesson the child Samuel was left at the tabernacle by his mother. Eli received him under his care. The child would likely be in the charge of the women of the tabernacle for a time, as he was at first too young to render any service. But as he grew older he began to perform certain simple offices about the sacred place. See chap. 2 : 11, 18. What he did we are not told, but he probably rendered various little services to Eli. He grew up in the sanctuary, knowing no other home, and from his very infancy imbibed the impressions and influences of the holy place. His mother did not forget him, however, but visited him every year, bringing him each time "a little coat," or robe, which she had made for him at home with her own hands. A description of Shiloh as it is now may be found in the "Ride Through Palestine," pp. 239–244.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

1 And the child Sam'u-el ministered unto the LORD before E'li. And the word of the LORD was precious in those days; *there was* no open vision. [1 Sam. 2 : 11, 18, 19; Luke 2 : 49; Ps. 74 : 9; Amos 8 : 11.]

2 And it came to pass at that time, when E'li *was* laid down in his place, and his eyes began to wax dim, *that* he could not see; [Gen. 27 : 1; 1 Sam. 4 : 15.]

3 And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God *was,* and Sam'u-el was laid down to *sleep;* [Ex. 27 : 21; Lev. 24 : 3; 2 Chron. 13 : 11.]

4 That the LORD called Sam'u-el: and he answered, Here *am* I.

5 And he ran unto E'li, and said, Here *am* I; for thou calledst me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down.

6 And the LORD called yet again, Sam'u-el. And Sam'u-el arose and went to E'li, and said, Here *am* I; for thou didst call me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again.

7 Now Sam'u-el did not yet know the LORD, neither was the word of the LORD yet revealed unto him. [Acts 19 : 2.]

8 And the LORD called Sam'u-el again the third time. And he arose and went to E'li, and said, Here *am* I; for thou didst call me. And E'li perceived that the LORD had called the child.

9 Therefore E'li said unto Sam'u-el, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth. So Sam'u-el went and lay down in his place. [Jer. 1 : 6, 7.]

10 And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times, Sam'u-el, Sam'u-el. Then Sam'u-el answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth. [1 John 1 : 3.]

11 ¶ And the LORD said to Sam'u-el, Behold, I will do a thing in Is'ra-el, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. [2 Kings 21 : 12; Jer. 19 : 3.]

12 In that day I will perform against E'li all *things* which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end. [1 Sam. 2 : 30–36.]

13 For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. [1 Sam. 2 : 29–31; Ezek. 7 : 3; 18 : 30.]

14 And therefore I have sworn unto the house of E'li, that the iniquity of E'li's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever. [Num. 15 : 30, 31; Isa. 22 : 14.]

15 ¶ And Sam'u-el lay until the morning, and opened the doors of the house of the LORD. And Sam'u-el feared to shew E'li the vision.

16 Then E'li called Sam'u-el, and said, Sam'u-el, my son. And he answered, Here *am* I.

17 And he said, What *is* the thing that *the LORD* hath said unto thee? I pray thee hide *it* not from me: God do so to thee, and more

also, if thou hide *any* thing from me, of all the things that he said unto thee.

18 And Sam'u-el told him every whit, and hid nothing from him. And he said, It *is* the LORD: let him do what seemeth him good. [Job 1: 21; Ps. 39: 9; Isa. 39: 8.]

19 ¶ And Sam'u-el grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground.

1 *The child Samuel ministered.* See Introductory. In chap. 2: 18 we are told that he wore a linen ephod, a garment that covered the shoulders and breast. This was the usual dress of the priests, and was probably worn by the child Samuel as a mark of his special dedication to the Lord's service. The little coat made by his mother and brought to him year by year was a robe worn under the ephod, reaching down to the feet, with arm holes but no sleeves. According to the Jewish tradition given by Josephus, Samuel was twelve years of age when he received his first revelation, as recorded in this chapter. *The word of the Lord was precious.* Revelations were rare. This was because of the decay of religion among the people at that time. *No open vision.* Literally, *No vision was published.* God had not been sending communications to the people by any acknowledged prophet.

2 *At that time.* On a certain definite day. *Eli was laid down.* The time was night, and Eli was in his bed. *His eyes began to wax dim.* This refers in general to his old age and feebleness. He was almost blind. This fact is mentioned to account for Samuel's thinking that Eli had called him; probably he did often call him at night for various personal or other services, being himself so helpless.

3 *Ere the lamp of God went out.* This was the seven-branched golden candlestick, made by Moses, which stood in the holy place. Ex. 25: 31–37. It was lighted every evening, burned all night, and all its lamps but one were extinguished in the morning. The words here imply that it was very near the time for extinguishing the lamps when Samuel heard this call. *In the temple.* The tabernacle, as the temple was not yet built.

4 *The Lord called Samuel.* Called him by name, so that the child heard the voice. *Here am I.* An answer expressing readiness to hear the message and obey it.

5 *He ran unto Eli.* The character of Samuel shines out in all this story very brightly. He supposed that Eli had called him, but his deference to him, his promptness in answering each time he heard his voice, and his eagerness to know what was wanted and to do it, are all marks of a very noble character in the lad.

7, 8 *Did not yet know the Lord.* The Lord had never spoken to him in this way before. *Neither was the word . . . yet revealed.* That is, in supernatural communications. This is an explanation of the fact that Samuel did not recognize the voice of God. *Eli perceived that the Lord had called the child.* The fact that Samuel had heard his name called so often assured Eli that it must be the voice of God which he had heard.

10 *The Lord came and stood.* A personal presence and visible also to Samuel. Probably the child saw the Lord in human form within his room. *As at other times.* That is, the other times mentioned in the foregoing verses. The lad had heard his own name called. *Then Samuel answered.* He followed the instruction of Eli. His answer implies readiness to hear, and also to obey whatever word the Lord might speak.

11 *The Lord said.* No doubt in an audible voice, as the child's name had been audibly called so often before. *The ears . . . shall tingle.* See 2 Kings 21: 12; Jer. 19: 3. The expression was proverbial, implying tidings startling and painful. The thing which God was about to do would shock all Israel when told.

12 *I will perform against Eli.* Samuel became thus early the Lord's prophet, receiving this message for Eli. *All things which I have spoken against his house.* See chap. 2: 27–36. Who this "man of God" was who came to Eli and uttered these solemn words we are not told; but Eli could not have forgotten his visit or what he said. This prophet had foretold that Eli's two sons should both die in one day, that the priesthood should depart from Eli's house, and that his descendants should crouch and beg for bread. All these solemn predictions, says the Lord now to Samuel, shall be fulfilled. *I will make an end.* He would not perform part and then withdraw his hand, but would make complete work.

13 *I will judge his house for ever.* The doom pronounced was final and could not be reversed. The priesthood should never return to his descendants. *The iniquity which he knoweth.* If he had not known of it his sin would have been less. *His sons made themselves vile.* Or, *Have cursed themselves.* See chap. 2: 12. They ought to have been holy men, especially as they were priests unto God, but their conduct had been infamous. Thus they had brought curses upon themselves. *He restrained them not.* He had not used his double authority as parent and high priest to compel them to desist from their evil practices. He had expostulated with them (chap. 2: 23), but it had been only in a gentle

and ineffective way. He ought to have dismissed them summarily from the sacred office they held. By his weak indulgence he became partaker of their sins.

14 *Therefore I have sworn.* It was not for any wickedness of Eli himself that this punishment was pronounced, for, so far as we knew, he was a good and pure man, but because he had permitted his sons in the priests' office so to dishonor God and defile his house. This form of an oath adds to the positiveness and unalterableness of the words about to be spoken. *Shall not be purged.* Literally, *Shall not cover itself.* Ordinary sins were purged, that is, atoned and cleansed by the appointed sacrifices (see Num. 15: 25), but this iniquity was so great that atonement could not be accepted. This does not mean that Eli could not be saved, but that his house could no more retain the priesthood.

15 *Samuel . . . opened the doors.* Here we have a hint of the duties the lad performed about the tabernacle. *Samuel feared to show Eli.* He loved and venerated Eli, and the delivery of such a communication could not but be exceedingly painful to his sensitive heart.

17, 18 *What is the thing?* Eli did not shrink from knowing what the Lord had spoken to the child; indeed he demanded to know. *He said, It is the Lord.* Literally, *He is the Lord.* See 2 Sam. 15: 26; 19: 37, 38. Compare also Lev. 10: 3; 2 Kings 20: 19; Ps. 39: 9; Luke 12: 42. Eli submitted to God when his severe chastisements were declared, but it would have been better if he had submitted years before to God's laws and kept his sons from defiling the holy sanctuary.

19 *Samuel grew.* Therefore, at this time he was yet young, not fully grown. *Let none of his words fall.* Let no prophetic word fail which fell from his lips. Thus all the people knew him as a true prophet. v. 20.

[See article on another page on "Samuel's Little Coat," by Dr. Cuyler.]

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

The child Samuel ministered unto the Lord. Of course he did not do the work of a man but that of a child. He probably lighted the lamps, opened the doors and closed them, and rendered personal services to Eli. Children can begin very young to minister unto the Lord. Jesus himself tells us that those who feed the hungry, visit the sick, care for the poor and help the needy do these things as to him—that it is the same as if he were the hungry or sick or needy person. This makes it very easy to minister to the Lord, for there are always people about who need the offices of kindness and help, and children may find opportunities continually of doing little things for them in Christ's name. They should begin in their own homes. A teacher met one of the boys of her class one week-day wheeling a baby coach. She had been talking to her class about doing things for the Master, and she said to the boy, "Well, John, what are you doing for Christ these days?" The boy's answer was, "Mamma is sick, and I am taking care of the baby for her." That was ministering to the Lord. When Jesus was a lad he said that he must be about his Father's business, and then went back home with his parents and stayed there as a loving, dutiful child. He found his Father's business at home, no doubt in doing little things every day to help his parents, and to add to the sweetness and comfort of the home-life. There is no child who may not minister in some way to the Lord.

The Lord called Samuel. The Lord calls every child at some time, not necessarily in an audible voice, but really. Sometimes the call is from without, sometimes from within. The home teachings, the lessons in the Sabbath-school, the sermons of the minister, the words of a friend, some book—in these ways the call comes from outside. Then there is a voice that speaks within which every child hears. We may say it is conscience, or that it is the Holy Spirit speaking in the heart. A prominent man related this incident of himself: When he was a little child, only four years old, he was one day standing by a pond when he saw a tortoise sunning itself in the shallow water. He found a stick, and was about to strike it. He had never killed anything, although he had seen the other boys destroy birds and squirrels and the like, and felt now a desire to follow their example. As he raised his stick and was about to strike the little creature, he seemed to hear a voice within him which said loud and clear, "It is wrong." He held the stick upraised in wonder at the new emotion, and then ran away home and told the tale to his mother, asking who or what it was that had spoken to him. She understood, for she was a wise mother, and taking him on her knee, she said to him: "Some people call it conscience, but I prefer to call it the voice of God in your soul. If you listen to it and obey it, then it will speak clearer and clearer and always guide you right, but if you turn a deaf ear, or disobey, then it will fade out little by little, and leave you in the dark without a friend. Your life depends on heeding that little voice." Every child hears

this same voice, and if it is obeyed it will continue to speak ever in tones of tenderness and warning love.

He ran to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou calledst me. He did not know it was the Lord that called; yet we have a glimpse here of his promptness and earnestness in answering Eli. Here is a good example for boys. Some boys are not so quick to heed the calls of parents or those under whose authority they are. They must be called repeatedly before they will obey; when they do as they are bidden it is only after long delay. Especially if they are called when in bed, as Samuel was, they are not so prompt as he was to respond. Those who are quick and prompt in their plain, common duties are likely also to be the same in doing what God commands.

Eli said unto Samuel, go lie down; and . . . if he call thee . . . say, Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth. Eli did very wisely. He knew now that the Lord had called the child, and he would not himself say a word, but would let the Lord speak. It would be well if all of us would learn the lesson. Ofttimes our children come to us with their deep questions. They have heard new and strange voices, and they want us to tell them what the voices mean. They have had glimpses of strange visions, and they ask us to explain them. And many of us never think for a moment that we cannot really help them. We are so vain of our knowledge and so confident of our wisdom that it never occurs to us that we cannot answer any question the children may ask. Would it not oftimes be better if we said to them just what Eli said to Samuel? Perhaps we meddle too much in the sacred communication that goes on between God and the souls of the young. Let us rather tell them what to do to get God's answer, and have them take their questions to him.

His sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. Eli himself was a good and pure man, but his sons, growing up in his home, became very vile. That home, too, be it remembered, was God's sanctuary, and that father was God's holy priest. Those boys grew up amid the most sacred influences. The air was ever fragrant with the perfume of incense and sacrifice. Those boys were brought up also to assist their father in his priestly service. It would seem that with such a home and such a father and such influences about them and such employment around God's altar, they could not be otherwise than pure and holy. Yet how different is the picture which we see! They grew up "sons of Belial; they knew not God." We have other glimpses of their vileness; and the solemn truth taught in God's words to Samuel is that Eli himself was in great part to blame for his sons' wicked lives. He had not been firm enough in his home government. He had not restrained his sons when they first began to do evil things. He had let them alone, never thinking perhaps that they could turn out badly. Now he could not restrain them, for they had gotten beyond his power; but there was a time when he could have kept them from straying. The lesson is for fathers, but it has something to say also to the boys. Sometimes they think their parents are very strict with them and restrain them too much. Here they see a father who let his boys do just as they pleased when they were young, but what came of it? Any honest, manly boy can see that it would have been a great deal better for Eli's sons if their father had trained them strictly. No one ever regrets in mature life that his youth was well disciplined.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Even very young children can minister unto the Lord. v. 1.

2. Ministering to the Lord is not always some fine spiritual service, but may be the most commonplace tasks. vs. 1, 15.

3. The Lord often passes by the learned and uses a little child to run his errands and deliver his messages. v. 4; Matt. 11: 25.

4. God calls the young in many ways, through parents and teachers, by conscience, by his Spirit and word.

5. Sometimes those to whom God's call comes do not recognize it. v. 5.

6. The true thing to do when God's call is heard is to say, "Speak; thy servant heareth." v. 9.

7. God sometimes has painful messages to deliver. vs. 11–14.

8. A good man, whose own life is pure and simple, may yet be guilty of great sin in what he permits to be done by his children and those under his influence. v. 13.

9. It is not enough for a father to be good; he must see that his family walk in right ways. v. 13.

10. Children may grow up under godly parents and amid holy influences, and yet become very wicked. v. 13.

11. Children should not chafe under the wholesome restraints of good homes, because it is thus that they are trained for noble life. v. 13.

12. Heavenly visions did not make Samuel too proud for lowly tasks. v. 15.

13. Those to whom God gives his messages must deliver them faithfully. v. 18.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

How to Begin.

1. *Carefully review* the preceding lesson. This lesson is so closely connected with that history that the review not only introduces but explains these events. 2. Have the class rapidly glance at the contents of chap. 2.

How to Analyze the Lesson.

I. The Child Samuel Called by Jehovah. vs. 1–10.

1. Was prepared for this call by ministering unto the Lord. v. 1. 2. In early years. 3. In God's house. 4. Personally—by name. 5. Repeatedly—four times. 6. Though he mistakes, he soon understands.

II. The Child Samuel Heard the Word of Jehovah. vs. 11–14.

1. Distinctly—face to face. v. 11. 2. It contained heavy tidings. vs. 11–14.

III. The Child Samuel Delivered the Word of Jehovah.

1. Faithfully serves. v. 15. 2. Promptly obeys. v. 16. 3. Knows how to be silent. v. 15. 4. Tells the whole truth when commanded. v. 18. 5. Grows in grace and stature and wisdom. v. 19. 6. Having honored Jehovah's word finds his own word honored. v. 10.

How to Question, Apply, Etc.

I. Called by Jehovah. What is meant by "ministering unto the Lord?" In what things could a child like Samuel serve the Lord? How old do you suppose Samuel was at the time of this lesson? How early in life may you begin to serve the Lord? What do the Scriptures say of Josiah? 2 Chron. 34: 1–7. What is the only story of the childhood of Jesus? Luke 2: 41–52. What is recorded of young Timothy? 2 Tim. 1: 1–13. How did Jesus speak of children? Matt. 18: 1–6; 13–15. Give illustrations of child piety. What are the advantages of serving Christ early?

Picture the scenes. 1. The child Samuel, girded with a linen ephod, ministering in the tabernacle. 2. Night; the lamp of the Lord burning; Samuel asleep; the mysterious voice, his natural mistake.

II. Heard the Word of Jehovah. What is meant by "the word of the Lord being precious in those days?" To whom would we naturally expect Jehovah to send his word? Why did he not send it to the high priest? To whom did he send it? See Matt. 11: 25, 26. What terrible announcement did Jehovah make to Samuel? What sins had Eli's sons committed? How had Eli sinned? What ought he to have done?

III. Delivered the Word of Jehovah. Bring out the modesty and faithfulness of Samuel, Eli's submission, etc.

Special Suggestions to Teachers of Younger Classes:

1. This lesson, so familiar, is yet ever fresh. No better opportunity will ever be yours of impressing your scholars with the duty and blessedness of knowing, trusting, loving and following Jesus in early life. 2. When the matter of early following Jesus comes up, explain carefully just who Jesus is, what he has done for us and what it is to trust in him.

Questions to be Assigned in Writing for September 30th:

1. What are the names of the *persons* of whom we have studied this Quarter?

2. Mention the *places* referred to in this Quarter's lesson.

3. Commit the titles and golden texts.

4. Draw a map of Palestine in the time of the Judges.

5. What are some of the duties taught in this Quarter's lessons?

Be minute and particular in giving out the Review lesson of next Sabbath. Encourage your scholars in every way to prepare for it. Appoint one scholar who shall point out on the map, next Sabbath, before the whole school, the location of the twelve tribes in Palestine.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Lesson Thought.—"He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

The Lesson Introduced.—How many scholars in this class have ears? How many ears have each? What are they for? A few minutes' talk on the wonder of the organ—its power, its strength, its delicate workmanship—will be found helpful in teaching the children to *think*, provided the teacher is so thoroughly prepared that she can use simple language.

Can all people hear? (Call out the thought that some are deaf—a great affliction.) Do all hear who can? Put up your hands and shut those little doors which lead to the ears, then see if you can hear what I say.

Once I saw a boy run around the corner as soon as he saw his mother come to the door. He said afterwards that he was afraid she was going to call him in the house, and he did not want to hear, so he ran. Did not he stop his ears? From this thought turn to the one that we hear with our *hearts* what conscience says,

what God's Spirit says, etc. How can we shut the doors of our hearts? A child sent to his room to think about some fault and make resolves to overcome it, drew out his box of building blocks and went directly to work, thinking about them all the time. Did not he shut the door of his heart to the thoughts that he ought to have had?

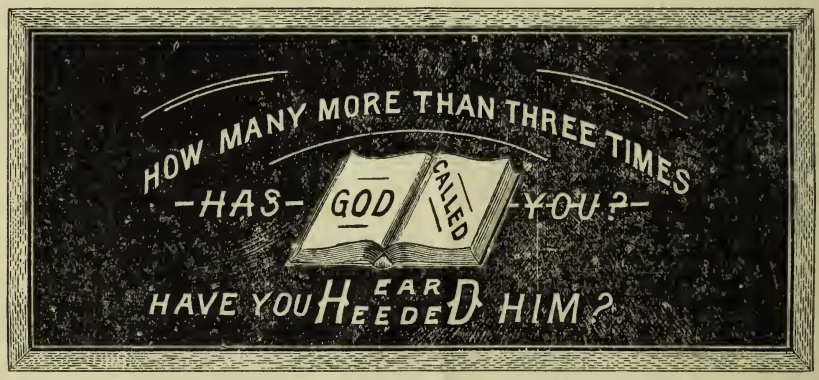
The Lesson Facts.—With these your class is almost certain to be familiar. Let them give the story to you, or to their division teachers, in answer to questions. Samuel shut neither the doors of his ears nor the doors of his heart. In fact, true hearing involves obedience to the truth heard, and this sort of hearing Samuel did.

PERSONAL APPLICATION.—How many times did God speak to Samuel? (Let marks be made on the board for the number.) How many times has God spoken to you? This will involve a discussion as to how God speaks. Help the children to tell. What does he want of them? The answer, variously expressed, is embodied in one word—OBEDIENCE. What does he do to lead them to obey him? Illustrate by the mother. She says: "If you will do so and so I will give you, etc." God promises rewards—great ones. The mother says: "If you disobey this command I shall punish." God punishes in many ways. The mother reminds her child daily, hourly; so does God. See, here is a flower, bright, sweet-scented. God says, Little child, you must wear a bright, sweet face, and your actions must be sweet, like the flowers. Do you hear his voice in the flowers? Here is an apple, good to the taste, useful, sound. God said that your fruit, that is, your acts, must be helpful to all whom you see. Do you hear his voice in the fruit? Here is a little lighted candle. If it were night, and the light of the sun were gone away, we could find our way through the room by this light. God said you must be lights in the world, showing the people the way to heaven. Do you hear his voice in the sunshine, the moonlight, the starlight, the lamplight? Or do you, to all these voices, shut the doors of your hearts and try to think of other things?

The above is simply a suggestion of an almost exhaustless method of illustrating the lesson.

The thought to impress, by whatever means the teacher may select, is undoubtedly the question: Can I honestly say to God, "Speak Lord, for thy servant *heareth?*"

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



SUGGESTIONS.—Draw an open book, representing the Bible. God is speaking to us in his word. Print, as in diagram, "How many more than three times has God called you?" Every time we read it God calls to obedience and calls to service. Print, "Have you heard him? Have you heeded him?" God still speaks in his house, by his word. Calls children, calls early; knows our names. Samuel's service was lowly and useful, his obedience was prompt and was rewarded. The lesson may be impressed as follows, in addition to the above: Samuel, ministered in God's house, was called in God's house, answered and was enlightened in God's house. Placed in the form below it may be fixed in the mind more effectively:

SAMUEL
CALLED
ANSWERED
MINISTERED
ENLIGHTENED

And as the result of his obedience and service, "Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground." v. 19. What an incentive to service in early life should this be to all our children!

Lesson XIV. **QUARTERLY REVIEW.** Sept. 30th, 1883.

[*From the Westminster Quarterly.*]

HOME STUDIES.

M. Josh. 1 : 1–9 ; 3 : 5–17. Th. Josh. 24 : 12–27 ; Judg. 2 : 6–16.
T. Josh. 5 : 10–6 : 5 ; 7 : 10–26. F. Judg. 7 : 1–8 ; 16 : 21–31.
W. Josh. 8 : 30–35 ; 20 : 1–9. S. Ruth 1 : 14–27.
S. 1 Sam. 1 : 21–28 ; 3 : 1–19.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you."—Josh. 23 : 14.

REVIEW CHART.

Lesson Passages.	*Title.*	*Topic.*	*Golden Text.*	*Lesson Plan.*
1.—Josh. 1 : 1–9.	Joshua Successor to Moses.	God's Words about Success.	Be strong in the Lord— Eph. 6 : 10	1. The leader commissioned. 2. The leader encouraged. 3. The leader counseled.
2.—3 : 5–17.	Passing over Jordan.	Entering the Promised Land.	When thou passest through—Isa. 43 : 2	1. Preparation made. 2. Instruction given. 3. The river crossed.
3.—5 : 10–15 ; 6 : 1–5.	The Plains of Jericho.	Victory by Faith.	By faith the walls of— Heb. 11 : 30	1. In the Promised Land. 2. The captain of the Lord's host. 3. The captain's orders.
4.—7 : 10–26.	Israel Defeated at Ai.	The Certain Consequences of Sin.	Be sure your sin will— Num. 32 : 23	1. The cause of defeat. 2. The sinner sought out. 3. The curse removed.
5.—8 : 30–35.	The Reading of the Law.	The Renewal of the Covenant.	I have set before you— Deut. 30 : 19	1. The altar built. 2. The law written. 3. The blessing and the cursing.
6.—20 : 1–9.	The Cities of Refuge.	Christ the Sinner's Refuge.	Who have fled for refuge—Heb. 6 : 18	1. The law of refuge. 2. The cities appointed.
7.—24 : 14–29.	The Last Days of Joshua.	The Great Decision.	Choose you this day— Josh. 24 : 15	1. The choice offered. 2. The decision made. 3 The covenant renewed.
8.—Judg. 2 : 6–16.	Israel Forsaking God.	The Covenant Broken.	And they forsook the— Judg. 2 : 12	1. The influence of holy teaching 2. The effect of bad association. 3. The evil of departing from God.
9.—7 : 1–8.	Gideon's Army.	The Lord our Defence & Deliverer.	The sword of the Lord— Judg. 7 : 20	1. The army too large. 2. The army reduced. 3. The army ready.
10.—16 : 21–31.	The Death of Samson.	Samson's Greatest Victory.	The God of Israel is he— Ps. 68 : 35	1. Samson's humiliation. 2. His victory in death.
11.—Ruth 1 : 14–22.	Ruth and Naomi.	The Good Part Chosen.	Thy people shall be my—Ruth 1 : 16	1. Ruth's friendship. 2. Naomi's return.
12.—1 Sam. 1 : 21–28.	A Praying Mother.	A Picture of a Godly Mother.	I have lent him to the— 1 Sam. 1 : 28	1. Training her child at home. 2. Dedicating him to the Lord.
13.—3 : 1–19.	The Child Samuel.	A Picture of a Godly Child.	Speak, Lord, for thy— 1 Sam. 3 : 9	1. The child called. 2. The message given. 3. The message delivered.
14.—Josh 1–1 Sam. 3 : 19.	Review.	Joshua and the Judges.	Not one thing hath— Josh. 23 : 14	

SUGGESTIONS FOR REVIEW.

The thirteen lessons of this Quarter are taken from the books of Joshua, Judges, Ruth and 1 Samuel, and they cover a period of nearly three hundred years, from B. C. 1451 to B. C. 1160. They contain the history of the Israelites under the government of Joshua, and during the time of the judges.

The book of Joshua relates the history of the conquest of Canaan under Joshua, the division of the conquered land among the tribes of Israel, and the provision for their settlement in that country as a nation with God for their king. The book of Judges continues this history from the death of Joshua to the time of Eli, under the administration of thirteen judges, whom God raised up in special emergencies for the restoring of social order and delivering from foreign oppression. The book of Ruth is a history of domestic virtue and happiness. It teaches the sure reward of filial devotion and trust in God, and the overruling providence of God in the private affairs of an humble family, as well as in the palaces of princes and the public events of nations. The books of Samuel commence with the judgeships of Eli and Samuel, and give an account of the people of Israel to near the end of the government of king David.

Lesson I. gives the command of God to Joshua, who had been appointed to succeed Moses as leader of the Israelites. God directs him to cross the Jordan, and promises to guide him as he had guided Moses, and further declares that he will neither fail nor forsake him.

Lesson II. tells of the rules of Joshua in regard to the passage through the Jordan. Then follows the passage itself of the people through the river. Before the events contained in this lesson, spies had been sent to view the land, and on their return the camp of Israel was broken up and moved towards the river.

Lesson III. tells of their encampment at Gilgal on entering the promised land, and of their renewing the rite of circumcision, which had been so long neglected, and of their keeping the

Passover, at which time the manna ceased. Then follows the preparations for the attack upon Jericho.

Lesson IV., which follows the capture of Jericho and the defeat of *Ai*, tells of Joshua's humble prayer, for his defeat at the latter place, and God's answer, showing that the reason of the defeat was the sin of Achan. It also tells of the detection and punishment of Achan.

Lesson V., following Joshua's stratagem against the city of Ai; the apparent flight of the Israelites and their victory, the capture of the city and its destruction, tells how Joshua went to Shechem, about twenty miles from Ai, and there ratified the law with solemn ceremonies on Mounts Ebal and Gerizim, according to the command of Moses.

Lesson VI., following the conquest, survey and division of the land—which occupied a period of not less than seven years—tells of God's command to Joshua to appoint six cities of refuge, and of the fulfillment of this command by Joshua.

Lesson VII. refers to the second parting address of Joshua to the people, and tells of the renewal of the covenant with them and of his death at the age of one hundred and ten years.

Lesson VIII., the first lesson in the book of Judges, begins with an account of the last days of Joshua, and then tells how after his death the Israelites soon forgot their covenant, forsook the Lord and fell into idolatry. In punishment, the Lord permitted them to fall under the power of their enemies, and on their repentance raised up judges for their deliverance.

Lesson IX. tells of the servitude of the Israelites—how they were oppressed by the Midianites, and how Gideon was raised to be their judge. Previously they had been in servitude to Mesopotamia, and were relieved by Othniel as judge; to Moab, and were relieved by Elud and Shamgar as judges; and to Jabin, and were relieved by Deborah and Barak.

Lesson X. tells of the servitude of the Israelites to the Philistines and of their relief by Samson, the Nazarite judge—how Samson himself was punished, and how he met his death for the defence of the Israelites. The history of Israel under the judges was a history of sin, ever repeating itself, and of divine grace constantly devising new means of deliverance.

Lesson XI. gives an account of Ruth the Moabitess, who became the ancestress of David, and so of "David's greater Son"—Christ. It tells of her unselfishness, brave love and unshaken trustfulness.

Lesson XII. tells of the birth of Samuel, the first prophet, in answer to prayer, and of his dedication and restoration to the Lord. It tells of the pious mother, who prayed for a child, and of the vow that his life should be given to God's service, and also how that vow was solemnly fulfilled.

Lesson XIII., following Hannah's song of thankfulness for the birth of Samuel, his ministry before Eli and the prophecy of God's punishment of Eli's house, gives an account of Samuel's *call* by the Lord to be a prophet, and the solemn and startling revelation God made to him of the destruction of Eli's house, which prophecy Samuel told Eli.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

[*From the Westminster Quarterly*]

Introductory.—From what books are the lessons of this Quarter taken? What do they contain? How long a period of time do they cover? What is the golden text of this lesson?

Lesson I. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? What did God command Joshua to do? What did the Lord promise? What assurance did he give Joshua? How did the Lord counsel him? What reason for courage did the Lord give him?

II. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? What had Joshua said to the people? What did the Lord promise Joshua? How did the Lord thus honor Joshua? Who first went into the river? What then took place?

III. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? What two events took place at Gilgal? Whom did Joshua meet near Jericho? What did he command Joshua to do for six days? What was Joshua to do on the seventh day? What took place on the seventh day?

IV. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? Why were the Israelites defeated at Ai? How was the guilty man discovered? What did Joshua say to Achan? How did Achan confess his sin? How was Achan punished?

V. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? What did Joshua now do? What were offered on the altar? What did Joshua set up besides the altar? How were the people divided? What did Joshua read?

VI. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? Why were the cities of refuge appointed? Why did he need protection? What had the man-slayer to do? How long had he to remain in the refuge? What refuge is appointed for us?

VII. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? What did Joshua urge the people to do? What choice did he offer them? What was his own choice? What was the decision of the people? In what words was the covenant renewed?

VIII. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? How long did the Israelites keep the covenant they renewed at Shechem? What did the next generation do? What was the consequence of their sin? How did the Lord punish them? What did he do when they repented?

IX. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? What did the Lord say to Gideon of his army? What proclamation did he command him to make? How many remained? To how many was the number further reduced? What did the Lord promise?

X. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? On what did Samson's great strength depend? What did the Philistines do with him when he had broken his vow? For what purpose did they bring him out of prison? For what did Samson pray? How was his prayer answered?

XI. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? What did Naomi say to Ruth after Orpah left them? What did Ruth reply? To what place did they come? How did their coming affect the people? What was her reply?

XII. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? What did Hannah promise if the Lord would give her a son? What did she call her son's name? What did she do when he was weaned? What did she say to Eli? How did she dedicate him to the Lord?

XIII. What is the title of this lesson? Topic? Golden text? Lesson plan? What did the child Samuel do? What happened to him one night? What did Eli direct him to say the fourth time? What did the Lord then say to Samuel? What did Eli say when Samuel delivered the message?

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

To Pastors and Superintendents.

A meeting of all the teachers should be convened to discuss the teachings of the past Quarter's lessons and to prepare for the Review. Let the following plan be examined. If it is approved let such selections be made from it as are adapted to the particular school. Every teacher should understand just what he is to do, and should prepare himself to drill his class in preparation for the general review of the superintendent. If any teacher is absent from this preliminary meeting measures should be taken to acquaint him with the plan agreed upon for next Sabbath.

Plan of Review.

1. After ten minutes spent in the opening worship give the teachers twenty-five minutes to review these points, after which let the superintendent take thirty minutes in conducting his general review. 2. The superintendent may vary the exercise by calling for answers from male classes alone, or from female, or from one class—being careful that the whole school hears and understands these answers.

I. Have all the scholars repeat in concert the titles and golden texts.

1. J. S. to M.	8. I. F. G.
2. P. O. J.	9. G's A.
3. T. P. of J.	10. T. D. of S.
4. I. D. at A.	11. R. and N.
5. T. R. of the L.	12. A. P. M.
6. T. C. of R.	13. T. C. S.
7. T. L. D. of J.	

1. Be strong	8. And they
2. When thou	9. The sword
3. By faith	10. The God of
4. Be sure	11. Thy people
5. I have set	12. I have lent
6. Who have	13. Speak, Lord,
7. Choose you.	

II. Call for the events which occurred at the following places mentioned in the last thirteen lessons. As each place is mentioned let some scholar point it out on the map, and the school or a class give the events:

1. The Jordan. 2. Mounts Ebal and Gerizim. 3. Shiloh. 4. Shechem. 5. Gaza. 6. The Well of Harod. 7. Bethlehem. 8. Gilgal.

III. What incidents in the history of the following persons:

1. Achan. 2. Samson. 3. Gideon. 4. Hannah. 5. Joshua. 6. Ruth and Naomi. 7. Eli. 8. Rahab. 9. Samuel.

IV. In which lesson of the Quarter are these great truths brought out?

1. The power of faith. 2. The retributive justice of God. 3. Compensations of Providence. 4. The fickleness of men. 5. God's sovereignty. 6. God—the hearer of prayer. 7. Protection of the innocent. 8. The doom of sin.

V. In which lesson are we taught the duty?

1. Of resolutely deciding for God. 2. Meditating on God's word. 3. Flying to Christ for Refuge. 4. Avoiding worldly intimacies. 5. Shunning covetousness. 6. Taking our trials to God. 7. Performing our vows. 8. Serving

Christ while we are young. 9. Of forsaking all for Christ.

VI. What instruction has any lesson of this Quarter for—

1. Daughters. 2. Mothers. 3. Fathers. 4. For those hesitating between God and the world. 5. For little children. 6. For Christians who lose the world's friendships. 7. For sons of good men. 8. For athletes. 9. For leaders of the Church. 10. For convicted sinners. 11. For those who have promised to serve Christ.

VII. SPECIAL HINTS.

1. Do not be satisfied with getting answers. Impress on every heart some practical truths.

2. The teachers of younger scholars should impress especially the two lessons concerning Samuel on their classes. The story is intensely interesting to all children and an opportunity is afforded of illustrating very important lessons.

Questions for Sabbath, October 9th:

1. What kind of a man was Eli?

2. Why was God's chastisements upon him so severe?

3. What will be the probable end of wayward youth?

4. What are some Oriental signs of mourning?

5. Why need we not fear for God's cause if we do our duty?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

Following the plan of review indicated above the accompanying outline is suggested for the blackboard summing up of the work in the class:

THE PROMISE OF
PUNISHMENT OF SUCCESS
POWER OF SIN
SERVICE.

The lessons in the lives of Joshua, Achan, Gideon, Samson, Ruth, Hannah and Samuel will be practically presented, it is believed, in the use of this condensed outline. Let us review our own lives, too, during the Quarter in which God has permitted us to study this history. How great has been our privileges, how wonderful has been his grace.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Dear friends: I find this the hardest part of my work with you, simply for the reason that I do not know in what ways you have taught the lesson, and therefore cannot materially help you in preparing for review. The most I can do is to give general suggestions, which may, or may not, be suited to your individual needs.

If you have used the blackboard extensively, and can have reproduced on paper the illustrations used, I have found it a pleasant way to hold up one picture, and wait for hands to be raised belonging to those who have something to say about that lesson. If you select one central thought and one application, and form your questions so as to draw those points out, you can work rapidly in this way. When I review by this method I try to select one thought which will fit all the lessons, and shape my questions with a view to impressing it. For instance, I might for this Quarter take the thought:

"A PROMISE-KEEPING GOD."

Outline on the board an arch for each lesson. Then emphasize the following thoughts:

No. 1.—God gave his people a new leader, Joshua, *as he had promised.*

No. 2.—He led them through the Jordan, *as he had promised.*

No. 3.—He gave them Jericho, *as he had promised.*

No. 4.—He punished them for sin, *as he had promised.*

No. 5.—He set before them life and death, *as he had promised.*

No. 6.—He gave them cities of refuge, *as he had promised.*

No. 7.—He gave them a chance to choose whom they would serve, *as he had promised.*

No. 8.—His "hand" was against them, because of their sin, *as he had promised.*

No. 9.—He raised up one who led them to victory, *as he had promised.*

No. 10.—He gave great strength to Samson, *as he had promised.*

No. 11.—He led his servants Naomi and Ruth into green pastures, *as he had promised.*

No. 12.—He gave Hannah a child, *as he had promised.*

No. 13.—He accepted Samuel for a prophet, *as he had promised.*

It is an unbroken succession of arches.

"No word he hath spoken,
Was ever yet broken."

What is the inevitable conclusion but that he will be true to all that he has said about your scholars? And he has said that he will keep them safe for ever if they put their trust in him.

REVIEW EXERCISE.*

Signal for silence.

Reading of the First Psalm.

Superintendent.—Blessed *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

School.—But his delight *is* in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

Supt.—And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

Teachers.—The ungodly *are* not so: but *are* like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

Supt.—Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

All.—For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Singing.—Hymn No. 335 (Pres. Hymnal):

My faith looks up to thee,
Thou Lamb of Calvary,
Saviour divine!
Now hear me while I pray,
Take all my guilt away,
Oh, let me, from this day,
Be wholly thine.

May thy rich grace impart
Strength to my fainting heart,
My zeal inspire;
As thou hast died for me,
Oh, may my love to thee
Pure, warm and changeless be,
A living fire.

Prayer.—Closing with the Lord's Prayer.

Recitation of the Ten Commandments.

Singing.—Hymn No. 515:

Stand up, my soul! shake off thy fears,
And gird the gospel armor on,
March to the gates of endless joy,
Where Jesus thy great Captain's gone.

Hell and thy sins resist thy course,
But hell and sin are vanquished foes;
Thy Jesus nailed them to the cross,
And sung the triumph when he rose.

Then let my soul march boldly on,
Press forward to the heavenly gate;
There peace and joy eternal reign,
And glittering robes for conquerors wait.

Notices and collections for the day.

REVIEW QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

LESSON I. **Superintendent.**—What did the Lord say to Joshua?

School.—Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them. 1 · 2

Supt.—What encouraging promise did the Lord give Joshua?

School.—As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. 1: 5.

II. **Supt.**—What command was given to the priests who bore the ark?

School.—When ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, ye shall stand still in Jordan. 3: 8.

Supt.—What did the Israelites do?

School.—All the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan. 3: 17.

III. **Supt.**—What feast did the Israelites keep after crossing Jordan?

School.—The children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho. 5: 10.

Supt.—What took place after Joshua had marched round Jericho for seven days, as the Lord commanded?

School.—The wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city. 6: 20.

IV. **Supt.**—What was the reason of the defeat of the Israelites at Ai?

School.—There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel, thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing from among you. 7: 13.

Supt.—How was Achan punished?

School.—All Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones. 7. 25.

Singing.—Hymn 180:

Jesus, my Strength, my Hope!
On thee I cast my care,
With humble confidence look up,
And know thou hearest my prayer;
Give me on thee to wait,
Till I can all things do;
On thee—almighty to create,
Almighty to renew.

I rest upon thy word;
The promise is for me;
My succor and salvation, Lord,
Shall surely come from thee;
But let me still abide,
Nor from my hope remove,
Till thou my patient spirit guide
Into thy perfect love.

V. **Supt.**—What did Joshua do when he had placed the tribes of Israel on Mounts Ebal and Gerizim?

School.—He read all the words of the law, the blessings and the cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law. 8: 34.

VI. **Supt.**—For what purpose were the cities of refuge appointed?

School.—That whosoever killed any person at unawares might flee thither, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood until he stood before the congregation. 20 · 9.

VII. **Supt.**—What choice did Joshua propose to the people?

* Extra copies of this Review Exercise will be furnished at 50 cents per hundred, on application to the Board.

School.—If it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve. 24: 15.

Supt.—What was the response of the people?

School.—The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey. 24: 24.

VIII. **Supt.**—What did the Israelites do after the death of Joshua and the men of that generation?

School.—They forsook the Lord, and served Baal. Judg. 2: 13.

Supt.—How were they punished?

School.—The anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers. Judg. 2: 14.

Singing.—Hymn 500:

Oft in danger, oft in woe,
Onward, Christian, onward go!
Fight the fight, maintain the strife,
Strengthened with the bread of life.

Onward, Christian, onward go!
Join the war, and face the foe;
Will you flee in danger's hour?
Know ye not your Captain's power?

Let your drooping hearts be glad;
March, in heavenly armor clad;
Fight, nor think the battle long,
Victory soon shall tune your song.

Onward, then, to battle move!
More than conquerors you shall prove;
Though opposed by many a foe,
Christian soldiers, onward go!

IX. **Supt.**—What did the Lord promise Gideon?

School.—By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand. Judg. 7: 7.

X. **Supt.**—How did Samson die?

School.—He took hold on the two middle pillars, . . . and he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon all the people that were therein. Judg. 16; 29, 30.

Singing.—Hymn 876:

No, not despairingly
Come I to thee;
No, not distrustingly
Bend I the knee;
Sin hath gone over me,
Yet is this still my plea,
Jesus hath died.

Lord, I confess to thee
Sadly my sin;
All I am tell I thee,
All I have been;
Purge thou my sin away,
Wash thou my soul this day;
Lord! make me clean.

Faithful and just art thou,
Forgiving all;
Loving and kind art thou
When poor ones call;
Lord! let the cleansing blood,
Blood of the Lamb of God,
Pass o'er my soul!

XI. **Supt.**—What was Ruth's beautiful reply to Naomi?

School.—Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Ruth 1: 16.

XII. **Supt.**—What did Hannah say to Eli about Samuel?

School.—For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him: therefore also I have lent him to the Lord. 1 Sam. 1: 27, 28.

XIII. **Supt.**—What did Samuel say when the Lord called him?

School.—Speak; for thy servant heareth. 1 Sam. 3: 10.

Supt.—What did Eli say when he heard the Lord's message?

School.—It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good. 1 Sam. 3: 18.

Singing.—Hymn 312:

My Jesus! as thou wilt!
Oh, may thy will be mine;
Into thy hand of love
I would my all resign;
Through sorrow or through joy
Conduct me as thine own,
And help me still to say,
My Lord, thy will be done.

My Jesus! as thou wilt!
Though seen through many a tear,
Let not my star of hope
Grow dim or disappear;
Since thou on earth hast wept
And sorrowed oft alone,
If I must weep with thee,
My Lord, thy will be done.

Review drill on titles, golden texts, Catechism, with whatever further exercises may be desired.

Singing.—Hymn 86:

Lord! dismiss us with thy blessing,
Fill our hearts with joy and peace:
Let us each, thy love possessing,
Triumph in redeeming grace;
Oh, refresh us,
Traveling through this wilderness.

Thanks we give and adoration,
For thy gospel's joyful sound;
May the fruits of thy salvation
In our hearts and lives abound;
May thy presence
With us, evermore, be found.

Secretary's and Librarian's Distribution.

CLOSING SENTENCES.

PSALM 121.

Supt.—I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.

Boys.—My help *cometh* from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.

Girls.—He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.

Teachers.—Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

Supt.—The Lord *is* thy keeper: the Lord *is* thy shade upon thy right hand.

School.—The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.

Supt.—The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.

All.—The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.

THE WESTMINSTER TEACHER.

VOL. XI. OCTOBER, 1883. NO. 10.

—The "Westminster Question Book," for 1884, is ready, and is a complete manual of the lessons.

—With January the Board will add a new "lesson help" in the shape of a "Question Leaf," on which the scholar will write the answers to a limited number of questions, returning the paper to the teacher.

—One of the most interesting problems of the age in missionary education is being worked out at Hampton. Mr. Ogden, who writes of this institution on another page, has been closely connected with the work from the beginning, and knows whereof he speaks.

—Every adult scholar would be profited by the use of the WESTMINSTER TEACHER in the study of the lesson. Every mother who helps her little ones at home to learn the lesson would find it invaluable. Send name and address on a postal card and we will send a specimen number.

—A beautiful certificate has been prepared by one of our Presbyterial Sabbath-school committees, to be given to any scholar who will recite the "memory verses" of the International Lessons for a whole year. It is adapted for use in any Presbytery, and is for sale by the Board of Publication; price, 10 cents.

—A new catalogue of the library of the First Church Sabbath-school, Philadelphia, is a model. It contains the titles of all the books in the library, alphabetically arranged, with the library number, author's name, number of pages and illustrations, and then in two or three words a description of the book.

—It is not enough for a teacher to teach the lessons well, Sabbath after Sabbath; there is a pastoral duty that must never be forgotten. Interest in a class is not enough; there must be an individual love and care for the pupils. The teacher should know each pupil intimately and should be the pupil's close, personal friend, interesting himself in his life and being ready to help him at every point. A friend is better ofttimes than a score of lessons.

—"Half-Hours," for 1884, is announced in our advertising columns. To those who have not seen the volume for the present year we may say that it contains forty-eight brief, condensed and practical sermons on the International Lessons for the year, prepared by twenty-four prominent Presbyterian clergymen. The book has been popular this year, and next year's volume is to be better than the present, as the oftener we do a thing the better we can do it.

—Wake up the teachers' meeting if it has for any reason, exhaustion or otherwise, fallen asleep. Get a pledge from every teacher to attend. Meet and begin on the minute. Have one or two short, earnest prayers. Let the leader come with thorough preparation, to lead not to lecture. Draw out everything that any teacher present has to suggest. Clear up every difficulty. Get suggestions about applying the lesson. Keep the meeting at a glow to the close. Stop on the minute.

—The writer of the lesson notes desires to return thanks to the very many members of the great Westminster Bible Class who have sent their messages of recognition. The next best thing to looking into a person's face is to hear his voice, or to open a letter and read the words he has written. Up out of this great unseen company a large number have made their response in such a way as to leave no doubt whatever of their identity and of their interest. Many of them have been pleased to speak very cheering words, not keeping all the flowers till the writer is dead, but sending some little sprays and blossoms in advance to cheer him while he is alive to enjoy the fragrance.

—It is well for every Christian frequently to deal closely and honestly with his own soul in the presence of God. It is not enough that his heart was right a year ago, and that he was then living honestly and in holy consecration. How do matters stand now between him and God? Are the close relations of former days maintained? Has no secret sin crept in? Is there no letting down of the bars between his consecrated life and the world? Has there been no grieving of the Spirit by any failure in loyalty? Has there been no slackening of zeal in service or in Christian fidelities? Every Christian, especially every active Christian

worker, should take time now and then for very honest dealing in such lines of self-testing as these questions indicate. It is very easy to decline from a high state of spirituality, and even the least declension brings loss of power and the shattering of the soul's peace.

Applying the Lesson.

THE application of the truth is most important. The object of Bible study is not merely to become familiar with historical or biographical facts or with ethical principles. When we study astronomy or botany or history, we do not expect that the facts we thus learn will have any particular influence upon our character, unless it be in the way of mental growth and culture; or that they will in any way modify our actions in a moral sense. It is not the object of these sciences to teach us how to live, or to make us wise unto salvation. When we study the Bible, however, it is expected that its facts and teachings will not lie as dead treasures of knowledge in our minds, but will make their impression upon our lives, will stamp their own mark upon our character and will modify our conduct. Bible study that stops short of these results fails of its final intention. We are to seek in the inspired Scriptures to learn what the will of God is, that we may obey it and yield our lives to it. We are to take the holy word into our hearts that our lives, at their very fountains, may by it be purified and sweetened. There is no doctrine or teaching or fact of the Bible, that, properly understood, has not some bearing upon practical life. There is no biographical sketch or fragment that does not show us acts or elements of character in others, either to be imitated or to be avoided. "All Scripture . . . is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness (right living), that the man of God may be perfect."

It is not the food one eats, but that which he assimilates, that really avails to nourish his life and build up the tissues of his body. It is not the spiritual knowledge one receives, but that which he transforms into conduct and character that truly benefits him. One person hears the beatitude, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." He remembers the words, but his heart continues impure as ever. The truth has no influence upon his life. Another catches the divine saying, and at once it begins to work within him a process of purifying. "Be kindly affectioned one to another." One hears this counsel, and thinks of it as a fine sentiment, as he would of some sentence from Cicero's essay on Friendship, without trying to apply it in his own life. Another is also charmed with it, but his bearing becomes more gentle, his words are touched with a new tenderness, and he begins to do many thoughtful things in his intercourse with others which he had failed to do before. These illustrations show the two different ways of receiving the truths of the Bible. The right way is that in which these truths are assimilated and absorbed into the life. A dry, bare, briery rod in your garden in the early spring days receives the sunshine and the rain, and in a few weeks stands covered with green leaves and lovely roses. So the life, in itself dead in sins and without beauty, which receives the word of God in faith and sincerity, must put on the graces of the Spirit and grow into the likeness of Christ.

It follows, therefore, that Scripture knowledge should be applied to life; and that those who teach the Bible to others should not be content merely to have all the facts of any particular passage clearly understood. This is important, but it is not adequate as an aim in teaching. These facts have an office far beyond that of merely imparting knowledge. They suggest certain duties to be performed, or they hold up before us certain traits of character, perhaps faults or blemishes with their warning, perhaps beauties wooing us to imitation; or they exhibit certain actions, good or evil, to be approved and followed, or disapproved and shunned. It is the teacher's part to lead the pupil to see these practical bearings of the divine truth, so to explain the passage under consideration that it will speak to his heart and conscience, and bring all its solemn weight to bear upon the influencing of his conduct and life.

To do this it is not necessary that the entire lesson time should be occupied in moralizing. The facts in the passage should be brought out clearly and intelligibly. Some people are afraid to teach any geography, history or biography in their lessons, regarding these subjects as unspiritual and fearing that they will mar the solemn impressiveness of the Scripture. Hence they leap at once into hortatory generalizations. Ofttimes they put into the text meanings and applications that the Spirit never lodged there. They regard their spiritualizings as better than God's own word. But the true way is first to teach the facts and then from this strong and firm basis draw the practical suggestions and inferences which are fairly in the passage. The facts will then be as nails to fasten the spiritual lessons upon the memory and heart.

In applying the lesson the teacher must also use discrimination. He must study his class as

well as his lesson. A great deal of earnest teaching is almost entirely lost from failure to do this. If the members of a class are all converted, the teacher need not shape his lessons into persuasions and appeals to the impenitent; rather let him present those phases of the truth which will help to build up Christian character and stimulate to Christian earnestness and activity. If the class consists of those who have not yielded themselves to Christ and who are old enough to make this voluntary surrender, the lessons should be wisely and prayerfully applied to the producing of this result. Every teacher who knows the week-day life of his pupils is aware of some particular point in each young life where there is weakness, or peculiar temptation, or where the character is faulty or the habit bad. He must watch for the truths or suggestions or warnings to meet these points.

Simply to study a lesson, gathering all possible practical thoughts and suggestions and pouring them all out indiscriminately upon a class, regardless of their spiritual needs and conditions, is about as sensible as if a physician were to gather a basketful of medicines, of as many different kinds as he could think of, and carry them about among his patients, measuring out at each bedside a few ounces of the mixture, regardless of the patient's condition. The teacher must seek rightly to divide the word of truth, giving to every one his proper portion.

The Hampton Experiment.

BY ROBERT C. OGDEN.

ON the margin of Hampton Creek, looking out upon Hampton Roads, a short distance inside of Old Point Comfort, at the greatest centre of historic interest on this continent, is being wrought out a great educational experiment. In a narrow sense, it is already a brilliant success, with results amply compensating the outlay of money, sympathy and thought; in a broader sense, it is still an experiment.

The problem is, to determine the value of industrial training as a moral force in elevating degraded peoples. The theory is that races emerging from a past of ignorance and oppression, from barbarism and paganism, need instruction in habits of labor, the common arts, the living habits of Christian civilization, equally with mental training and moral precept. In this experiment technical knowledge is not undervalued, but manual labor has a higher aim, and is needed to vitalize the moral and complete the mental. Creation of character is the end. Christian doctrine, often accepted sincerely, fails in practical life. Mental culture alone produces only vanity and conceit. To the untutored mind that man is greatest who needs to do least, and the expulsion of this notion is the broad basis of all upward movement.

The material at Hampton is negro and Indian. The immediate purpose is the preparation of a class of native instructors for both races of the rank of white district school teachers. The ulterior purpose is the accumulation of a systematic experience, which may be utilized largely for both negro and Indian, and in missionary work struggling with kindred conditions among similar or more unfortunate peoples.

Beside academic and moral training, the industrial features are: For women, domestic work of every sort, sewing and tailoring; for men, farming, wood sawing and working in a steam mill, harness making, tinsmithing, shoemaking, carpentering, tailoring, brick-making, iron working, printing, and various small employments incident to a large institution.

The negro students are expected to earn board and clothing; the Institute gives education. The Indians are mainly supported by the government, but are educated to the same ideas. Thus comes the idea of self-help, self-respect and independence, a deepened sense of the responsibility of living, a race missionary spirit, and the grand notion that all any man or woman may ask of the world, is a chance to rise by hard work.

The results of the Hampton idea appear at Carlisle, at Hampton and elsewhere where the system is known and recognized in its application to the Indian; in a Normal school in Alabama, and in five hundred district schools for colored children in many parts of the South, taught by its graduates. The power of the work to reproduce itself appears in its own workshops and farms—students sometimes becoming instructors—in the constant applications for admission from young men and women sent by graduates, and in the teaching work referred to above.

The reach of this enterprise is broad and deep. Intelligent and devoted missionaries tell us that foreign missions are still an unsolved problem. The Hampton idea holds an important factor in the solution of this problem, and in the great moral revival on behalf of the negro and Indian its place is to supply certain ascertained means whereby that revival shall take practical form. Competing with nothing, it seeks to help all who are striving to bring the ignorant and degraded into the light of Christian civilization.

The demands upon Hampton have grown

with immense rapidity. Every hopeful applicant must be cared for. To provide work, diversify employment, and meet all the growing needs of a success, which by its very growth impoverishes, are the problems confronting the executive officers and trustees. To capitalize industries, and make them self-supporting, to endow the Institute and put it beyond the contingencies of the single life now at its head, are the methods by which these problems may be solved.

To business men its practical methods appeal directly; the poetry of its location touches the patriot deeply; and the Christian finds in it the true missionary heroism. These powers ought to lift the grand experiment to a grander success.

The Bible Correspondence School.

BY THE REV. JAMES A. WORDEN, D.D.

WHAT OUR PRACTICAL WORKERS SAY.

THE Rev. Dr. Eli Corwin, of Racine, Wis., writes: "The plan proposed is a good one for keeping the churches in close contact with the Sabbath-school Secretary and the Publication Board. It will prove of special advantage to teachers remote from the centres of population, where Normal work is not carried forward or where the teacher sees little of convention and institute work, or sees it to disadvantage. But it will be specially serviceable at the South and in the newer States, where the long distances and expensive traveling hinder convention work by making it a costly luxury; and to all it brings advantages by placing the teacher in contact with the best methods of working and with the best authorities consultable. It is in fact a convention, unlimited in its duration and very wide in its range."

Rev. Dr. George P. Hays, formerly President of Washington and Jefferson College, now pastor of the Central Church in Denver, Col., writes: "I very strongly endorse it. There is no doubt of its practicability, but it will involve an immense amount of labor."

Rev. Dr. W. A. Niles writes: "Try it, brother. Keep the pot boiling. If one thing don't succeed try another. 'All things to all men, so as by all means to save some.' The general ignorance of the Bible is deplorable. I wish abundant success to your plan."

Mr. Jas. H. Kellogg, of Troy, writes: "The plan seems simple and feasible, and can at least be tried with very little difficulty, and, in my judgment, is well worth a trial. That there is very great need in our Church for something of the sort I cannot question. With the talent and intelligence of our clergy and laity we should have already a multitude of schools for the training of teachers for our Sunday-schools, but in this we are sadly deficient. This scheme aims partially to supply the lack. There is something undeniably fascinating in the idea of a line of study in which multitudes of persons scattered throughout a great nation, and especially as members of a great religious body, are engaged by correspondence with one common teacher and head."

Prof. Willis J. Beecher, D.D., of Auburn Theological Seminary, writes: "It is desirable and practicable in instances where the local president is interested and competent. If the lessons issued and the working of the plan in general are only just *pretty good*, the school can be made a fair success by persistent drumming; if the lessons and the management are head and shoulders better than anything else of the kind in existence—as they ought to be—that in itself will make the plan attractive."

Rev. Dr. Herrick Johnson "most heartily approves the plan."

Rev. Drs. Howard Crosby and Francis L. Patton give it their cordial endorsement.

It is impossible to quote from all replies received, but they are from such men as Revs. Clement C. Dickey, C. E. Cline, M. D. Kneeland, Frank E. Miller of Easton, Chas. P. Coit, E. P. Whallon, P. H. Brooks, W. C. Rommel, E. S. Miller, Thomas Wright, D. W. Fahs, Rev. Drs. W. M. Blackburn, W. C. Cattell, President of Lafayette College; W. C. Roberts, C. B. Ramsdell, W. Y. Brown, T. S. Hamlin, A. W. Sproull, Samuel Dunham, E. C. Haskell, J. F. Riggs, H. A. Ketchum, F. De Hart Bruen, Mr. R. C. Ogden, Mr. Henry Cullen.

How to Get and Hold Your Scholars' Attention.

ATTENTION is an immediate result of interest. But the interest must be active and vigilant, not lagging or dormant. To excite the eager interest of your scholars, is just so far to command their attention. How to excite their eager interest, is, therefore, the same question as, How to command their attention. You cannot compel your scholars' attention on the score of your rights, or of their duty. But you can attract their attention by whatever arouses their curiosity, or otherwise quickens and centres their interest. And here is where your watchful ingenuity is to be taxed, in the effort to gain an indispensable hold on the scholars who are least inclined to give you their attention voluntarily, and least able to control their wills to such an end. An example of a successful struggle to win the at-

tention of unwilling scholars, may illustrate the nature of a teacher's good work in this direction.

A teacher sat down as a stranger, before a class of untrained and fun-loving little roughs, in a city mission-school. The lesson for the day was in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah: that most wonderful of all the Messianic prophecies. But the last thing in the world that had those boys' attention, was the study of prophecy. Their attention was on the living present. They were quick-witted and wide-awake. They had their eyes on each other, on the teacher, and on the classes about them, with some fun-poking at each object of their attention in its turn, in rapid succession; but the lesson—that was something which they hadn't given attention to, and which they didn't propose to look at seriously. One plan after another, to get their attention to that lesson, and to his words about it, was tried by the teacher, without success. Finally, he spoke up quickly, and with a show of real interest in his question: "Boys! did any of you ever see a sheep-shearing?" It was a question at a venture in a city school; but one of the boys answered exultantly: "Yes, I did once, when I was out in the country." That boy was interested. Now, to interest the others. "Boys!" again spoke up the teacher. "Boys! Just listen all of you. Billy, here, is going to tell about a sheep-shearing he saw out in the country." That caught the attention of all, and they bent forward in curious interest. "Now, how was it, Billy?" "Why, one old fellow just caught hold of the sheep, and sat down on his head, and another one cut his wool off." Explicit, graphic, and intelligible that! The narrator had conscious pride in his results of travel. The listeners were attent at the recital of something quite outside of their range of observation. "How much noise did the sheep make about being sheared?" "He didn't bleat a bit?" "Well, now, how does that story agree with what the Bible says about sheep-shearing? Just look at this lesson, all of you, and see what it does say. There, in the last part of the seventh verse: "As a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." Attention was now fairly caught; caught, and attached to a lesson not the best suited to the teaching of untrained scholars in a mission-school.

Methods of catching the attention of all the scholars before beginning to teach, must greatly vary with various classes. A simple call, "Now!" may prove sufficient in a well-trained class. Again, as in the case already described, an unexpected question will do the work, especially if it sets each at competing with, or watching, the others. Thus, for example: "Who can tell me, to begin with, how many different places are named in to-day's lesson?" This question might be followed up by the teacher's showing a little map, and asking, "Now, who can point those places out to me?" "Where is Jerusalem?" "Where is Gaza?" "Well, what have these places to do with to-day's lesson?" Or, again, the question might be, "Which of the lessons in this book of the Bible, so far, has been the most interesting lesson?" And if only one scholar answers, the teacher might follow with "Do you *all* agree to that?" Yet, again, a teacher might catch the attention of all by showing a flower, or a few grains of wheat, or a coin, or a small vase, or something which he was to use as a help in the lesson-teaching, asking, as he showed it, "What is this?" The method employed must be adapted to the peculiar characteristics and needs of the scholars; and the methods, in the same class, will have to be different at different times. The chief thing is to see that interest is excited, and that it is excited in the direction of the proposed lesson-teaching.

Giving attention, when one wants to give it, as well as continuing one's attention when he has given it, is a matter of habit. And there is hardly a habit of mind more difficult of acquiring than just this one. It has been said, indeed, that a man's power of learning, and a man's power of using his knowledge, depend more upon his ability of fixing and continuing his attention on what he sees or hears, or on what he would say or do, than on any other mental habit or quality. Hence it is important for a teacher to watch for any flagging of his scholars' attention while he is teaching, and to be prompt in recalling their attention when it is intermitted; and it is also important to have the scholars recognize their liability to be inattentive, even while they think their attention is fixed. Many a well-disposed scholar supposes he is attentive to the teaching, and his teacher supposes him to be so, when in fact his attention is not on the lesson, nor on its attempted teaching. Any fair test on this point would show the rarity and the difficulty of fixing and continuing attention. Let a teacher ask quickly of one of his scholars, by name, "Am I correct, or not, in what I said just then?" and in how many cases the honest answer would be, "Excuse me; but I wasn't giving close attention to what you said." If a teacher will, therefore, be in the habit of putting questions to one and another of his scholars in just that way, he will either hold his scholars' attention better than the average teacher, or he will show them how inattentive they are in the habit of being.—*S. S. Times.*

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FOURTH QUARTER.

1. Oct. 7.—**Eli's Death.** 1 Sam. 4 : 10–18.
2. Oct. 14.—**Samuel the Judge.** 1 Sam. 7 : 3–17.
3. Oct. 21.—**Asking for a King.** 1 Sam. 8 : 1–10.
4. Oct. 28.—**Saul Chosen King.** 1 Sam. 10 : 17–27.
5. Nov. 4.—Samuel's Farewell Address. 1 Sam. 12 : 13–25.
6. Nov. 11.—Saul Rejected. 1 Sam. 15 : 12–26.
7. Nov. 18.—David Anointed. 1 Sam. 16 : 1–13.
8. Nov. 25.—David and Goliath. 1 Sam. 17 : 38–51.
9. Dec. 2.—David's Enemy—Saul. 1 Sam. 18 : 1–16.
10. Dec. 9.—David's Friend—Jonathan. 1 Sam. 20 : 32–42.
11. Dec. 16.—David Sparing his Enemy. 1 Sam. 24 : 1–17.
12. Dec. 23.—Death of Saul and Jonathan. 1 Sam. 31 : 1–13.
13. Dec. 30.—Review.

Lesson I. **ELI'S DEATH.** Oct. 7th, 1883.

1 Sam. 4 : 10–18. Memorize vs. 17, 18.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"His sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not."—1 Sam. 3 : 13.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 1 Sam. 4 : 1–9...*War with the Philistines.*
T. 1 Sam. 4 : 10–18.*Death of Eli.*
W. Prov. 29 : 1–18 ..*A Child Left to Himself.*
Th. Prov. 13 : 1–24 ..*A Wise Son.*
F. Matt. 10 : 37–42..*He that Loveth Son or Daughter.*
S. Eph. 6 : 1–8.....*Children, Obey!*
S. Ps. 90 : 1–17.....*Consumed by thine Anger.*

TOPIC.

Parental Neglect Punished.

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Disastrous Battle. vs. 10, 11. **2. The Anxious Priest.** vs. 12–15. **3. The Fatal Tidings.** vs. 16–18.

Time.—B. C. 1141. **Place.**—Shiloh.

Catechism.—Q. 38. *What benefits do believers receive from Christ at the resurrection?* A. At the resurrection, believers, being raised up in glory, shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgment, and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoying of God to all eternity.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 540: "How shall the young secure their hearts." Other hymns, 747, 763, 767, 807.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

INTRODUCTORY.—In our last lesson we heard the fearful doom pronounced on Eli and his house. It was not immediately executed, however, but in the present lesson we learn how, about twenty years after its foretelling, it was fulfilled. Samuel was now grown up, being probably above thirty years of age. This was during the time when the people were under the power of the Philistines, struggling but ineffectually as yet to cast off the galling yoke. Samson was probably living at this time, although it is well-nigh impossible to disentangle the chronology of those troublous times so as definitely to locate the several events. The account of this battle with the Philistines is probably given just at this point to show the fulfillment of the prediction against the house of Eli. In the first assault the Israelites were defeated, with the loss of four thousand men. The elders thought that if they had the ark with them in the field it might save them. It was a superstitious faith in the sacred symbol and not a faith in God himself that they had. The ark was borne to the camp, Eli's sons accompanying it.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

10 ¶ And the Phi-lis'tines fought, and Is'-ra-el was smitten, and they fled every man into his tent: and there was a very great slaughter; for there fell of Is'ra-el thirty thousand footmen. [v. 2; Lev. 26 : 17; Deut. 28 : 25; Ps. 78 : 9, 62.]

11 And the ark of God was taken; and the two sons of E'li, Hoph'ni and Phin'e-has, were slain. [1 Sam. 2 : 32.]

12 ¶ And there ran a man of Ben'ja-min out of the army, and came to Shi'loh the same day with his clothes rent, and with earth upon his head. [2 Sam. 1 : 2; Josh. 7 : 6.]

13 And when he came, lo, E'li sat upon a seat by the wayside watching: for his heart trembled for the ark of God. And when the man came into the city and told *it,* all the city cried out. [1 Sam. 1 : 9.]

14 And when E'li heard the noise of the crying, he said, What *meaneth* the noise of

this tumult? And the man came in hastily, and told E'li. [v. 6.]

15 Now E'li was ninety and eight years old; and his eyes were dim, that he could not see. [1 Sam. 3: 2; Ps. 90: 10.]

16 And the man said unto E'li, I *am* he that came out of the army, and I fled to-day out of the army. And he said, What is there done, my son? [2 Sam. 1: 4.]

17 And the messenger answered and said, Is'ra-el is fled before the Phi-lis'tines, and there hath been also a great slaughter among the people, and thy two sons also, Hoph'ni and Phin'e-has, are dead, and the ark of God is taken.

18 And it came to pass, when he made mention of the ark of God, that he fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck brake, and he died: for he was an old man, and heavy. And he had judged Is'ra-el forty years.

10 *The Philistines fought.* When they heard the shouts in the camp of Israel and learned that the ark of the Lord was there, they were afraid. They remembered what the Lord of Israel had done for them in Egypt and in the wilderness. They aroused each other, therefore, to fresh valor, that they might not be defeated and become slaves of the Hebrews. Thus the effect of the bringing of the ark was to excite the Philistines to the most heroic courage. They fought with the desperation of despair. See v. 9. *Israel was smitten.* Defeated, totally routed. *Every man into his tent.* The army was utterly broken up, not merely driven from the field, but dispersed, every man trying to save himself by fleeing away to his home. The slaughter was so terrific that thirty thousand were left dead on the ground. *Footmen.* Either they had but few horsemen in the battle, or the mounted men escaped by swifter flight, leaving the footmen to suffer.

11 *The ark of God.* The ark was a chest made of acacia wood, containing the two tables of stone on which the ten commandments were written, and having for its lid the mercy-seat, made of gold, and overshadowed by the two forms of cherubim. It was the symbol of the divine presence. It was the custom among the Philistines to carry the images of their gods to the battle-field that they might ensure them victory. The Israelites had brought the ark into the battle with the hope that its presence would give them the victory. Instead of this, however, not only was their army defeated with terrible slaughter, but the awful symbol was itself taken. In allowing the ark to be captured the Lord was not defeated, but he would teach the people that the symbol itself had no power to deliver them. He would teach them also that while sin was practiced and permitted in the very tabernacle and by the anointed priests, the divine favor and help could not be given to them. *Hophni and Phinehas were slain.* See chap. 2: 34. The sign given by the "man of God," who first foretold the doom of Eli's house, the pledge that what he said would come to pass, was that both Eli's sons should be slain in one day. The character of these men was very bad. Their sins are described in the former chapters. They showed their covetous greed by taking a larger portion of the peace offerings than belonged to them by right, thus desecrating the sacred sacrifices and robbing those to whom the food properly belonged. Thus they brought the whole service into contempt. But even this was not their worst sin. They brought scandal upon themselves by their impure conduct about the very tabernacle of the Lord. Eli knew of their offences, for the report had spread among all the people; but instead of severely punishing them, he only gently chided them, permitting them to continue in their shameful practices. The penalty would be the taking of the priesthood from Eli's house, which should sink to obscurity and beggary. The slaying of Hophni and Phinehas in one day was to be the sign that this curse in its fullness should fall. Compare Ps. 78: 56–64.

12 *There ran a man.* Bearing tidings of the defeat. There were men who made a business of running with news, acting as messengers. They were swift of foot and could go great distances. They became well known. See 2 Sam. 18: 19–31, where the running of Cushi and Ahimaaz is specially mentioned. Asahel also was celebrated for his fleetness. 2 Sam. 2: 18. These runners always accompanied armies, to be in readiness to carry tidings after any engagement. This Benjamite messenger ran from the field, when the battle had been decided, to carry tidings to Shiloh. *His clothes rent, and with earth upon his head.* These were tokens of grief, and indicated as he drew near enough to be seen the character of the news he bore. There was no need for him to speak at all; these signs told the whole story to the anxious and expectant people. There had been disaster to Israel.

13 *Eli sat . . . by the wayside watching.* He was seated upon his accustomed seat or throne, by the gate that led to the court of the tabernacle. See chap. 1: 9. He seems to have occupied this place as ruler or judge. Here he heard the people's causes and adjudged them. He was the most anxious of all the watchers that day. *His heart trembled for the ark.* He had two sons in the battle, but it was for the ark that he felt the greatest anxiety. He had fore-

bodings of disaster. He may have had doubts as to the propriety of taking the ark to the field, and it may have been against his wish that it had gone. Then he had not forgotten the woe pronounced upon his house because of the wickedness of his sons, and the ark was in their hands. So the old man sat in his blindness that day, listening with intense anxiety for tidings and yet dreading to hear them. *The city cried out.* A loud wail went up from the watching people when they saw the messenger, with torn garments, and heard his message.

14 *When Eli heard the noise.* The people learned the tidings from the runner before Eli did, and it was their wail that he heard. He asked of some about him the cause of the tumult. *The man came in.* Into the city and into Eli's presence.

15 *His eyes were dim.* Set by reason of age. His ears were keen by reason of his blindness, so that he had heard the people's wails in the city, but he could not see the rent garments and dust-covered head of the messenger to know beforehand the character of his tidings.

16 *I fled to-day.* See v. 12. This shows that the battle had taken place on the morning of the same day, and that Eben-ezer was not more than a few hours' run from Shiloh. *My son.* Note the gentleness of the old man as it appears in this paternal address.

17 *The messenger answered.* He tells his tale of sorrow in plain, simple, but terrible words. Each clause announces a new element of disaster. The people were scattered; many (thirty thousand, v. 10) were slain; Eli's two sons were dead, and the ark of God was captured by the Philistines.

18 *When he made mention of the ark.* It was this last announcement that was the most terrible of all to Eli. It was for the ark of God that his heart trembled. v. 13. This does not indicate that he had no grief for his sons, or that disaster to the country did not deeply pain him, but that the calamity that had befallen the ark was to him the most terrible of all the results of that lost field. He was the especial guardian of the ark, and felt therefore responsible for its safe-keeping. This sorrow shows that with all Eli's faults his heart was right. "Such a calamity was appalling in an age which associated the presence of God with the symbol now lost, perhaps for ever. To the ignorant multitude it would doubtless seem as if, in gaining the ark, the Philistines had also secured the presence and aid of Jehovah; for this was the common idea in the ancient world. It was grievous for the tribes to have lost their God; but to find him in the hand of their enemies was a disaster of inexpressible magnitude." And the sorrow of Eli, who as high priest and judge was the custodian of the sacred emblem, was far greater than that of the people. *He fell from off the seat.* Having swooned from the effect of the heavy tidings. *By the side of the gate.* His throne or seat was without a back, and stood with its side against the post of the gate, so that as he sat in it his face would be toward the passage way. Thus he could see all who entered the gate. He fell backward from his seat and died. *He had judged Israel forty years.* So far as we know, the personal life of Eli was pure and blameless. His promotion to the judgeship may have been due to some special, perhaps heroic deliverance, wrought by him in his earlier days. Or he may have received the name and authority of judge from the fact that as high priest he gave counsel to those who came to Shiloh to worship, bringing their matters to him. The latter is more probable, as it was not the custom for the high priests to engage in war, and thus Eli would have no opportunity to accomplish deliverances for the people in battle, as the other judges did. The great flaw in Eli's character was his weakness, growing out of his very gentleness. He was not strong enough to enforce the divine laws even in his own family. He allowed his sons to commit great wickedness, with no other effort at restraining them than a gentle chiding. What floods of sorrow and woe came in at the gates he thus left open it is appalling to think.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

In the practical development of this lesson it may seem difficult to apply its truths to the lives of children and the young. Its great teachings manifestly are for parents. To them it is full of solemn warning. Yet there is much in it also for children. All Bible truth is instructive. Lessons may be lodged in the minds of the young which seem at the time to have no direct application to their lives; but as the years move on there will come a time when the remembrance of these lessons may prove of the greatest value. The sad story of Eli should be very vividly portrayed so that his whole life and character shall stand out in clear relief. It cannot then fail to make a deep and lasting impression on the mind and heart of every one who is caused to see it.

The Philistines fought, and Israel was smitten,

and they fled. What a sad contrast to the battles of the earlier days of the conquest, when the Israelites scarcely needed to fight at all! Then God was with them and fought for them. Here God was not with them, and the result was disastrous defeat. True, they had the sacred ark with them in the army, but even that had no power to give them victory when God himself was absent. The carrying of the ark to the field was an act of superstition; the people's trust was not really in the Lord but in the ark. They remembered that it had led the nation in former days in wonderful achievements; the historical facts they remembered, but they knew nothing of the spiritual meaning of those facts. The ark had led the people over the Jordan, and the river had been stayed by it as by a wall until all were gone through. It had been carried around Jericho, and the walls had fallen down before it. And they supposed that it would do the same for them again. So men in all ages trust in the symbols of religion, and forget that without the divine presence the symbols are nothing. The Bible is a blessed book, and rightly used it is the power of God unto salvation. It is the "sword of the Spirit" in the presence of temptation and the fierce battles of life. Jesus conquered Satan in his conflicts with him by the use of this holy word. "It is written," was his answer, and the tempter fled before him. But the mere repetition of a sentence of Scripture in the hour of danger, as a Romanist would kiss his crucifix, will not give any strength. Or it will do no good to carry a Bible in the pocket. Nor when death is drawing near will it be any safety to have a Bible under the pillow, or even to have the sacraments of the church administered, unless the heart is really in the exercise, and thus God is received in the rite. With the ark in the field Israel was cut to pieces, and the ark itself carried away as spoil of war. One may use the Bible and all the church ordinances and yet be swept down by the power of temptation.

There was a very great slaughter. . . . The ark of God was taken, and the two sons of Eli . . . were slain. It is a very startling thing to remember that all this calamity was the outcome of the sin of a few individuals. We trace it back first to Hophni and Phinehas; their wickedness was no doubt largely the cause for the moral corruption of the nation which led to the terrible disaster of Ebenezer. But we can trace it back still further; Eli had left the gates open, and it was his fault therefore that the floods came in. Yet he was a good man himself. There is not a word against his personal character. His sin was in not restraining others from doing wrong. It is not enough for one to be good at heart, even to love God and serve him and be active in doing good. Every one is responsible for others as well as for himself. Every man should be a sort of moral break-water to restrain the floods of ungodliness and keep them from sweeping at liberty over the world. Eli was a parent, and of course the lesson is for parents especially, that they must so restrain their children that they will become blessings to the world. A father who allows his son to grow up in sin is preparing a curse for the generation after him. But the lesson is for others as well—for teachers, for rulers, for every one who has the smallest influence over other lives.

Eli sat upon a seat by the wayside watching; for his heart trembled for the ark of God. There is a great deal that is good about this old man. For one thing here, he loved the ark of God, and now that it was in the battle-field his heart trembled with anxiety for it. Around that ark clustered all the most sacred associations of the history of Israel. It was the symbol of the presence of God. It was the ark of the covenant. In it lay the tables of stone on which had been written by the divine finger the ten commandments of the law. Its lid was the mercy-seat where the Lord manifested himself, when he met his people to commune with them, to hear their confessions, to receive the blood of atonement, to forgive their sins and to speak to them his will. That ark represented all that was most hallowed and revered in the nation, and now it was in peril in the field of battle. What if it should be captured by the Philistines! The old man had fearful forebodings. A deep shadow of doom seemed to be settling down over him that day. He was the custodian, too, of the sacred ark, and if evil should befall it the blame must be his. No wonder his heart trembled as he sat there in the gathering gloom of night. May we not learn a lesson here? Have we such love for God's Church as this old man had for the ark? Do we carry it in our heart? Are we anxious for it when it is in the midst of the assaults of enemies? Does disaster to the Church cause us pain?

When he made mention of the ark of God, he fell . . . his neck brake and he died. The loss of the ark was but one of the terrible items of disaster that came to the ears of this old man. There had been a great slaughter among the people. There had been a calamitous defeat of the army. Then, coming still closer to his heart, his two sons had been slain. All these tidings, as they fell from the messenger's lips,

the trembling old man heard with deep sadness yet without fatal shock; but when the messenger told of the disaster to the ark, it was too much. This shows us where Eli's heart was. It clung to the ark to the last. He was a patriot and loved his country; he was a father and loved his children; he was a tender-hearted ruler and loved his people; but his affection for the sacred ark exceeded all other affections. There is an old story of a Lacedemonian mother, who, when the messenger came back from the field where the battle was raging in which her five sons were engaged, hastened to ask the news. With trembling tones the messenger said, "Your five sons are all dead." With a look of almost withering scorn she replied, smothering in her breast her maternal love and grief, "I did not ask you about the welfare of my sons; I asked if the country were safe." In her patriotic bosom love of country was stronger than even the motherly affection. In Eli every other interest was forgotten in his absorbing passion for the ark of God. Is it so with us? What is it that we love most? What interest receives our warmest thought and our holiest solicitude? What loss causes us the deepest sorrow—that of a little money or that of the presence and favor of God?

He had judged Israel forty years. Thus the story of his life is summed up. Surely the end was tragic and sad. Forty years of service for his country, and then death in "a state of blended consternation, grief, shame and remorse!" It was not such a close as befits a life that has been true, faithful and heroic. Look a moment at this life. What was the final outcome of those forty years of service and anxiety? He was certainly a good man. No stain rests upon his character. He was faithful as priest and ruler. He had no doubt done many valuable services for his country in those forty years. But somehow the good that he did was nearly all neutralized by his weakness of character. He lacked what might be called the manly qualities. He lacked courage and force or energy. He was timid and irresolute. So the good one hand did the other undid. What he gathered by his fidelities and services flowed away again for want of a strong hand to hold and compact. Years went on and he continued faithful, but the nation was growing degenerate all the while. He did not know it was his fault. He was so busy about his own duties that he did not know for a long time what evil his sons were doing. At last his work was tried. Ruin came. All the evil gathered into a day of doom. We look at the close of the "forty years," and nothing is left. All the labor of his long life is swept away in a day, and he himself is buried in the wreck. Could anything be sadder? The lesson is that weakness will destroy all that strength can build up. We see it often in business, in church life, in philanthropy, in the family, in the individual. Goodness is not enough; there must be strength, courage, resoluteness, force, will. Contrast Eli with Joshua, the type of a manly man. It must not be overlooked, however, that while his work was all destroyed, he himself was saved, yet "so as by fire." Though dying in the darkness, shame and pain of retribution, his heart was right. Terrible was the punishment that came upon him, but he was not lost. "We must distinguish between *the ruin of a man's work* and *ruin of his soul.*" See 1 Cor. 3: 11–13.

LESSON POINTS.

1. The world is full of Philistines still, and the Church and every Christian must often be in battle. v. 10.

2. Sin makes men weak and unable to stand before their enemies. v. 10.

3. The symbols of religion alone will not give victory if the divine presence be wanting. v. 10.

4. The Church of God suffers defeat when its guardians and representatives are unholy and unworthy. v. 11.

5. When the cause of God is in danger good men are anxious. v. 13.

6. Disaster to the cause of God causes deeper sorrow to the Christian than any other calamity. vs. 17, 18.

7. The good work of a man's life may be almost destroyed by his weaknesses.

8. A man may himself be saved and yet all the results of a long life-work be destroyed.

9. Goodness is not enough, nor even personal devotion to God and his service; a character without courage and strength is incomplete.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

BY JAMES A. WORDEN, D.D.

INTRODUCTION.—In teaching this lesson first get the events vividly in the minds of the scholars, *then* work back from these events to their cause in Jehovah's anger against Eli for his over-fond indulgence of his sons. You thus secure the highest interest in the opening of the lesson, and the most practical and impressive lessons you reserve for the close. Therefore begin with questions on the battle of Eben-ezer, narrated in this chapter, vs. 1, 2. Who were

Israel's principal foes at this time? Who were the Philistines? What were their principal cities? Where did they pitch their camp at this time? Where was the army of Israel? What was the result of the first battle? What was the plan proposed? How was it carried out? Why did they think that the ark would bring victory? What was the welcome given to the ark in the camp? How were the Philistines affected? What priests went with the ark? Why was it wrong to take it into battle? With this short prelude advance at once to the lesson.

I. ISRAEL'S DEFEAT. vs. 10, 11.
II. ELI'S DEATH. vs. 12–18.

I. ISRAEL'S DEFEAT.—Enlist all in describing the battle; the two armies; the officers encouraging their men; the banners carried to the front; no artillery; no guns. Both armies shoot their arrows and rush toward each other. Hand to hand struggles with sword and spear must decide the day. The Israelites rally around the ark, but the Philistines fight with the courage of desperation. The army of Israel wavers; it retreats; retreat is turned into a rout. Thirty thousand footmen are killed. The ark of God is taken. Hophni and Phinehas, the priests, are slain. Impress your class as you go along with the awful hatefulness of war. Bring up the question, Why was it a sin to take the ark into battle? If after the first defeat they felt Jehovah was not with them, what should they have done? When the Lord suffers us to be defeated what should we do? How can we secure Christ's presence? By putting forward our professions of religion? By punctilious regard for the outward forms of worship? This was the method of the mistaken elders of Israel. *How can* we secure Christ's presence in our battle-fields? What disgrace did the mistake in carrying the ark into battle, unauthorized of God, bring on the religion of Jehovah?

II. ELI'S DEATH.—Who has seen an old man of ninety years? A blind old man? Here is one ninety-eight. Picture the scene. The aged priest—sitting, watching. His heart trembling for the ark of God. He is caring more for that than for his two sons. He is fearing it was wrong to take the ark away from the tabernacle into battle. Picture the Oriental runner. He comes from the camp. His garments are rent asunder, his hair is all sprinkled with dust—sorrow and awful astonishment thus shown. Tell how the whole city wailed and wept when they saw him and heard the news. That is the way in the East people receive woful tidings. How about the blind old man watching by the wayside? What question did he ask? Who answered him? What four fearful things did the man tell Eli? Which distressed him the most? Why? What accident put an end to his agony? In what way would Eli's death add to the awful calamity of defeat to Israel? His death left Israel without a ruler or leader, except the young Samuel. What was the cause of this judgment on Israel, on Eli and on his sons?

1. What sins had Hophni and Phinehas committed? 1 Sam. 2: 12–17, 22. What woes did these sins bring on themselves? What woes on their father? What on their country? What circumstances aggravated the sins of Hophni and Phinehas? Boys and girls are prone to think lightly of sin, especially of the sins and faults of youth. Let this story tell of sin's awful guilt and doom.

2. *For what does the golden text say Eli was chastised?* What good traits had Eli? He was *submissive* to God's will. See 1 Sam. 3: 18. He loved the ark of God. He was affectionate and blind. 1 Sam. 1: 17. What were the sins of this good man? Why is it a sin *not to restrain children?* Prov. 19: 18; 13: 24; 23: 13, 14; 29: 15–17. Examples and warnings. 2 Sam. 18: 5. David's indulgence of Absalom.

This death of Eli—the saddest death of a good man recorded in Scripture—is a monument of warning to all parents *to restrain their children.* To children the question comes home, Do you want a father who will not *restrain* you?

Points in the Lesson for October 14th to be assigned:

1. Name and locate all the places mentioned in 1 Sam. 7: 3–17.
2. Samuel's childhood a promise of his manhood.
3. Examples of prayer before battle.
4. When and how should we erect Ebenezers?
5. Give a brief narrative of the events in 1 Sam. 5th and 6th chapters.
6. What was meant by pouring out water before the Lord? v. 6.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

BY MRS. G. R. ALDEN—"PANSY."

The Lesson Story.—An old man ninety-eight years old, blind, sad, sitting on his seat near the temple waiting and watching for news. His name is Eli. The same old man to whom Samuel brought sorrowful news years ago. He is very anxious to-day.

Miles away there is a great battle being fought. The Israelites have powerful enemies. They have the ark of God with them. That dear ark which has always been a sign of God's presence with his people. What if that should fall into the hands of the enemy?

Hark! there is a noise of shouting in the city. Look! In the distance there rises a cloud of dust. Some one is coming with news. A man who knows how to run. He comes rapidly. Soon he is among the eager people answering their questions. Eli hears the noise, but he cannot see the runner. The people make way for him to get to Eli. He has a short story to tell, but it is full of sorrow. Listen: I came today out of the army; Israel is fled before the Philistines; a great many have been killed; thy two sons Hophni and Phinehas are dead, and the ark of God is taken.

Oh, the bitterness of the story! It grows harder and harder. How will Eli bear it? See, he falls backward. Poor old man! He is dead. That last bit of news about the ark of God being taken by enemies was too much for him.

This entire story should be drawn from class as much as possible, and then repeated in a way to produce thought. It is intensely dramatic in character and will prove interesting.

Cause and Effect.—Make a dot to represent the point of time when Samuel was called in the night and had solemn news told him. Recall this story in its general outlines from class. Print at that point of time the word "BECAUSE." Extend a line from that downward, marking it into periods—five years, ten years, fifteen years, twenty years, and at that point print "THEREFORE."

Because Eli let his sons do wrong, and did not punish them or hold them back from sin, therefore they shall die early and none of Eli's family shall live to old age. Yet twenty years passed before God began to show that he intended to keep this promise. God never forgets.

This story, then, has a warning for us. Here is an arch made of purple. It stands for the promises of the King; promises to punish all who disobey. It may be twenty years, or forty, or many more before he does it, but he will not fail.

Here is a blue arch, lined with gold, which stands for all the sweet promises of the King. (Let class recall one representative promise for each arch.)

Now, do you know that all my scholars stand under one or the other of these arches? The sweet promises all belong to those who have chosen Jesus for their King. The sad ones belong to those who are not his servants. God knows under which arch to put a dot for you. I might make a mistake, but he cannot.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

BY J. HOWARD SEAL.

SUGGESTIONS.—Have the school read in concert chap. 2: 12–17 in connection with the golden text. Show the result of their sin, upon themselves, upon Israel and upon Eli. Hophni and Phinehas were bad men, "mournful types of priestly greed and lust." They thought only of forms, knew nothing of heart-religion. They needed God's presence, not the symbol of it. God could help them without the ark. The ark was worthless *without God*. It is dangerous when *form* takes the place of *Spirit*, when man's will decides and God's is not asked. We can never overcome sin unless God be with us, in our churches or in our schools. Sin now, as then, brings defeat, disaster and death. Have the word "Sin" in bold letters on the board during the class study. In the desk lesson show what it brings, printing each word as you impress the lesson connected with it. Speak tenderly but impressively of Eli's weakness, and how parental indulgence is very harmful, and how bad boys bring trouble upon a home.

Directions for Coloring.—"Sin," green shaded with red; "Brings," white; "Defeat," orange; "Disaster," green; "Death," red.

Lesson II. **SAMUEL THE JUDGE.** Oct. 14th, 1883.

1 Sam. 7: 3–17. Memorize vs. 12, 13.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."—1 Sam. 7: 12.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 1 Sam 7: 1–17..*Samuel the Judge*
T. Ex. 17: 1: 13...*Amalek Overcome*
W. Ps. 99: 1–9.....*Moses, Aaron, Samuel.*
Th. Joel 2: 12–32..."*Gather the People Together.*"
F. Eph. 2: 14–18.."*Access through Him.*"
S. Rom. 8: 31–39.."*Maketh Intercession for Us.*"
S. Prov. 11: 1–12.."*By the Blessing of the Upright.*"

TOPIC.

National Prosperity.

LESSON PLAN.

1. National Reformation. v. 3–6. **2. Victory over Enemies.** vs. 7–12. **3. Peace and Prosperity.** vs. 13–17.

Time.—B. C. 1120. **Place.**—Mizpeh, five miles from Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 39. *What is the duty which God requireth of man?* A. The duty which God requireth of man is, obedience to his revealed will.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 94: "Come, thou Fount of every blessing." Other hymns, 284, 351, 361, 362, 811.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—It was a sad day for the Israelites when they suffered the terrible defeat and loss narrated in our last lesson. The glory seems to have departed from Shiloh when the ark was gone and the high priest was dead. The empty tabernacle was removed, and we next find it at Nob. Chap. 21: 1. The captured ark proved no blessing, however, to the Philistines. The first result was the humiliation of their god Dagon, followed by plagues. Sent away then from Ashdod to Gath, and thence to Ekron, sore destruction followed. It remained only seven months among the Philistines when it was returned to Israel, stopping first at Beth-shemesh, and sent thence to Kirjath-jearim, where it rested for twenty years. This is the length of time, therefore, between the last and the present lessons. The history of those years is a blank. Samuel was growing in power all the time, but the religious condition of the country was no doubt very low.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

3 ¶ And Sam'u-el spake unto all the house of Is'ra-el, saying, If ye do return unto the LORD with all your hearts, *then* put away the strange gods and Ash'ta-roth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Phi-lis'tines.

4 Then the children of Is'ra-el did put away Ba'al-im and Ash'ta-roth, and served the LORD only. [Judg. 2: 11.]

5 And Sam u-el said, Gather all Is'ra-el to Miz'peh, and I will pray for you unto the LORD. [Judg. 20: 1, 2.]

6 And they gathered together to Miz'peh, and drew water, and poured *it* out before the LORD, and fasted on that day, and said there, We have sinned against the LORD. And Sam'u-el judged the children of Is'ra-el in Miz'peh.

7 And when the Phi-lis tines heard that the children of Is'ra-el were gathered together to Miz'peh, the lords of the Phi-lis'tines went up against Is'ra-el. And when the children of Is'ra-el heard *it*, they were afraid of the Phi-lis'tines.

8 And the children of Is'ra-el said to Sam'u-el, Cease not to cry unto the LORD our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Phi-lis'tines. [Isa. 37: 4.]

9 ¶ And Sam'u-el took a sucking lamb, and offered *it for* a burnt offering wholly unto the LORD: and Sam'u-el cried unto the LORD for Is'ra-el; and the LORD heard him.

10 And as Sam'u-el was offering up the burnt offering, the Phi-lis'tines drew near to battle against Is'ra-el: but the LORD thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Phi-lis'tines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Is'ra-el. [Judg. 4: 15; 2 Sam. 22: 14, 15.]

11 And the men of Is'ra-el went out of Miz'peh, and pursued the Phi-lis'tines, and smote them, until *they came* under Beth-car.

12 Then Sam'u-el took a stone, and set *it* between Miz'peh and Shen, and called the name of it Eb'en-e'zer, saying, Hitherto hath the LORD helped us. [Josh. 4: 9.]

13 ¶ So the Phi-lis'tines were subdued, and they came no more into the coast of Is'ra-el: and the hand of the LORD was against the Phi-lis'tines all the days of Sam'u-el.

14 And the cities which the Phi-lis'tines had taken from Is'ra-el were restored to Is'ra-el, from Ek'ron even unto Gath; and the coasts thereof did Is'ra-el deliver out of the hands of the Phi-lis'tines. And there was peace between Is'ra-el and the Am'or-ites.

15 And Sam'u-el judged Is'ra-el all the days of his life.

16 And he went from year to year in circuit to Beth el, and Gil'gal, and Miz'peh, and judged Is ra-el in all those places.

17 And his return *was* to Ra'mah; for there *was* his house; and there he judged Is'ra-el: and there he built an altar unto the LORD. [1 Sam. 8: 4; Judg. 21: 4.]

3 *And Samuel spake.* The last mention of Samuel was more than twenty years before this time. Chap. 4: 1. There he appeared as a prophet to whom the people gave heed. Of his history during those long, dark years after Eli's death we have not a word. He seems to have gone back to Ramah to his father's house. His sorrow must have been very great at the terrible calamity of the capture of the ark. It is not probable that any revelation was made through him to the nation during those years. The intimations are that the Israelites went further and further away from God. Meanwhile Samuel was being silently and unconsciously fitted to be the great reformer and deliverer of his people. At length the time came for him to speak. *If ye do return unto the Lord.* These words indicate that there had been a turning to the Lord on the part of the people, with a profession of penitence. This is implied also in the closing words of the preceding verse: "All the house of Israel lamented after the Lord," that is, wept over their sins and sighed for the return of the lost favor and blessing of God. Samuel here tells them how to prove the sincerity of their profession. *Put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth.* If they truly desired to return to God and have God return to them they must prepare the way by putting away the idols they had been worshiping. These words tell us much about the history of those dark years. Israel had turned away from God and sunk into idolatry. The ark remained neglected in the house of Abinadab while the people bowed down to the idols of the heathen. *Prepare your hearts unto the Lord.* It was idle to implore God to return unless they made ready a place for him in their hearts. *Him only.* He will dwell in no pantheon, one of many gods, but must be the only God. *He will deliver you.* Here we have another part of the history clearly implied. As a result of the nation's wandering from God they had been given over to the Philistines, perhaps from the time of the defeat of our last lesson. Thus for twenty years they had been held in oppression. Now comes the promise of deliverance if they will truly return to the Lord.

4 *The children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth.* See note and cut in August number, p. 304. The people proved the genuineness of their repentance by putting away the idols and beginning to serve the Lord. "Far and near, through the land, the numerous images of Baal and Ashtaroth, with their foul, gross and licentious symbols, were swept away, and the nation was ready to proclaim that henceforth it would serve Jehovah alone."

5 *And Samuel said.* Now that the false gods had been given up Samuel was ready to begin his work of deliverance. *Gather all Israel to Mizpeh.* The reformation was to be inaugurated by a great public solemnity, and for this purpose the people were called to meet in assembly at Mizpeh, probably now Nebi Samwil (the prophet Samuel), a hill about five miles north of Jerusalem. *And I will pray for you.* He would intercede for them with the Lord, praying him to turn his face and favor toward them again. So Moses prayed for the people at Rephidim (Ex. 17: 11, 12); so Elijah at Carmel. 1 Kings 18: 36, 42. Jesus also ever lives at God's right hand to intercede for us.

6 *They gathered together.* They came in vast multitudes, as they were eager to return to the Lord and receive again his favor. *Drew water and poured it out.* The meaning of this act is not quite clear. The Targum paraphrases the passage: *They poured out their heart like water in penitence before the Lord.* According to this view, it was a symbolical act, indicating the contrition and humiliation of the people in the presence of God, the water representing their tears of sorrow for sin. Another view is that the act was an expression of their sense of ruin and helplessness, in accordance with the saying in 2 Sam. 14: 14, "We must needs die and are as water spilt on the ground, etc." It is also supposed by some to have been a form of oath, or a confirmation of the solemn vow they were about to make, which was thus declared as irrevocable as the act of spilling the water on the ground. This is said to have been a very ancient oriental way of taking an oath. *Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh.* This seems to indicate that Samuel's judgeship began at this time, that here for the first he became the ruler of the people. His functions as judge were both civil and military. He led the people back to the laws of God and heard their causes (Ex. 18: 13–16); and he organized them for war against their oppressors to cast off their yoke.

7 *When the Philistines heard.* This assembly at Mizpeh must have lasted some time. The Philistines learned that the tribes were gathered there, and supposed the object to be revolt. *The lords . . . went up.* The whole nation was aroused to a combined attack. *They were afraid.* Their terror was caused by the great show of strength made by the Philistines. The people of Israel had forgotten the promise of God to fight for them. They had been so long under the heel of oppression that they had lost courage and faith.

8 *Cease not to cry unto the Lord.* Literally, *Be not silent from us from crying.* See Ps. 28: 1.

They felt that their only hope now was in God, and that Samuel alone could secure God's favor for them.

9 *A sucking lamb.* Before he begins his intercessory prayer for them he must offer this sacrifice. This lamb, according to the law (Lev. 22: 27), was not less than seven days old. *A burnt offering wholly.* That is, whole; the lamb was not cut or divided in pieces. The burnt offering implied consecration. For the law for this offering, see Lev. 1: 10–13. *And Samuel cried unto the Lord.* As the people had requested. v. 8. *Heard him.* Or rather, *answered him.* As narrated in v. 10; not merely in giving deliverance, but in the audible thunder. See Ex. 19: 19; Ps. 99: 6–8.

10 *As Samuel was offering.* While the smoke of the sacrifice was ascending and Samuel's cry of intercession was piercing the air, the people saw the enemy approaching in battle array. *But the Lord thundered.* This was the answer to Samuel's prayer. Its immediateness is to be noticed. See Isa. 65: 24. It was the time of wheat harvest, May or June (chap. 12: 17), and at this season of the year thunder and rain were very rare in that country. This storm, therefore, breaking so suddenly and unexpectedly on the Philistines, as they approached the people of Israel, would seem to them the voice of God fighting against them. *Discomfited them.* Struck terror and panic into their hosts. Notice that it was *the Lord* that did this by means of the fierce thunder storm, the people of Israel only pursuing the Philistines after the Lord had routed them.

11 *The men of Israel went out.* They rightly regarded the storm as God's answer, and assured thus of divine aid they went out against the Philistines, and finding them in panic and confusion attacked them, smote them in great numbers, and chased them to the edge of their own territory. *Beth-car.* The location is not identified.

12 *Samuel took a stone.* This was the ordinary way of marking spots on which important events occurred. See Gen. 28: 18, 19; 35: 14; Judg. 13: 19; 1 Sam. 6: 14. The exact place at which this memorial was set up is not known. It is at the same spot, however, on which twenty years before this time Israel was defeated by the Philistines and the ark captured. Chap. 4: 1. It was called Eben-ezer in the history of that event, in anticipation of this victory and memorial. *Eben-ezer.* The stone of help. It thus celebrated the victory as one wrought through the help of God.

13 *The Philistines were subdued.* This was the breaking of the Philistine yoke and the end of the forty years servitude. *Came no more.* We are not told how long this freedom lasted. *The hand of the Lord was against the Philistines.* Showing that it was the Lord that kept these fierce hordes from invading Israel's territory. *All the days of Samuel.* Probably, during Samuel's active judgeship, and not during his natural life, for we find the people suffering much from the Philistines before Samuel died. See chaps. 9: 16; 10: 5; 13: 3, 19; 14: 21; 17: 1; 23: 27. Or the words here may be taken in a general sense, implying that they obtained no great decisive victory over Israel.

14 *The cities . . . were restored.* A campaign of considerable magnitude must have been undertaken by Samuel against the Philistines, resulting in the recovery of a number of Hebrew towns. *Peace between Israel and the Amorites.* The Amorites seem to have united with Israel against the Philistines.

15 *Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life.* In a certain qualified sense only can these words be understood. Saul became king some time before Samuel's death, and the military rule passed into his hands; but even then Samuel retained an authority in the civil and religious affairs of the country. Samuel's sons also were made judges when he was old (chap. 8: 1), but evidently they did not displace their father, and merely assisted him.

16 *In circuit.* Passing from place to place, and holding his court at these different points.

17 *He judged Israel.* We know but little of Samuel's history after the victory of Eben-ezer. He went on annual circuits and judged the people. He acted also as priest, offering sacrifices to the Lord. Thus it is true that Samuel's judgeship continued to the end of his life, although he did not retain the entire power.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

If ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods . . . from among you. One blessed thing here is that it is not impossible to return to God even after we have wandered far away from him. We may have broken covenant with him, and have gone very deep into sin, yet he keeps the way open for us to return to him. He does not shut the door against us. There is an old story of a Scotch mother whose wandering daughter came back one midnight to her home, sick of sin, and found the door on the latch. Entering she was welcomed with all a mother's loving compassion. Then she asked, "But why was the door

left unlocked at this midnight hour?" And the mother's answer was: "Never, my child, since you went away has that door been fastened a single night; I kept it open for you to return." So it is that our God keeps the door of his grace always open for his wandering children to return. A great novelist tells of the leaving home of a child, and of the candle kept burning every night in the window, so that if she were ever near the old home at night she would see the light there and know that there was a welcome for her. God keeps the candle of his word, his promises, always shining in the window of his house to assure the wandering ones of a welcome there for them if they will but return. It is a great thing for us to know this. But we must know also that to be welcomed we must turn away from all other gods and be ready for whole-hearted allegiance. There is no use talking about returning to the Lord so long as the heart is occupied by a strange god. He will never enter a heart in which any other god is dwelling. He will dwell in no pantheon.

Prepare your hearts unto the Lord. External reformation is not enough. It is not enough to put away the other gods. There must also be an inner preparation, a preparation of the heart. A place must be made for him there, a clean place, a holy place, a place of love and honor. So in coming back to God there must be close and thorough searching of the affections and motives, a purification of the secret fountains of the life. It is not by any mere accident that God comes into a heart in special blessing and power; he comes only into the heart that is prepared for him. When you are ready for him he will come in and fill all your soul with richest joy and gladness.

And he will deliver you out of the hands of the Philistines. When? After you have returned to him with all your heart and put away the strange gods and prepared your heart for him and begun to serve him only. You need expect no deliverance while you fail to do these things. God is not going to help those who are bowing down to other gods and giving him no honor or worship. Are you in the hands of the Philistines? You will stay in their hands until you are ready to do full and loyal homage to the Lord.

Gather all Israel together and I will pray for you unto the Lord. It is a great thing to have some friend on close and intimate terms with God to pray for us when we are in trouble or have sinned. We do not know what blessings come down to us through prayer. If a child is wandering in sin there is a voice that is heard in the secrecy of the home, a voice thrilled with the tenderest love, a parent's voice, that ceases not to cry to God for mercy upon the wanderer, that he would bring back to himself the soul that is away in evil paths. If a scholar is careless or turning after sinful things, there is a little room somewhere in which a loving teacher bends low before God's throne in earnest supplication and tender pleading. If a church member is forsaking the Lord and going into wrong paths there is an altar of prayer at which a faithful and devoted pastor constantly bows, calling upon Christ to bring back his own wandering sheep into the fold. Those who are living in sin, and who have praying friends, do not know how continuously and how earnestly these friends plead with God for them. Nor are we to forget that we have another Intercessor, Christ our great High Priest, who in heaven makes continual intercession for us.

We have sinned against the Lord. That is the way to start. The first step in returning to God is to make confession of our sin. Until we have done this we cannot be forgiven, and until we are forgiven there can be no restoration to the divine favor. In the Oriental story of "Paradise and Peri," nothing would open the gate of heaven for the exiled spirit until she found a weeping penitent, and, catching a tear from his eye, brought that to the angel-warder. A class of pupils in an institution for the deaf and dumb were asked, "What is the most precious thing in the world?" One wrote, "Going home;" another, "A mother's love." When the last and youngest came to the board she wrote, with trembling fingers and bowed head, "The tear of penitence." And she was right. If we have sinned there is no gift we can bring to the Lord that is half so precious in his sight as a penitential tear. It will open heaven's gates to us when all the gold in the world or all the good works of a hundred lifetimes would not cause it to move on its hinges.

The Philistines went up against Israel. That is always the way. The Philistines did not object to the Israelites' worship so long as they worshiped Baal and Astarte; but the moment they learned that they were going back to Jehovah, all the opposition in them was stirred up. They must not allow this. The next thing they would be rising up and claiming their liberty. So they gathered their forces for an assault upon them. It is just the same when a backslider gets tired of his Philistine experience and wants to return to the Lord. He is sure to have a hard fight of it before he gets away from his alien masters. Satan never gives up a soul without a fierce struggle. Pharaoh would not let Israel go until they were torn out of his

hands at terrible cost to him. It is the same way with the devil. Any one who is in his hands is going to have a hard time to get out. Satan will gather all his forces and make a most determined opposition to any effort to rescue his captive.

When the children of Israel heard it they were afraid of the Philistines. No wonder they were afraid of such enemies. Their faith was yet weak in its first beginnings. But they did the right thing; they turned to Samuel and begged him to cry to God for them. They knew that they could not save themselves, and that help must come from the hills. That man is a fool who is not afraid of sin. Especially if one has been long under the power of some sin and is trying to get away from its clutches, is he a fool if he has no dread of it and thinks himself able to meet it in his own strength. A reforming drunkard dare not stand in his own strength in the face of the old sin which has so long held him in its grasp. No Philistines were ever half so terrible in their cruel power as the habit of strong drink when once a man has been its slave. The papers have just been telling of a man wandering about the meadows on the sea-shore, who in some way stumbled into the swampy bog when the tide was in and sank almost to his neck in the soft mire. It was night and there he lay, his head merely above the surface, unable to extricate himself. For a time the waters flowed away, but by-and-bye they turned and began to flow toward him. Weak, faint, bewildered and unconscious, he lay there through the darkness. Morning dawned and the tide was rising. In a few minutes more it would sweep over his head and bury him forever in the fatal swamp. A workingman hurrying to some early duty, walking on the railroad trestle, saw a man's head in the bog with the water up to his chin. He hastened to his rescue, and with difficulty extricated him from his perilous condition. Had not help come that hour the poor man must have perished in the swamp. He had no power to fight the mighty oncoming tides, with all the great sea behind them. Just as helpless is a human soul in the presence of sin and temptation with but its own strength to meet the enemy. The only hope is to call upon God. The only help can come from the everlasting hills. Earth has no power to give aid.

Samuel took a sucking lamb and offered it . . . and cried unto the Lord. The way to God is by the blood of the Lamb. Sacrifice comes before intercession and prepares the way for it. After he had offered the lamb he was ready to pray for help from God. When we seek help from the Lord in our dangers we do not need to bring any lamb to offer, for the one great offering has been already made. Christ the Lamb of God has been slain, and his blood has been sprinkled on the mercy-seat. Now we need only to come in his name. Yet we must not forget that there is no other way of acceptance, and that if we do not plead the blood of this Lamb we cannot receive any help. "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." We can overcome only "by the blood of the Lamb."

The Philistines drew near to battle . . . but the Lord discomfited them. No enemies can stand before him. The Israelites alone could not have beaten the Philistines, but it was nothing to the Lord to defeat them. He heard the prayer and sent help. He is the same God to-day, and is just as able to give deliverance now as he was that day. This is a great thing for us to learn. In our temptations when we cannot deliver ourselves if we have truly returned to God and if we earnestly call upon him for help he will give it.

Samuel took a stone and . . . set it . . . and called the name of it Ebenezer. It is a good thing to set up memorials to mark the places where God has done some great thing for us. Where was it that you first met Christ and formed with him the covenant of life and peace? Where was it that you were delivered from the power of some great temptation? Where was it that the burden rolled off you when you cried to God? Should not all these spots be remembered? It will keep alive the gratitude in your heart? It will help to keep you faithful and true to your covenant engagements. It will keep fresh in your heart the religious impressions that associate themselves with the spot thus marked.

The Philistines . . . came no more . . . the cities . . . were restored. Here we have hints of the fruits of this return to God. The old enemy was conquered; the captured cities were retaken; there was peace with other nations because of the favor of the Lord that rested upon Israel. When one has truly repented and returned to God as Israel did here these things will all come true in his religious experience. The old enemies have no more the power over him they once had. Temptations once mastered by the divine hand have no more the same terrible strength as before. Then as he enters upon his new life he gets back again the lost powers that sin had torn away from him in the days of his wandering. And he rises above the harassing influences of evil about him. When God has taken a man back into his favor and fought the battle with sin for him and gotten

him the victory, it is easier for him to live afterward. He lives on a new plane then. He is no longer a weary, struggling and defeated man, but a victor, strong, hopeful, courageous, with the power of God resting upon him and the grace of God in his heart. It makes a great deal of difference in living, whether we are the poor slaves of the evil one or have him under our feet.

Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. Samuel was the greatest of all the judges. His character was spotless. Consecrated to the Lord in infancy he never departed from him. Unlike Eli, who was also a good man, Samuel was strong in his moral character. His left hand did not tear down what his right hand had built up. He was a manly man, courageous and firm as well as good. His influence was not gained by the sword, but by the power of truth. He was a prophet and teacher, and taught the people the word of God. He delivered them not by victories in war, but by leading them back from their wanderings to new allegiance to the Lord. Instead of by his weakness allowing idolatry to spread through the land, he made himself felt as a force against all idolatry, cleansing the land of its false worship and restoring the worship of the true God. Eli saw the results of his long life all swept away at one terrible blow; Samuel had the joy of seeing his work stand and the nation rise into grand power and influence under his rule.

LESSON POINTS.

1. It is good when a church, a nation or an individual begins to lament after God. See v. 2.

2. No return to God is possible while the strange gods are retained. v. 3.

3. It is idle to expect God to come into a heart that is not cleansed and made ready for him. v. 3.

4. True seeking after God begins in putting away the false gods. v. 4.

5. The next step in returning to the Lord is confession of sin. v. 6.

6. Returning to God always arouses opposition; the devil never lets go his hold without a fearful struggle. v. 7.

7. We should look to God for help in all struggles with sin. v. 8.

8. We can overcome only through the blood of the Lamb. v. 9.

9. When we return to God he takes up our battles for us, and victory for him is easy. v. 10.

10. It is well to keep memorials of God's blessings. v. 12.

11. When the backslider returns, God restores his lost power and blessings. v. 14.

12. Samuel in contrast with Eli. vs. 15–17.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

1. Carefully study the *history intervening* between the last lesson and this. 1 Sam. 5th and 6th chapters.

2. Have a clear understanding of "the times" of this lesson; the change since the events of the preceding lesson; Israel's gradual and thorough reformation aimed at and partially wrought by the labors of Samuel. Samuel had been "judging" Israel for twenty years, and the people had been brought by the oppressions of the Philistines as well as by the instructions of Samuel to "lament after the Lord."

3. Attend to the geography of the lesson; the names and the location of the places mentioned —Mizpeh, Beth-car, Shen, Ebenezer, Eckron, Gath, Bethel, Gilgal, Ramah.

4. Master the meaning of all the unusual words and expressions of this passage: Baalim and Ashtaroth, "Return unto the Lord," "Prepare your hearts unto the Lord," "Drew water and poured it out before the Lord," "Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh," "A sucking lamb for a sacrifice," "He went from year to year in circuit," etc.

INTRODUCTION.

1. Question on the title, golden text and principal truths in the last lesson—Israel's defeat, Eli's death.

2. Call for a rapid outline of the history contained in chaps. 5 and 6.

3. Review the class on the events of Samuel's childhood, then ask what kind of a man would such a boy make? Impress the fact that "the boy is father to the man."

4. Ask for the probable age of Samuel at this time, for his probable labors of the preceding twenty years, evidences that he had helped in bringing a change for the better in Israel.

LESSON PLAN.

Reformation. vs. 3–6. *Victory.* vs. 7–11.
Peace. vs. 12–17.

QUESTIONS, APPLICATIONS, ETC.

I. REFORMATION.—What was the religious condition of Israel in Eli's time? 1 Sam. 2: 17. What young person would most keenly grieve over this condition? What change would Samuel constantly work for? What was the substance of his teaching? Read v. 3. What did he ask Israel to do? What is it to "return unto the Lord with all your hearts?" Why was this Israel's great duty? How can we return

unto the Lord? Hos. 14: 1–3. What three *evidences* of their sincere repentance did Samuel call for?

1. "Put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth." Let one of the class explain these names.

2. "Prepare your hearts unto the Lord." How can we prepare our hearts for coming to God? Ps. 119: 59; Isa. 5: 7; 1 Cor. 5: 7; Matt. 5: 23, 24.

3. "Serve him only." Read Deut. 6: 13; 13: 4; Matt. 4: 10; 6: 24.

What reward did Samuel promise them for thorough reformation? What effect had Samuel's faithful teaching? What meeting did Samuel propose? What was the design of this assembly? Why did Samuel make prayer the chief exercise? What can we learn from this as to the importance of public prayer? In what spirit should we join in this exercise? What was the meaning of their pouring out water before the Lord? What is fasting? When ought we to fast? Mark 2: 20; Luke 5: 35; Acts 10: 30; 14: 23. What confession did Israel make? Prove that confession of sin is part of true repentance. What is meant by Samuel "judging Israel" in Mizpeh?

II. VICTORY.—In the same way bring out by questioning the approach of the Philistines, the terror of Israel, their request that Samuel would cry unto the Lord for them. What says the Bible of Samuel as an intercessor? Ps. 99: 6; Jer. 15: 1. With what sacrifice did Samuel accompany his prayer? With faith in what sacrifice are we ever to pray? Bring out a description of the sudden and miraculous answer to this prayer? Show how Samuel's promise in v. 3 is thus fulfilled. Draw from the class mention of remarkable answers to prayer given in the Bible, then remarkable answers to prayer in their own experience. Impress anew the power of believing prayer.

III. PEACE.—Briefly recall from the class the changed condition of Israel after the defeat of the Philistines at Ebenezer and the faithful toils of Samuel as judge. He was prophet, priest and king, and he went throughout all Israel. Who is our Prophet, Priest and King? What circuit does he make? Rev. 2: 1.

Questions on the Lesson for October 21st to be assigned:

1. Up to this time what was the form of government in Israel?

2. Why was it an insult to God for Israel to ask for a king?

3. Why do some good men's sons turn out badly?

4. Why did God yield to their request for a king?

5. Prove that the voice of the people is not always the voice of God.

6. What example of humble obedience to God does Samuel give us in this lesson?

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The Teacher in Class.—Objects to be shown: A large stone; a glass of water.

Blackboard Outline.—An altar made in the sin-color, with the name "BAAL" printed over it. Also, at the lower left hand in large letters, the word "IF," and at the upper right hand the words "HE WILL."

How many remember Samuel? What have you to tell me about him? (Encourage a social talk.) After all the wonders that God had done for this people, why have I made an altar for Baal on the board? Draw from class the story of the grievous fall into idolatry.

What does this large "IF" mean? Try to call from class the fact that it is always God's condition with people: "If you will," etc., then "I will," etc. In other words, use these to impress the fact that a covenant has two sides, God's and ours. Also, the conditions are the same. We, as they, are called upon to put away sin, to turn to the Lord, to serve him only. It is often well to read a verse from the large Bible in the presence of the class. The first verse of the lesson might now be read.

Let us see whether the people were ready to do their part. Call attention to the glass of water. By questioning, lead scholars to think what would become of the water if it were spilled on the ground. Could they gather the drops for use again? Tell them of the object-lesson which the Israelites gave themselves. They poured water on the ground to illustrate the weakness of their former promises as worthless as water spilled. Also to signify that they entirely gave up their idols. Teach that this was the Eastern method of taking a solemn oath. Also they confessed, "WE HAVE SINNED." Print these words on a line slanting upward towards the words "He will."

Notice again that Samuel called for *heart* repentance. God accepts no other. Surround the words, "We have sinned," with a heart, and as you speak of our only way of confessing, make many red lines, representing prayer going up from the heart, like many strands, meeting at last before God as a cloud of incense; it is the sacrifice with which he is well pleased.

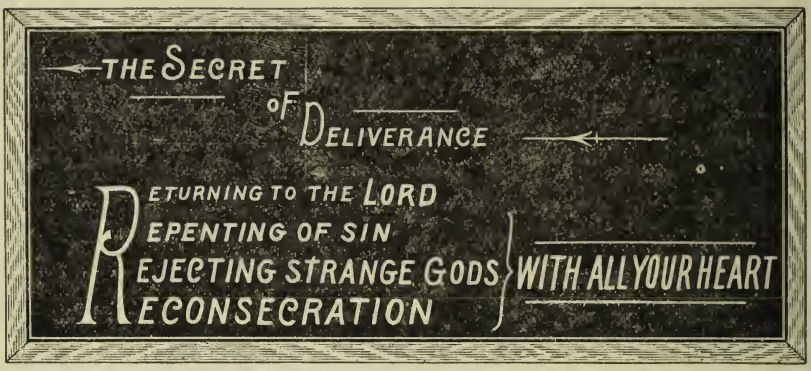
Teachers will notice that the personal application of this lesson runs all through it.

Encourage the scholars to tell the story of victory over the Philistines, and the great stone set up as a memorial. Explain that at this

same spot, twenty years before, God had helped his people. Teach the meaning of the word *Eben-ezer* (stone of help). Now set up the stone which you have brought on your table or desk, put a band of paper around it with the word "EBENEZER" printed on it, and encourage class to give several instances in which which God has helped them. Or, if they be too young for this, tell them a story of help which came to a child. Select a story of modern time, and if possible one with which you are personally familiar.

Aim to make the central thought of the entire lesson the certainty of God's help if we meet the conditions. This will lead you to the thought of last Sabbath's lesson—a promise-keeping God, and enable you to use another verse of the common metre hymn taught last Sabbath.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



SUGGESTIONS.—An enemy the Philistines did not look for, and did not know, met them as they came up to fight Israel. The Israelites were at a prayer-meeting. Instead of swords and spears in their hands they had sorrow for sin in their hearts. The thunders of God and lightnings from heaven were more than a match for Philistine bravery.

Have the above outline placed upon the board previous to the meeting of the school, "The secret of deliverance," alone exposed to view of school until the time for the desk lesson. The rest may be covered with pieces of paper, to be removed as each thought is presented, or if expert in lettering be printed as the lesson is taught. If the former plan be used, remove the papers one by one, leaving "With all your heart" until the last. Impress each, and have school read in concert Ps. 50: 15; Jer. 29: 12, 13; 1 John 1: 8–10.

Directions for Coloring.—"The secret of deliverance," white shaded with blue; "With all your heart," same colors; the rest in their order, orange, green, yellow and white; the capital R, yellow shaded heavily with purple.

Lesson III. **ASKING A KING.** Oct. 21st, 1883.

1 Sam. 8: 1–10. Memorize vs. 4–6.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes."—Ps. 118: 9.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 1 Sam. 8: 1–10..*Asking a King.*
T. Ps. 118: 1–9....*Confidence in Princes.*
W. Jer. 2: 4–19....*Forsaking God.*
Th. Isa. 43: 20–28.."*Weary of Me.*"
F. Ps. 146: 1–10..."*His Thoughts Perish.*"
S. Ps. 81: 1–16...."*My People would not Hearken.*"
S. Acts 13: 16–24..*A King Desired.*

TOPIC.

A Nation's Ingratitude.

LESSON PLAN.

1. The People's Request. vs. 1–5. **2. The Matter Carried to God.** v. 6. **3. The Lord's Answer.** vs. 7–10.

Time.—B. C. 1095. **Place.**—Ramah, a town of Judah, the birth-place, residence and burial-place of Samuel.

Catechism.—Q. 40. *What did God at first reveal to man for the rule of his obedience?* A. The rule which God at first revealed to man for his obedience, was the moral law.

Q. 41. *Wherein is the moral law summarily comprehended?* A. The moral law is summarily comprehended in the ten commandments.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 952: "Glory and praise and honor." Other hymns, 1, 639, 847, 857.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—After the battle of Ebenezer there ensued a period of peace, during which time Samuel was the ruler of the people, uniting in himself all the highest offices—the prophet, the priest, the judge. It is impossible to estimate his influence in moulding the nation. Indeed, he found Israel about to perish and sink out of existence as a people, and he lifted them up to national character and strength, restored the Mosaic religion, established the order of prophets, and in effect laid the foundations for the future greatness and power of the chosen people under the rule of David. Our lesson to-day brings us to a new era in the history of Israel. Nearly two hundred years before this time the people had expressed a wish for a king, and had offered the crown to Gideon. Judg. 8: 22. This desire had been growing ever since, and now seems to have been universal and very strong. Here we see Samuel's skilful hand in this critical epoch, so effecting the great change in the government as to avoid the shock of revolution.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

1 And it came to pass, when Sam'u-el was old, that he made his sons judges over Is'ra-el. [Deut. 16: 18; 2 Chron. 19: 5.]

2 Now the name of his firstborn was Jo'el; and the name of his second, A-bi'ah: *they were* judges in Beer'she-ba.

3 And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment. [Jer. 22: 15-17; Ex. 18: 21; 1 Tim. 3: 3.]

4 Then all the elders of Is'ra-el gathered themselves together, and came to Sam'u-el unto Ra'mah,

5 And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations. [Deut. 17: 14; Hos. 13: 10; Acts 13: 21.]

6 ¶ But the thing displeased Sam'u-el, when they said, Give us a king to judge us; and Sam'u-el prayed unto the LORD.

7 And the LORD said unto Sam'u-el, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. [Ex. 16: 8; 1 Sam. 12: 17, 19.]

8 According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of E'gypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee. [Ps. 78: 56-59; Acts 7: 51-53.]

9 Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit, yet protest solemnly unto them, and shew them the manner of the king that shall reign over them.

10 ¶ And Sam'u-el told all the words of the LORD unto the people that asked of him a king. [Deut. 17: 14-20.]

1 *When Samuel was old.* A number of years, perhaps nearly or quite twenty, must have elapsed after the victory at Ebenezer before Samuel called his sons to his assistance. Growing infirm in his old age, and needing help, he made them judges, that they might aid him in his laborious duties.

2 *Now the name, etc.* These names indicate the piety of Samuel. *Joel* means "Jehovah is God;" Abiah, "Jah is my Father." The nation had been following idols, and Samuel had led them back to the true God. These names are protests against idolatry and indicative of loyalty and devotion to Jehovah. *Judges in Beer-sheba.* Beer-sheba was on the extreme southern frontier of Judah, and it is probable, therefore, that Samuel assigned to his sons the southern district of the country, while he himself retained the northern.

3 *Walked not in his ways.* His life had been pure and irreproachable, and there is no reflection here upon his family government as there was in the case of Eli. However, his sons did not choose the ways of holiness in which he had always walked. *Turned aside after lucre.* Lucre is ill-gotten gain. They were drawn aside by their love of money, which led them to take bribes. That is, as judges they were not incorruptible like their father, but accepted bribes from parties who brought their cases before them, and were influenced by these in their decisions. See Deut. 16: 19.

4 *Then all the elders . . . came to Samuel.* This malfeasance in office of Samuel's sons freshly excited the desire among the people for a king. The fact that all the elders united in this request, meeting together and coming up to Ramah, the home of Samuel, for the purpose of making it, shows that this was a formal application or demand in which the whole nation joined, and not the desire of a discontented faction. There were elders, that is, heads of families who acted as rulers, even before the Exodus. Ex. 3: 16. In the wilderness Moses appointed seventy to represent the whole body and take part of the government. Num. 11: 16, 24, 25. With modifications this system was re-

tained as long as the Hebrew people continued as a nation. In our Lord's time the elders composed one of the constituent elements of the Sanhedrin.

5 *Thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways.* They assign these two reasons or excuses, rather, for the request they are about to prefer. *Make us a king.* See Deut. 17: 14, where this very thing was foretold. *To judge us.* To perform the same duties which Samuel himself had performed. The demand for a king was therefore for an entire revolution in the form of government. *Like all the nations.* All the other nations around them were ruled by kings, and the Israelites felt that they lacked something in having no royal head.

6 *The thing displeased Samuel.* There were several elements in his displeasure. God's answer to him (v. 7) indicates that Samuel regarded the request as the rejection of himself, as ingratitude toward him. It was certainly very hard, after he had devoted his whole life to restoring the theocracy and establishing the nation on solid foundations, to be thrust aside in this manner. It is not strange that his feelings were hurt. He was also no doubt grieved at the desire itself for a king. The government under which they now were was that which God himself had appointed for them, and the request for a change seemed like rebellion against God, who was now their real king. At this particular time, too, the demand appeared most unreasonable and wrong, since the nation was now in such prosperous condition. *Samuel prayed unto the Lord.* Before he gave any answer to the elders he took the matter to the Lord. He would not trust himself to speak on such a matter without divine instruction. If he had spoken out his own feelings his reply might have shown irritation. He asks God what to say.

7 *Hearken unto the voice of the people.* That is, grant them the request they have made. *They have not rejected thee, but . . . me.* Samuel's feelings had been hurt by their request, because it involved his displacement as judge and showed ingratitude toward him. He is reminded that their act is far more the rejection of the Lord than of him, and that therefore he ought not to complain if the Lord was willing to endure the slight. In the same way Christ counseled his disciples to bear wrongs and persecutions patiently, because he himself endured them. See Matt. 10: 24; John 15: 18, 20.

8 *According to all the works.* Not only in this particular case were they rejecting God as their King, but they had been doing the same all along the years of their history.

9 *Now therefore hearken . . . yet protest.* He was to grant the request of the elders, not allowing his own personal feelings to interfere, and waiving all points of opposition, but he was at the same time to set before them the true nature of the change in the government and the disadvantages to themselves that would result from it. *The manner of the king.* His privileges and powers; that is, the way he would rule them.

10 *Samuel told all the words.* See vs. 11–18, where he fully describes the "manner of the king" that should reign over them. He drew the picture not from imagination, but from what he knew of the kings of other nations around them. They were absolute despots and tyrannized over their people. He would take their choicest young men to be his personal servants and military officers. He would levy forced labor to till the royal lands and make instruments of war. The young women, too, he would take to prepare spices and to cook and bake for the royal household. He would seize their fields at will and give them to his courtiers. He would levy taxes, one-tenth of all produce, to maintain his court. The result of all this tyranny and exaction, Samuel warned them, would be that they would be led to cry out to the Lord for relief, and then they would cry in vain, if they still persisted in making this choice. See 1 Kings 12: 4. Thus Samuel faithfully set before the people the disadvantages of the new kind of government which they desired, but they were determined and would not change their demand. v. 19.

On the sinfulness of the people's request for a king these observations may be made: It may be that in his own time and way, God would have given Israel a king. See Gen. 17: 16; Num. 24: 17; Deut. 17: 14–20. The fact that the kingship typified Christ's Messiahship points also to this probability. However this may be, it is certain that the time had not yet come when God desired this new development in the government. The demand for a king, made now by the people, was sinful in that it sprang from their own restlessness, faithlessness and pride, and not from a desire to do God's will. They did not consult God or request Samuel to lay the matter before him, but made their demand without reference to the divine will. It was sinful also in that they did not desire such a king as God might appoint, but one "like the nations." Yet God gave them their request. Their first king was a man after their ideal, and by bitter experience they learned the lessons they would not otherwise learn. In studying this point, see Hosea 13: 10, 11, and Acts 13:

21, 22. These passages show that the request for a king at this time and in this way was granted really as a punishment and not in blessing; but in David God gave them a king in mercy and one after his own heart, from whose reign much blessing resulted.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

His sons walked not in his ways. They had enjoyed every advantage. Their father had set before them from the beginning a godly and consistent example. There is no evidence either that like Eli he had failed in parental discipline. He had taught them well, for he was one of the wisest and best teachers Israel ever had. Yet in spite of all these advantages and blessings they had forsaken the paths in which they had been brought up. The suggestions are such as these: Goodness is not hereditary. It does not descend from father to son. The fact that one has a good parent does not insure goodness in the child. A father may bring up his son most strictly and yet he cannot compel him to follow after God. The best training is not omnipotent. Another suggestion is that power is always perilous. Many young men who in lowly walks would have lived well, because they are promoted to places of power, fail. The sons of Samuel were not able to stand the temptations which office brought them. Political positions are always full of peril. Many men who are upright in private life have proved unable to resist the temptation to dishonesty in public positions where money passed through their hands, or where bribes were offered. The safest places for virtue are the quiet places in life's lowly walks. One other suggestion to be noted here is the great sin committed by the sons of such good men as Samuel when they turn away from the paths in which by example and teaching their feet have been directed. Only see what trouble these young men brought upon their father by their evil courses. They pained his heart in his old age. They put in peril all the good work of his whole life. The children of good men owe it to their parents to live so as to bring honor and blessing upon them in their declining years. There are many ways of doing this, but the best is by living noble and beautiful lives, carrying out the precepts they have learned in youth and being such men and women as their parents will be proud and happy to own as their children before all the world.

The elders . . . said unto him, Behold, thou art old. They meant that his old age made him inefficient as a ruler. It was a suggestion to him that he had better lay down his authority and let them choose some other ruler. They seem to have forgotten that he had grown old in their service; that he had given his whole life to the cause of the nation; that they owed to him whatever grandeur or real glory there was in their land. They forgot also that his years had only brought him more wisdom and fitted him all the better to rule them. Their conduct toward him was ungrateful in the extreme. Yet we must not let the lesson for ourselves be overlooked while we utter our blame against them. This fault is too common in our own days. We are lacking in reverence to the aged. We are too ready to ask them to step aside when they have grown gray in serving us, and to make room for younger people to take up the work they have been doing. We ought to venerate old age, especially when it has ripened in ways of righteousness and in toils of self-denial for the good of others. Those who have given all their lives to God's service ought to receive honor and affection from younger Christians. Often they are lonely; we know not what sorrows they have endured, what sad memories fill their hearts, how they crave sympathy and love. No sight is more beautiful than that of a young person showing respect and homage to one who is old.

Make us a king to judge us like all the nations. They wanted to be like other nations around them. They saw the pomp and splendor of these nations, and were enamored of it and desired to have the same themselves. At the bottom of it was a discontent with what God had given them, and a feeling that what others had was better. Besides, there was a worldly spirit which craved the world's parade and fashion. The same spirit is alive still. There are many professing children of God who look longingly over into the world's fields and sigh to get over the fence to have the same enjoyments that the world has. Many Christians are not satisfied with the spiritual things of grace for their portion, but crave to have all that the world has. Then there is another view of this request. God was the King of Israel. From him they were to receive all commands, and him only were they to obey. Now they grow restless under his government, and begin to desire another king, a human king. Is not the same sin repeated in these times? Are not all of us disposed to desire the same? We tire so easily of God's authority, and long for another ruler. It's too old-fashioned to be a Christian. We want more show. Then there are a great many people who *will not* have God to rule over them.

They positively reject his authority and choose their own kings in the world, some one and some another.

The thing displeased Samuel . . . and Samuel prayed unto the Lord. Could anything be nobler or more beautiful? This request of the people hurt him sorely. It was a painful slight upon him. They had asked him to step aside because he was too old, and let them have a king. He knew also that they had not asked it in the proper spirit, that they were also slighting God and rejecting him. The most natural thing in the world would have been for him to answer them sharply and tell them in plain language what he thought of their request. But instead see how beautifully he bore himself. He would give no answer at all until he had carried the whole affair to the Lord. He prayed. "Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he rehearsed them in the ears of the Lord." v. 21. We must not lose the lesson of this example. When others hurt us by their speeches, or are about to hurt us by their acts, then is a time when prayer is our first duty. We ought never to trust ourselves to speak when there is any danger that we may speak an angry word or an impatient word. If we first take the matter to the Lord we will not speak the hasty word. Is there any better cure for a quick temper than a little while of prayer before speech? Not only so, but God is far more concerned in any matter that concerns us than we ourselves are. We do not know what his will may be about it. Perhaps the thing that we think should not be done he may want done. Perhaps he wants us to submit to the wrong. At least we should always carry every such matter to him to ask him his will before we give any answer.

The Lord said . . . they have not rejected thee, but . . . me. So the matter concerned God even more than Samuel. And if God was willing to suffer the wrong Samuel ought to do so too. Ought we not to learn many a great lesson of patience and forbearance towards others from the way God bears with men's sins—with our own sins perchance? The old story of Abraham and the fire-worshiper is in point here. Abraham welcomed the tired wayfarer to his tent and set bread before him. The old man ate without giving God thanks. Then the patriarch arose in his anger and thrust him away from his tent into the gathering darkness of night. Presently God called to him to ask him where the traveler had gone. "I thrust him out because he gave thee no thanks." But the divine answer was one of disapproval: "Since I have borne with his unthankfulness all his life long, shouldst not thou have borne with him one night?" God is very patient with the wicked in all their sins; should not we likewise be patient with them? If we are trying to do others good, and they will not receive us nor accept the blessings at our hands, let us not forget that they are rejecting God as well as us, far more than us. This thought should keep us from saying any angry word. What right have we? If the Lord bears it, must not we be silent?

Now therefore hearken to their voice. Although their request was not approved, yet it was granted. God gives them their own way. So we get the truth that God sometimes grants men's prayers even when what they ask is not really the best thing for them. We see also that God sometimes permits things which he does not approve. Obstinate and rebellious prayers are sometimes answered in punishment for the improper spirit in which they are made. According to the prophet Hosea, God says: "I gave Israel a king in mine anger." It is never safe to make demands of God in prayer, to pray insubmissively and rebelliously. Of another incident in the history of Israel it is said that God gave them their desire but sent leanness into their souls. Ps. 106: 15. No doubt worldly things are sometimes granted to those who too eagerly long for them, while the result is spiritual leanness. The great mistake in the request of this people for a king was that they did not lay the matter before God. There could have been no sin in the mere desire for a change in the form of government, if they had come with it to the Lord to submit it as a simple request to him. The essence of their sin lay in the insubmissive manner in which they presented the request. Instead of *asking* God they came demanding a king. When Samuel reasoned and protested they grew the more determined, saying "Nay; but *we will* have a king." v. 19. The true way to pray is to lay our requests at the feet of God and leave them there. We do not know what is the best for us. The thing that seems to us indispensable may be in reality the very worst thing that we could get. There is no harm in our praying for wealth, but it must be in the spirit of Gethsemane; "Not my will but thine be done." In praying for the life of a dying friend the same must be the spirit of our pleading. We dare not make the choice ourselves; we dare not make any choice, whether in small things or great, for we cannot tell what is best for us or most for the glory of God. Therefore insubmissive prayers are always wrong. Yet God may sometimes let us have what we are determined to have, and the receiving may prove an evil rather than a good.

LESSON POINTS.

1. It is always a misfortune when a good ruler becomes unable to fulfill his duties. v. 1.

2. It is sad when children dedicated to God (see the names here) decline from the ways of truth. vs. 2, 3.

3. The best father and the best training will not insure the godly character of the children. v. 3.

4. Not many young men can stand promotion and power. v. 3.

5. When men begin to turn away from God they like to have some one on whom to lay the blame. v. 5.

6. It is a bad sign when the people of God begin to hanker after the vanities of the world. v. 5.

7. Good men are grieved when they see the worldliness of the Church. v. 6.

8. When we are grieved or hurt or wronged the true thing to do first is to lay the matter before God. v. 6.

9. When the Lord bears with men's rejection we should be patient with them. v. 7.

10. It is a great sin to reject God as King. v. 7.

11. God sometimes answers rebellious prayers by letting men have their own way—the answer being a punishment. v. 9, with Hos. 13: 11; Acts 13: 21.

12. God permits things which he does not approve. v. 9.

13. It is a blessed thing to learn to carry *everything* to God in prayer. vs. 6, 10.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

TEACHER'S SELF-PREPARATION.

1. Read the passage over and over again without note or comment.

2. Study well the whole subject—Israel's request for a king. Have all its historical points clear in your mind. Realize its historical importance. These few verses narrate a bloodless revolution, a transformation of outward form of government in Israel.

3. Study the precise nature of the previous government of Israel. It was a theocracy—a government by God himself—the prophet (as in the case of Moses), or the general (as in the case of Joshua), or the judge (as in the cases of the fifteen judges), simply acting as prime minister or vice-gerent of Jehovah.

4. Settle in your own mind the question, Precisely in what was the sin of this request of Israel for a king? Had not Jehovah made provision for the establishment of a monarchy in Israel? How then did these elders sin in asking for a king? In what respects was their request a rejection of Jehovah as well as of Samuel?

5. Choose out of the practical spiritual truths of this lesson those best adapted to your particular scholars.

6. Carefully examine the lesson helps which your scholars study. What a discouragement to a faithful scholar who has studied his lesson helps, for the teacher in the class to ignore the line of truth which that scholar has gone over.

7. Know precisely how you are to begin—to question, to illustrate, to review and apply.

INTRODUCTION.

1. After a brief review of the preceding lesson ask the class to give you an account of the different forms of government which God s people had enjoyed before this? This may be framed thus: What kind of government do you call that which God's people had between the call of Abraham and the descent into Egypt? You may induce some bright scholar to answer, *Patriarchal.* Ask for the meaning of that word. How did God govern Israel from the exodus until the settlement in Canaan? How from the death of Joshua until the time of our lesson?

2. Call for the names of the judges. Our lesson to-day tells how the demand was made for a change of government.

The Demand of the People. vs. 1–5.
The Displeasure of Samuel. v. 6.
The Answer of Jehovah. vs. 7–10.

METHODS OF TEACHING.

I. THE DEMAND OF THE PEOPLE.—How old was Samuel when the elders made this request? Whom had Samuel made assistant judges? Where were they stationed? Why had Samuel made them his assistants? (While they lived near their father they probably had not shown their true character, and doubtless in intelligence and other qualifications were superior to all others.) What kind of men were Joel and Abiah? What special sin and crime did they commit? Ex. 23: 8; Deut. 16: 19. What is the meaning of the word *lucre?* What did Jesus say of covetousness? Luke 12: 15. See also Eph. 5: 3: Col. 3: 5. Warn your scholars against the insidious danger of this sin. How did the fact that Samuel was the father of these two men increase their guilt? What other accounts in the Bible are there of good men having bad sons? How can you reconcile this with Gen. 17: 7 and Prov. 22: 6? Of what did the sins of Joel and Abiah become the occasion? Who presented this request? Who were the elders? *In what consisted the sin of this de-*

mand? (It was the worldly motive, the carnal policy of relying on princes. "Make us a king to judge us *like all the nations.*") Show this thoroughly and carefully. How are *we* tempted to commit a similar sin? We are drawn to this sin by love of worldly display, by love of worldly pleasure or power or money. The boy or young man is tempted to rely on some powerful friend to aid him in achieving success instead of trusting only in God.

II. THE DISPLEASURE OF SAMUEL.—You can readily draw from the class the statement of the real reason of Samuel's displeasure, viz., the worldly and ambitious spirit of the elders of Israel in making this demand. Especially dwell on Samuel's example of casting this unexpected and perplexing burden upon the Lord. "And Samuel prayed unto the Lord." The youngest scholar ought to be taught to bring all his little trials to God in prayer.

III. THE ANSWER OF JEHOVAH.—After drawing from the class the full narration of the Lord's answer, try and lead them to apply the great lessons. Did Jehovah approve of this demand of the elders? Why then did he grant it? *God often allows his people to have things which he does not approve.* In the same manner apply to each of your scholars that if he rejects God's true servant he rejects God. That in all trials we must, like Samuel, bow to God's decision. *This whole lesson can be used to warn against conformity to the world, to encourage to prayer and to submit to God's will.*

Assignments for Sabbath, October 28th:

1. What was Samuel's method of pointing out the king?
2. What qualities had Saul which fitted him to reign?
3. What principles should govern us in selecting rulers?
4. What noble qualities did Samuel exhibit on this occasion?
5. What were the circumstances of Saul's first interview with Samuel?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

SUGGESTIONS.—To ape popular customs is a worldly policy unworthy God's people. "Churches may repeat the sin of Israel by preferring eloquent and fashionable leaders to the spiritual and godly." Here we see Israel's sin in ignoring the GOD who had done so many and so mighty works in their behalf, and desiring a king to rule over them like the nations about them—heathen nations with heathen kings. A worldly king preferred to a heavenly King. Worldly power in preference to divine power. GOD REJECTED. Samuel insulted. And God granted their request. He often punishes men by giving them what they wish. After impressing the lesson suggested, erase the last two letters in the word rejected, and print *will* between God and reject, and add *them*, *that* and *him*, so that the board will read, "A worldly king desired, a heavenly King rejected."

GOD WILL THAT REJECT THEM HIM.

And remember, sin is always against God. Ex. 16: 7, 8; Acts 5: 4; Ps. 51: 4. It is always best to obey God and to walk in his statutes.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The Lesson Story Illustrated by Story.—There was once a man who lived so true and good a life that I can make a picture of it by drawing this straight white line on the board. We have been studying for several Sabbaths about that good man. Do you know his name? He had two sons. What were their names? Shall I make straight white lines for pictures of their

lives? That is true, they walked not in their father's ways. I will make little crooked lines at the left of this white mark to stand for their lives.

There was once a little boy who said to his brother: "I will give you two cents if you will not tell mother that I waded in the water." The brother took the money, and when his mother asked him if his brother had been in the water, he said: "No, ma'am." What did that boy love better than the truth? I think the children can be led to see that he loved money, and took a bribe, which is the story of Samuel's sons. The verse can now be read from the Bible, explaining the word "lucre."

Now the people made the sins of these young men an excuse for asking for a king to rule them, as the other nations had. Who had been their King ever since they left Egypt? Had he taken good care of them? But now they come, coaxing for a king. How did Samuel like this?

There was once a boy who was much displeased with the way in which his playmates acted, and he talked to them in this way: "You are the meanest boys I ever saw, and I will never speak to you again." Is that the way Samuel acted when he was displeased? What red line shall I make to picture his actions?

Try, in this way, to impress the lesson that it is never safe to act or speak, even when we are justly displeased, until we have asked God what we shall do.

Now we come to a very solemn part of the lesson. I will read you what God said. (Read v. 7.) Did you know that God sometimes answered prayers in that way? It may be that sometimes he says: "That little girl down there is determined to go to a certain place this week. She will not believe that her mother knows best, nor that I know best. She rejects the thoughts about it that I put into her heart, and will not give up going. I shall let her go. She will not be happy. It will bring her into trouble, but it is the only way to teach her to trust in my care and judgment." Try in this way to teach the spirit of the words: "Thy will be done."

Explain that Samuel was told to let the people know what trouble would come to them through choosing a king, but that they were still determined to have their own way.

Let the final thought be the awfulness of rejecting King Jesus and choosing Satan instead!

Show that the child who follows Satan's hints, and forgets to try to please Jesus, is rejecting him.

In a few plain words, explain the deliberate choice that the *will* must make of Christ, and that to live on without making the choice is to reject him. Try to press to an immediate decision. Ask all who mean to serve Jesus to bow their heads and *silently* say: "Jesus, I choose thee as my King."

Notice the lesson hymn, and teach the grand old tune of "Harwell."

Lesson IV. **SAUL CHOSEN KING.** **Oct. 28th, 1883.**

1 Sam. 10: 17–27. Memorize vs. 18, 19.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And all the people shouted, and said, God save the king."—1 Sam. 10: 24.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 1 Sam. 9: 1–27.....*Saul Sent to Samuel.*
T. 1 Sam. 10: 1–16.....*Saul Anointed.*
W. 1 Sam. 10: 17–27.....*Saul Chosen.*
Th. Ps. 106: 1–15.....*Their Request Given.*
F. Hos. 13: 4–11.....*A King in Anger.*
S. Ps. 97: 1–12.....*The Lord Reigneth.*
S. Ps 145: 1–14.....*An Everlasting Kingdom.*

TOPIC.

God the Ruler of Kings.

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Nation Assembled. vs. 17–19. **2. The King Chosen.** vs. 20–23. **3. The People Rejoicing.** vs. 24–27.

Time.—B. C. 1095. **Place.**—Mizpeh.

Catechism.—Q. 42. *What is the sum of the ten commandments?* A. The sum of the ten commandments is, to love the Lord our God, with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind; and our neighbor as ourselves.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 8: "Around the Saviour's throne." Other hymns, 9, 12, 32, 92, 98.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—The people would not listen to Samuel's protest; they were determined to have a king. The choice fell upon Saul, of the tribe of Benjamin. The story of his selection is told with graphic interest in chapters 9 and 10. A drove of his father's asses had strayed, and

Saul with a servant went to seek for them. After three days of vain search, at the suggestion of his attendant, he climbed the hill to the city where Samuel was, to inquire of the Lord at his hands concerning the lost animals. Meanwhile Samuel had received a divine intimation that a man would come to him that day who was to be the king of Israel. He received Saul, and entertained him at a feast held that day, took him home with him for the night, and next morning poured upon his head the holy anointing oil, dismissing him to return home. Our lesson passage tells of the assembly of the people called to receive their king.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

17 ¶ And Sam'u-el called the people together unto the LORD to Miz'peh; [Judg. 11: 11; 20: 1; 1 Sam. 7: 5.]

18 And said unto the children of Is'ra-el, Thus saith the LORD God of Is'ra-el, I brought up Is'ra-el out of E'gypt, and delivered you out of the hand of the E-gyp'tians, and out of the hand of all kingdoms, *and* of them that oppressed you: [Judg. 6: 8, 9.]

19 And ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saved you out of all your adversities and your tribulations; and ye have said unto him, *Nay*, but set a king over us. Now therefore present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes, and by your thousands. [1 Sam. 8: 7, 19; 12: 12.]

20 And when Sam'u-el had caused all the tribes of Is'ra-el to come near, the tribe of Ben'ja-min was taken.

21 When he had caused the tribe of Ben'ja-min to come near by their families, the family of Mat'ri was taken, and Saul the son of Kish was taken: and when they sought him he could not be found.

22 Therefore they enquired of the LORD further, if the man should yet come thither. And the LORD answered, Behold, he hath hid himself among the stuff. [1 Sam. 23: 2, 4, 10, 11.]

23 And they ran and fetched him thence: and when he stood among the people, he was higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward. [1 Sam. 9: 2.]

24 And Sam'u-el said to all the people, See ye him whom the LORD hath chosen, that *there is* none like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, God save the king. [2 Sam. 21: 6; 1 Kings 1: 25, 39; 2 Kings 11: 12.]

25 Then Sam'u-el told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote *it* in a book, and laid *it* up before the LORD. And Sam'u-el sent all the people away, every man to his house. [Deut. 17: 14.]

26 ¶ And Saul also went home to Gib'e-ah; and there went with him a band of men, whose hearts God had touched.

27 But the children of Be'li-al said, How shall this man save us? And they despised him, and brought him no presents. But he held his peace. [Deut. 13: 13; 2 Sam. 8: 2; Ps. 72: 10.]

17 *Samuel called the people together.* The conduct of Samuel in all this matter concerning a king is very beautiful, and shows his true greatness in most striking light. When he learned that it was God's will to grant the people's demand, he forgot his own wounded feelings, his personal interests and his conviction that it was an unwise movement, and seeing that a king was inevitable he set himself to direct the choice and regulate the kingdom in such a way as to make the change of government a blessing to the people. The Lord having indicated to him who the king should be, Samuel called this assembly of the nation to meet to take part in the formal ceremony of electing by lot and then receiving their sovereign. This national assembly thus convoked was composed of all Israelites of twenty years old and above. Num. 1: 3. Of course all of these did not come, but the gathering must have been very large, on account of the interest in this movement. *Unto the Lord.* Probably the ark was there, as the symbol of the Lord's presence. *To Mizpeh.* The site is only conjectural; probably at Nebi Samwil, five miles from Jerusalem, in the territory of Benjamin. See chap. 7: 5 for another important meeting of the people called by Samuel at this same place.

18 *I brought up Israel out of Egypt.* The Lord reminds them of all he had done for them as their King. He would once more show them the sin and the unreasonableness of their ingratitude in rejecting him and demanding another king. "It was *I* who brought you up out of Egypt and delivered you so many times."

19, 20 *Ye have this day rejected your God.* After all this history of mercy and deliverance. Their sin is set before them in a very clear manner. The words are full of pathos. They had grieved God by their rejection. *Now therefore present yourselves.* Here is a striking illustration of the law of providence. God leaves men free to choose for themselves, and if they resolve to go contrary to his counsel and will he does not compel them. Here, though the people had rejected him, he yet grants their request and selects the king for them. *By your tribes and by your thousands.* The ordinary subdivision of the tribes was into families, houses, etc. (see Josh. 7: 14); but this division into thousands, hundreds, etc., was adopted by Moses. Ex. 18: 25. The heads of tribes were first called, and the selection was made, probably by lot. The usual way of casting the lot

was by the use of small stones, probably white and black, which seem to have been drawn from a box or chest. The decision thus made was not regarded as chance, but as determined by the divine hand, and therefore an expression of the divine will.

21 *The family of Matri was taken.* First the tribe of Benjamin was indicated, and when the heads of the families of this tribe came this family was taken. Lots were cast for the subdivisions of the family, and so on until the man indicated was Saul. *He could not be found.* He knew what the result of this choice would be, for he had already been secretly informed that he was to be king and had been anointed. Modest and humble, he had therefore withdrawn from the crowd and had concealed himself. No doubt as he thought of the great responsibilities of the new position he felt that he was unworthy and unfit for the place.

22 *They inquired of the Lord further.* By means of the Urim and Thummim, in the breastplate of the high priest. Ex. 28 : 30; Num. 27 : 21. The inquiry was whether Saul had come to Mizpeh and where he could be found. *He hath hid himself among the stuff.* The baggage. The baggage of the whole congregation was probably in one place, and among this Saul had concealed himself.

23 *Higher than any of the people.* Taller. See chap. 9 : 2.

24 *Whom the Lord hath chosen.* Although the demand for a king at this time and in this way was not approved by the Lord, yet he gave the people their own way and then chose the man for them. See Deut. 17 : 15. *None like him.* That is, in stature and physical form. In those days, when the chief business of a king was war, physical qualifications were considered of first importance. Saul was therefore commended to the people as just the ideal of the king they had desired. *God save the king!* Literally, *Let the king live!*

25 *The manner of the kingdom.* See chap. 8 : 11, where the words, "the manner of the king," meant the way in which a king, like the kings of the surrounding nations, would treat him. The phrase describes the arbitrary rule of an Oriental despot. The meaning, however, of the words in this verse is different, relating to the way in which the Lord would have the new kingdom conducted. This was not to be a despotism, like other Oriental kingdoms. God himself was still the real ruler, and the king was his representative, his authority and power limited. What Samuel wrote was a charter, constitution or bill of rights, by which the kingdom should be governed. The substance of it at least was no doubt drawn from the Lord's own instructions, in Deut. 17 : 14–20. *Laid it up before the Lord.* Most likely beside the ark. See Deut. 31 : 26. There it would be ready for reference in case either the king or the people violated the constitution. *Sent all the people away.* Dissolved the assembly, and caused them all to return to their homes.

26 *Saul also went home.* He did not at once enter upon his new duties. Samuel still exercised the functions of judge. *A band of men.* Literally, *The host*, or *The valiant men.* He was escorted home by a band of brave and loyal men, who gladly accepted him as king.

27 *The children of Belial.* That is, the worthless fellows, in contrast with the brave and true mentioned in the previous verse. Belial is wrongly written as a proper name in our translation of the historical books of the Bible. It simply means worthlessness. *How shall this man save us?* They spoke disparagingly and contemptuously of him, and refused to show him respect. *Brought him no presents.* This implies that the other people did bring him presents as tokens of homage. The refusal to bring these was equivalent to a rejection of his authority as king. *But he held his peace.* He would not notice the insult. He controlled his anger. Had he not done so a civil war might have been the result. Probably the fact that Saul belonged to the smallest tribe made the greater tribes slow to own him as king.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

Samuel called the people together unto the Lord to Mizpeh. The secret part has already been done. The king has been chosen and anointed. The prophet knows who it is to be, and Saul himself knows, but the people do not know. They are called together now to make their selection. This incident illustrates the way of God's providence. He makes his plans in secret, and then manifests them through men's voluntary actions. We go about in our daily duties, and work freely and without constraint; we think we are making all our own plans and doing the things that only we ourselves have purposed; but all the time we are carrying out the secret purposes of God which he has made long before. This subject is very interesting, and here is one of the most striking illustrations of it to be found even in the Bible.

Ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saved you out of all your adversities and your tribulations. It is well for us sometimes to stop and consider what God has done for us.

We are very quick to see ingratitude in those whom we have befriended, who forget our kindness and treat us ill. We like to quote in such connection the fable of the serpent, frozen by the wayside, which the benevolent passer-by took up and put in his bosom to warm, but which returned his kindness by striking its deadly fangs into his flesh as soon as it was revived by the heat of his flesh. We all complain sorely of the want of gratitude in those whom we have helped or delivered in trouble. Let us be fair toward God. Let us judge ourselves in relation to his mercies and favors to us by the same rule which we so inexorably apply to our fellow-men. What has God done for us? What mercies and favors have we received from him? From what adversities and tribulations has he delivered us? Are we saved? Are we on the way now to heaven and glory? Who saved us? Who took us up out of the horrible pit and miry clay? Who forgave us our sins? Who rescued us out of the hands of Satan? Who keeps us day by day? There is only one answer. Well, how are we treating this Deliverer and Saviour? Do we recognize him as our King and Lord? Or are we rejecting him and demanding another? It is well that we sit down quietly while we are studying this lesson, and see whether we are free from the sharp blame which the prophet here lays upon these ancient people.

Present yourselves before God . . . and Saul . . . was taken. The lot was used at that time as the means of finding out what the will of God was. It was a divine ordinance. Its decision was therefore regarded as a divine decision. "The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." The appeal to the lot seems to be an appeal to chance, but the eternal God guides that and every "chance." So it came that the lot pointed to the very man who had already been named to Samuel, and whom he had anointed. All this is plain enough in this particular case, but how are we in ordinary cases to find out what the will of God is where choices are to be made? The general answer is, that where we are truly ready to have God decide the matter for us, and ready then to accept his decision and follow it out in practice, if we refer it to him and use the best means at our disposal for learning his will, he will reveal it to us. On all cases involving moral questions, questions of right or wrong, the Bible throws instant and very clear light. Duty is always the plain way of God's commandments. In matters which do not involve any moral principle, where either course is right, and yet where we cannot tell which one God wishes us to take, there are several ways in which we may seek for guidance. One is by prayer, and here we must make sure that we are really ready to submit the whole matter to God and abide by his decision. Another way is by studying the providences of God that touch the matter. What do these indicate? Still another help may come through the advice and counsel of wise friends who understand the whole case. Then, lastly, we are to use our own judgment, our common sense. God gave us brains to think for ourselves; and when we have asked direction and given thought to all phases of the question of duty, after all we must settle it for ourselves, for "every one must bear his own burden." The most delicate and difficult point in all such decisions is to make sure *that we really want God to decide for us*, and are ready to accept his decision. So often all our talk about guidance and of our perplexity about the way is simply a struggle between conscience and inclination. We want to do a certain thing, and we want to get God's permission, or want to persuade ourselves that this is the right way.

When they sought him he could not be found. Here one of the good points in Saul's early character shines out. He knew already what the result of the lot would be, and he modestly hid himself away out of sight. Modesty is always a lovely trait. It is better that we let honors seek us than that we seek them. This is, however, one of the "illusive presages" of the opening of Saul's reign which failed to indicate the real character of the man.

See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people? While the young king stands before us let us look away from him to Christ our King. There are points of likeness and points of unlikeness. Saul stood head and shoulders above the people. He was a magnificent specimen of a man in a physical sense. There was none like him among all the people. In his bearing he was noble and kingly. Christ our King also towers far above all other men. He is the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. In him every beauty of character blossoms out into perfection. He is the only perfect man tha ever lived. He is sinless and holy. All other men that ever lived have been only fractions o! men, but in him all loveliness, whatsoever things are pure, true, honest and manly are found in perfection. He is kingly, having all power and winning the admiration and praise of all whose eyes look upon him. He is by the very grandeur and sublimity of his character the King of men. Yet there is a contrast also.

Saul began well, but his glory soon became dim. The bright promise of his early years was not fulfilled. We read on a few pages and find him anything but a kingly man—selfish, ignoble, full of murderous hate, forsaken of God. But there was no such sad and bitter disappointment in the after career of Jesus. His star grew brighter and brighter as the years went on. Now he is the King of glory, and all the holy angels bow down to him.

There went with him a band of men whose hearts God had touched. What a great thing for Saul it was that these men went with him! All the people were not his friends that day; there were sons of belial who only scoffed and sneered at the new-made king. How it must have strengthened him to have this company gather about him in loyal devotion and friendship. It is always a great thing to have friends, but there are times when their value is simply incalculable. There are times of need when if one has to stand alone he must fail. We are not told that these friends of Saul did anything for him or gave him any real help. So far as we know they did nothing but go with him to his home. Yet this was a great thing for him. They thus took their place on his side before all the people, and avowed themselves his friends. They pledged themselves on his side. There come times in every one's life when simply to go with him is the greatest favor another can show. In his admirable sermon in "Half-Hours," on this lesson, Dr. H. A. Nelson asks: "Were you ever in circumstances in which simply to *go with* you was the kindest and the bravest thing that any friend could do for you, including and pledging every other kind and generous and courageous thing which there might yet be occasion to do? Did you ever stand among an angry crowd tossing your name about with ribald scoffs, and glaring on you with ferocious faces? Have you known the comfort in such a situation of having honorable citizens and reputable ladies come quietly to your side and show themselves determined to stand with you whatever insults or whatever injuries might come? Were you ever called in some great emergency in which dear and sacred interests were at stake to go forward on some line of action, in some path of duty, made evident as such to your conscience, but left rough and steep to your natural fears; and when your heart shrank timidly from the peril, and more timidly from the conspicuousness, have you been reassured by generous men rallying to your support, and saying or showing that along that path, unto that work or trial, they were ready to *go with* you? Then you can understand what it was to Saul on that memorable day to see that band of men, 'whose hearts God had touched,' going with him 'home to Gibeah.'"

They despised him . . . but he held his peace. He acted wisely. It is a great thing to know how to be silent in such experiences. We know that Saul failed to show the same patience in the later years of his reign. Power spoiled him. Here, however, his conduct was very beautiful. It showed great self-control. It showed also much wisdom. Amid the sneers and scoffs of these worthless fellows he was as though he were deaf. We are reminded of Christ himself, who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, threatened not, and answered not a word to the reproaches of his enemies. The lesson is one well worth learning. We are so apt to resent insults and retaliate when others say or do evil things to us. The Christian way is either not to speak at all or to give the soft answer that turneth away wrath. Not only is this the Christian way, but it is also the way of wisdom. The quickest way to conquer an enemy is to treat him with kindness in return for his unkindness. Stopping to resent every insult keeps one continually in trouble, whereas ignoring slights and going on with our own duty is the way to get the better of them, and of those who offer them to us. The best answer to sneers is a quiet and beautiful life of patience and gentleness.

LESSON POINTS.

1. The character of Samuel shines very brightly in all this episode. He passed the power out of his hand with the most beautiful spirit of acquiescence and humility.

2. Study the providence of God in all this story of the selection of Saul.

3. Before we turn away from God in the smallest way we should look back and count up all his mercies and favors to us. vs. 18, 19.

4. When we remember all that God has done for us, it is a terrible sin to reject him as our King. v. 19.

5. There is always some way of finding out God's will in any perplexity, if we truly want to know what it is. vs. 20–21.

6. Mark the fine things in Saul at this early time: "His humility (v. 21); his superb physical manliness (v. 23); his patience. v. 27.

7. It is a great thing to have friends when one is called to responsible duties. v. 26.

8. If we are called to do the Lord's work we must expect to have enemies as well as friends. v. 27.

9. It is a great thing to know how to keep silence when others taunt us. v. 27.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

TEACHER'S SELF-PREPARATION.

1. Study the intervening history. See chap. 9 and chap. 10: 1–16. Determine how you shall use this history in the opening of the class teaching.

2. Arrange in your own mind all the events of the lesson in their order—the summons of Samuel to the people to assemble at Mizpeh; his speech short and pointed to them there; the choice of Saul; the failure to find him; inquiring of Jehovah for Saul's whereabouts; Saul's hiding himself; his appearance among the people; Samuel's commendation of Saul, and the people's shout; the instruction of Samuel as to the kingdom; the assembly dismissed; the return of Saul to Gibeah; his body guard; his despisers, and his wise reticence.

3. Have a clear understanding of the charge against Israel. Select those practical lessons which are best adapted to your class.

INTRODUCTION.

1. The never-to-be-omitted review of the last lesson.

2. Question on the intervening history. Bring out all the particulars of that providence which brought Saul to Samuel. How did the providence of God, prophecy, and the Spirit of God combine to prepare Saul for the kingship? You can most usefully apply this wondrous series of events to the young people in your class. Show them that the seemingly unimportant affairs of their daily lives may become crises of their destiny, as the search for the lost asses became to Saul. Has not God already in your experience hinged great blessings to you on slight occurrences?

3. Do not lightly pass over the events recorded in chap. 10: 1–13, especially bringing out that strange expression in v. 9: "God gave him another heart." *If God calls you to service he will give you a heart for it.* Do not spend too much time on the narrative of Saul's prophesying.

Jehovah Rejected. vs. 17–19.
Saul Selected. vs. 20–27.

I. JEHOVAH REJECTED.—Who called the people together? To what place? By whose authority? For what purpose? With what words did Samuel sum up God's dealings with Israel? With what sin did he charge them? How had they rejected Jehovah? They had preferred the pomp and show of royalty to having the invisible God as their King and Defender. In what like way do men now reject Christ? They prefer worldly power, fame, riches, pleasure, money, knowledge, society, to simply trusting Christ Jesus. Why should we submit our wills to God in prayer?

II. SAUL SELECTED.—By what means probably was this choice made? Give the comparative size and importance of the tribe of Benjamin. If Israel's desire for a king was a rejection of Jehovah, why did Jehovah yield to it? Here we come again upon that mystery of God's providence which is common in the life of individuals and of nations. God gives men or nations their desire. He does not approve of the desire. But he makes the very accomplishment of it its own punishment. See Ps. 106: 15. If you desire power, honor, pleasure, riches, society, etc., you may get them, but your very success will be a failure. Eve succeeded in enjoying the forbidden fruit with her husband; Judas succeeded in getting his silver for his Lord. From such successes may Christ deliver us! Success without God is failure. Failure with God is success. In these days when our young people are tempted to worship success, these truths are wholesome. How did they ascertain where Saul was? Why had he hidden? 1 Sam. 15: 17. What traits did Saul thus show? Modesty, humility. Illustrate the attractiveness and power of genuine modesty in a young person. In the same manner educe from the class by skillful questioning the noble bearing and spirit exhibited by Samuel. He, at God's command, took the lead in exalting a new man over himself—in deposing himself. Hold up his example to the ambitious, aspiring youth. In the same manner also call attention to the wise and noble reticence of Saul at the studied insults of his despisers. This modesty of Saul, this noble generosity of Samuel, and the wise self-control of Saul under slights, are full of instruction for this day.

SPECIAL QUESTIONS FOR OLDER CLASSES.

1. Has not a nation a right to ask a change of the form of government?

2. Why was this demand for a change a rejection of Jehovah?

3. Were the manner and spirit of the demand the sin?

4. What ingratitude did their manner of demanding a king show?

5. What kind of a man, spiritually, was Saul at this time?

6. In what circumstances does God make the answer to our prayers our punishment for asking them? Ps. 106: 15.

Questions for Sabbath, November 4th, to be assigned in writing:

1. What events intervened between the last lesson and this?

2. How would you sum up Samuel's character and work?

3. What sign did Samuel work to confirm his word?

4. What wickedness is referred to in 1 Sam. 12: 20?

5. Why is it a sin for the righteous to cease to pray for their friends and enemies?

6. What motives have we now to serve the Lord?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

SUGGESTIONS.—God has chosen a King for us, and one that will rule in righteousness. He is the best King for us to choose, and the best King for us to serve. Let the board be prepared, as above, before the school meets for study—the first sentence, "The best King to choose, the best King to serve," only exposed to view, the rest covered with pieces of paper. In the desk lesson, remove the paper covering the name Jesus, and have school read in concert Ps. 2: 6; Acts 5: 31. Remove paper covering "God's choice." The best King to choose, etc., is Jesus, because he is God's choice. Read Ps. 2: 7; Matt. 3: 17; 17: 5; Acts 13: 33; Rev. 19: 11–16, and while the last is being read remove paper covering "God's Son." As God's choice is God's Son, and as "all power is given unto him in heaven and in earth," he is the best King to choose and to serve.

Directions for Coloring.—"Jesus," in bold letters, orange shaded with white; "God's Choice" and "God's Son," green shaded with yellow; the rest in white, the word "King" bold letters.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The Teacher Before her Class (for sub-divided classes).—Here are dots to stand for all the children of Israel. At what place were they gathered, and for what?

Now I will show you how they chose their king. There were twelve tribes. Here are twelve pieces of paper. Eleven of them are blank; one has the word "KING" printed on it. A scholar from each class may come and get one of these pieces of paper. Which of you got the one marked "KING?" It was in some such way that Samuel managed. Which tribe drew the paper?

In each tribe were different families, just as there are in our class. Here are more pieces of paper—one marked "KING," the others blank. The scholars from Miss A's class (the class which drew before), may come forward and take these pieces of paper. Which one has drawn the word "KING?"

That is much the way the family to which Saul belonged was taken.

They tried once more, letting all the sons of that family come and draw; but we now understand how it was done and need not do it again.

Who can tell me anything about Saul? Let us look at his picture on our Westminster lesson papers. What do you notice about him as he stands with the others? Let the class finish the story. They will, by this time, have a clear knowledge of the main facts.

Go back to the first verses of the lesson, and question as to what God said to the people when he called them before him at Mizpeh.

PERSONAL APPLICATION.—Here are two crowns on the board, one in the sin-color, and one in gold. What two kings do these represent? Questions of this character will review your last Sabbath's work.

Here we are, gathered before God as certainly

as the Israelites were at Mizpeh, and he wants us to choose a king. He reminded the Israelites of what he had done for them. Let us see if we can remind ourselves of anything that he has done for us. Encourage rapid answers to this thought, until your scholars are impressed with the fact that their mercies are numberless.

God said to the Israelites, "Ye have rejected me." I wonder if he is saying that to any of us?

Remember, if we have not given ourselves entirely to Jesus, then we are over here, under this crown, serving Satan. Where shall I make the marks to stand for my scholars? How many said with their hearts last Sabbath, "Jesus, I choose *thee* to be my King," and have been showing by their lives all the week that they meant it?

Why do I not make marks under these crowns to stand for you?

That is it—I do not know where you belong. God knows. At this moment he is here. See, I am making a heart under the golden crown. I print in it—

"JESUS MY KING."

Jesus knows of how many hearts here this is a picture. He knows just who is saying now: "*I* belong to him." He will take care of all such. Who will pray this prayer with me?

"Take *my* heart, and let it be
Ever, only, *all* for thee."

ABOUT NEW BOOKS.

..It would have seemed that after our own great Webster and Worcester there could be nothing else necessary or possible in the way of a dictionary. However, here we have the IMPERIAL DICTIONARY, brought over from England, and published from plates by the Century Company. It has characteristics enough of its own to justify its publication, even after the other great dictionaries. The most marked of these is its encyclopædic character. It is not merely a dictionary, giving etymology and definition, but it goes further and furnishes some account of the things to which the words are applied. For example, under the word "steam-engine," we are not put off with the bare definition, but have an article giving a succinct account of the invention of the steam engine, of its principle, action and construction and varieties, with pictorial representations. Under the word "sun" we have a condensed account of all that is known of that splendid orb, of its size, motions, spots, light, power, etc. Under the word "horse," we have a brief article, giving some scientific facts regarding this noble animal and its many varieties, with description of various parts. It is thus first a dictionary, and, second, a condensed encyclopædia, and thus will prove a valuable work in the hands of those who may have access to it. It is issued in four large volumes, imperial 8vo. The price is $5.00 per vol., or $20.00 for the whole, in cloth; in sheep, $6.50 per vol., $26.00 for the set; in half Russia, $6.25 per vol., $25.00 for the set. New York: Century Company.

..The last number (July) of THE PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW is one of more than usual interest. The opening article, by Dr. Vincent, on "Modern Miracles," is timely, as the claim of "faith-cures" is attracting the attention of Christian people. The article is practically a review of Rev. A. J. Gordon's recent book on "The Ministry of Healing." It ought to be widely read. Another paper in this number which has a peculiar interest, is that of Dr. Prentiss on "Infant Salvation and its Theological Bearings." Dr. Prentiss glances at the history of opinion on the subject, and notes a great change. He inquires as to what this change signifies, and then what theological consequences are involved in the belief that all who die in infancy are saved. The other articles in this number are all of value. We beg leave to suggest that if the editors would considerably reduce the length of the papers, and furnish a greater number of articles with more variety of topics, it would enhance the value and the popularity of the REVIEW. New York: Anson D. F. Randolph & Co. Price, $3.00 per year; 80 cents per single number.

..LARRY GILBERT. By Mrs. S. K. Reeves, author of "Young Eagle," etc. The story is better suited for quite young readers than for older ones, for whom it has scarcely strength enough to sustain the interest to the end. Larry was a very good boy, but whether there was enough in him to demand a whole book like this in which to tell of it, the reader must judge. Philadelphia: Sunday-School Union. 12mo cloth, illustrated, pp. 164. Price, 90 cents.

..GWENDOLINE; or, Halcots and Halcomes. By Agnes Giberne. The name of this author has come to be regarded as a pledge that the book offered is worth reading. The story is certainly one of her best. There is an interest in it which is well sustained to the close. The principal characters are strongly drawn. Gwendoline wins our sympathy, and then our admiration, proving herself a real heroine. Lady Halcot is a growth of old society, of whom there are more specimens in England than in America; but even she yielded to the mellowing power of grace. "All's well that ends well," and all ends satisfactorily in this story. Philadelphia: Sunday-School Union. 12mo cloth, illustrated, pp. 230. Price, $1.10.

..THE MISSIONARY PROBLEM: Containing a history of Protestant Missions in some of the principal fields of missionary enterprise; together with a historical and statistical account of the rise and progress of missionary societies in the nineteenth century. By James Croil. This little book will prove of value to all who are interested in the great work of foreign missions. It is a concise and comprehensive history of missionary work in all heathen countries, written in plain, vigorous style. Toronto: William Briggs. Price, 75 cents.

..HORACE. By Theodore Martin. Next in interest after blind Homer, among the writers of the ancient times, comes Horace, and here we have a brilliant and entertaining little volume telling the story of his life and his works, and costing only fifteen cents. It is one of the volumes of "Ancient Classics for English Readers," which Mr. Alden is publishing in his Elzevir Library. Half a dozen other numbers of the same

"Library" have been received, including ARISTOTLE, by Sir Alexander Grant, and PLATO, by Clinton W. Collins, both at the same price (15 cents). Send to John B. Alden, 18 Vesey Street, N. Y., for circular.

..JACOB WITHERBY. By Agnes Giberne. A very pleasant little story, written in this author's usual style. New York: Robert Carter & Brother. 16mo, pp. 171. Price, 60 cents.

BOOKS FOR THE TIMES.—Under this general title the American Tract Society have commenced a series of books specially suited for wide distribution, intended to meet the skeptical tendencies of the age. The five already issued are: "Christianity and Miracles at the Present Day" (Cairns); "Historical Evidence of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ" (Row); "Christ the Central Evidence of Christianity" (Cairns); "Antiquity of Man Historically Considered" (Rawlinson), and "Love for Souls" (Scribner). The price of the last is 15 cents; of the others, 10 cents each. The books are bound in tough paper covers. American Tract Society, Philadelphia.

MAGAZINES.—Month by month comes the *Magazine of Art* (739 Broadway, N. Y.), always bright and beautiful. The change in the name of the publishing firm is significant. Instead of Cassell, Petter, Galpin & Co., it is now Cassell & Co., Limited. A large share of the stock of this prosperous house has been distributed among the employés, an experiment of co-operation which will be watched with interest. *The Century* and *St. Nicholas* retain their hold on their respective constituencies. The *Sunday Magazine* still carries the name of Dr. Talmage at its editorial masthead, and his face on the cover. *Mastery* is a new magazine, devoted to outdoor sports and recreations (842 Broadway, N. Y.).

..We would direct the attention of the elders to a little book just published by our Board that is well worth owning and reading. It is THE ELDER AND HIS WORK, written by Mr. David Dickson, one of the best known and most highly-esteemed ruling elders of the Free Church of Scotland. He speaks from his own experiences in a racy, easy, practical way that attracts the reader, and with so much good sense and piety as to instruct and stimulate him. It will be mailed to any address for fifty cents a copy. If not an elder yourself, you can order copies for your session, and you will make a good investment for your church.

..The purchasers of GRAHAM ON EPHESIANS may wonder how so valuable a book, a handsome volume of 463 pages, 8vo, can be sold by our Board of Publication for $1.25. This very low price is due to the fact that a gentleman of New York was so impressed with its excellence that he paid for stereotyping it, and the Board gives to purchasers the full advantage of this contribution to the cost of the book. It is a treasury of good things.

..Those who know how much good may be done by the gift of a leaflet or neatly printed tract, are glad to be told of new publications of this class. They will be interested in learning of some recently published by the Presbyterian Board. BELIEVE! ONLY BELIEVE! is the title of a 16mo tract by the Rev. Dr. E. P. Humphrey, of Louisville, Ky., which can be made useful to those who need to be called into the kingdom It is a twenty-four page tract. Of 18mo tracts the most recent are some grave in purpose and thorough in preparation. No. 204, HOW TO REPENT, by the Rev. J. F. Dripps (2 cents); PUNISHMENT THAT HAS NO END.

..That able paper, the *Christian Intelligencer*, of New York, gives a true notice of one of the recent publications of the Presbyterian Board. It says: "DOROTHY DORCHESTER is a delightfully realistic and readable book for the young, by Helen B. Williams, whose 'Sprag Boy' is one of the most popular of Sunday-school books of the day. We have rarely seen a thoroughly religious book made so fascinating for the young."

..MY GROWTH IN DIVINE LIFE. By Joseph W. Reynolds, M.A., Prebendary of St. Paul's Cathedral.

..MY EMOTIONAL LIFE. By the Rev. George A. Chadwick, D.D., Prebendary of Armagh Cathedral.

These two little volumes belong to the "Heart Chords" Series, which has for its object "the stimulating, guiding and strengthening of the Christian life." The series consist of thirteen volumes, all brief, and written in short chapters, easily read by busy people. They are meant to help earnest, thoughtful Christians in the development and culture of the spiritual life. Of the volumes here noticed the former treats of growth in the Christian life, following the order of our Lord's earthly life; the latter treats of the emotions, natural and religious, of the dangers of the emotional life, and of the control of the same. The books are well adapted to their end, and cannot but prove helpful to the Christian who desires to reach higher things in spiritual life. New York: Cassell & Co.

Any of these books may be ordered from the Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1334 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.

NOW READY.

Westminster Question Book

FOR 1884.

A complete manual for the use of Teachers and Scholars, with Maps, Helps to Study, Questions, References, etc., etc.

PRICE, 15 CENTS, NET.

SPECIMEN PAGE

FROM THE WESTMINSTER SABBATH-SCHOOL HYMNAL.

50 Never Alone.

R. W. RAYMOND. FERD. SILCHER.

1. Far out on the des - o - late bil - low The sail - or sails the sea,
2. Far down in the earth's dark bos - om The min - er mines the ore;

A - lone with the night and the tempest, Where countless dan - gers be;
Death lurks in the dark be - hind him, And hides in the rock be - fore;

REFRAIN.

Yet nev-er a - lone is the Christian Who lives by faith and prayer;

For God is a Friend un - fail - ing, And God is eve - ry - where.

3 Forth into the dreadful battle
The steadfast soldier goes,
No friend, when he lies a-dying
His eyes to kiss and close;
REF.—Yet never alone, etc.

4 Lord, grant as we sail life's ocean,
Or delve in its mines of woe,
Or fight in its terrible conflict,
This comfort all to know:
REF.—That never alone, etc.

39

Price 35 cents per single copy, or in quantities at the rate of $30 per hundred.

THE WESTMINSTER TEACHER.

VOL. XI. NOVEMBER, 1883. NO. 11.

—"It is admirably adapted to use in the prayer-meeting," says a pastor, of the "Westminster Sabbath-school Hymnal," recently published by the Board. That use of the book was kept in mind in its preparation.

—One of the newest leaflets of the Board of Publication is on "The Death of Children." It suggests some of the comforts in such sorrow, and is suitable to be given or sent by pastors and friends to those who have lost little children. Price, one cent.

—During this month occurs the four hundredth anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther. Much interest is felt in this event, both in this country and abroad, and we furnish in this number two articles of rare interest bearing upon the life and influence of the great Reformer.

—Particular attention is directed to the advertisement on another page of "Half-Hours with the Lessons of 1884." Superintendents and all teachers of adult classes will especially want this book. It contains forty-eight short sermons, one on each of the lessons, by twenty-four of our Presbyterian ministers.

—"Should the superintendent always teach the lesson in the teachers' meeting?" Not necessarily. Very often a pastor will be glad to do it, and the superintendent should have no hesitation in asking him. In some schools the pastor teaches the lesson every week, in others he alternates with the superintendent.

—It is not hard to see our neighbor's faults, and to become very zealous in trying to have them cured. The trouble is, however, that we are nothing like as apt to detect our own faults or to try to have them removed. To see ourselves as others see us, and to be as rigid and exacting with ourselves as with others, is not so easy a problem.

—The new lesson help for 1884 will be the "Westminster Lesson Questions." It will be a leaf for each lesson, with six questions on the lesson, having spaces in which the answer is to be written by the scholar, to be returned the next Sabbath to the teacher. For the sake of convenience these leaves will be put up in packages covering six months, and sold for five cents a package, net.

God's Reserves of Goodness.

THERE is a verse in one of the Psalms which represents God as *laying up* goodness for those that fear him. The thought has many delightful suggestions. It tells us for one thing that God planned for us, and made provision for our wants, before we were born. Another suggestion in the words is, that the goodness is "hidden," that is, laid up in secret places for us, in reserve, not to be disclosed until it is needed.

No devout person can look back over the years of his own life and not see how, always just at the right moment, a treasure-house of divine goodness has been opened to meet his wants. We grow anxious and fearful as we see our supplies melting away. What shall we do to-morrow? But when the dreaded to-morrow comes it brings its own storehouse. The widow of Zarephath has gotten down to the last handful of meal in the barrel and a little oil in the cruse. She will make a cake, eat it and then die. But just then comes Elijah. And her experience is a type of that of thousands since.

The Bible is a great treasury of hidden goodness, which is disclosed only as we have need. As children we con its words, but many of them have no meaning for us. Then, as we move on into the midst of the struggles, trials and conflicts of real life, we begin to see new meanings in the sacred sentences. The promises begin to glow with a sense we never saw in them before. Experience reveals their preciousness. They shine out, just as we need them, to pour their bright beams upon our path. Every Christian who has lived many years, and to whom divine grace has ever proved a conscious reality, knows how texts he had never noticed before, all at once in some new experience of need or trial, flash out like beams from God's throne.

When a party of tourists is about to enter Mammoth Cave, they all receive lighted lamps. It may be noon-day, and how pale the little flame appears in the bright sunshine! How useless it seems to carry these dim, flickering lamps, as the visitors walk down the green bank! But they enter the cavern's mouth, and soon the daylight fades out and the darkness deepens into densest blackness. How brightly then the

beams of the little lamps shine out! They no longer appear useless; but for their light no one could take a step. So it is that the meaning of many Scripture promises has to be learned. We see no special beauty in them at first. They lie in our memory as we learned them in childhood, and the years pass on with their new experiences. The light of human joy wanes. Health gives way, or disappointment comes, or sorrow breaks in, or human trusts fail. The sunlight that flooded our path gives way to darkness. Then the promises which seemed so pale and unreal and common-place a little while ago, flash out in full splendor. Did the words have no light in them till just now? Nay; the light was there all the years. The texts meant just that, all of that, the first time we read them; but we never saw the beams until the path grew dark under our feet. We have passed close by all this wondrousness of help and comfort a thousand times; yet we never discovered it till the hour of our sore need. But was not that soon enough? Do we need to have the goodness put into our hands in advance? Will it not be soon enough if the lamps flash out their beams when the night comes on? Will it not be soon enough when the larder is empty for relief to come? When you come to your Gethsemane will not that be soon enough for the angel to appear to strengthen you?

God seems to have hidden many of his promises in very strange places, and until we come to those places we cannot find the promises. "In the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion." This promise can only be found in the hour of trouble. "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee." This promise lies away out in the midst of the wild waves, and you cannot get it until you are plunging amid the billows. "I will be a husband to the widow, and a father to the fatherless." This promise can never come to the tender wife who leans upon the strong arm of her husband, nor to the happy children who cluster about the father's knee. It can be found only by the dark coffin, or at the new-made grave, where stricken ones, with crushed hearts, mourn over the husband and the father dead.

Thus God has hidden the promises in the very needs themselves, and we cannot get the promise until we stand within the circle of the need. He does not give grace to meet temptation when there is no struggle upon us; nor grace for sorrow when the cup of joy is full. Some people are ever dreading death, but God has nowhere promised to give dying grace while the pulses are throbbing with the full tides of life. He gives living grace then, grace for duty, for battle, for service; then when death comes, he will give dying grace. The goodness for that hour is hidden in the valley of shadows. But will not that be soon enough to find it? We are sure of some provision laid up in reserve at every point of need. Should not that content us?

"I know not what the future hath
Of marvel or surprise;
Assured slow that life or death
His goodness underlies."

A Letter from Luther's Country.

BY PROF. W. H. JEFFERS, D.D., LL.D.

THE traveler in Germany regards his work as very imperfectly accomplished if he fails to make a pilgrimage to the chief places associated with the name of the great reformer, Martin Luther. He may, if need be, shorten the list of castles and cathedrals which he had promised himself the pleasure of visiting, and hurry past romantic scenery and celebrated watering-places; but he feels that he must by all means pay his respects to Eisleben, Erfurt, Eisenach, Wittenberg, for the sake of the name and the cause with which they stand historically associated.

In the quiet, old-fashioned town of Eisleben, eighteen miles west of Halle, he finds the place, now occupied by a primary school, where on the tenth day of November, 1483, Luther was born; and in another quarter of the town, not far distant, the house where he spent the last few days of his life, and the room where his peaceful death occurred, February 18th, 1546. "Reverend father," said his friend Justus Jonas to him as he lay in that chamber, rapidly sinking, "dost thou rest on Christ and abide by the doctrine thou hast preached?" He roused himself sufficiently to answer with a clear emphatic "Yes," and shortly after expired.

Between forty and fifty miles south-west of Eisleben lies the more important town of Erfurt, a town which came to its full growth four hundred years ago, and has been on the downward grade since. It is of course the Erfurt of the past, and not that of to-day, that the traveler is seeking as he turns from the railway station to enter its shadowed streets and wander about its mediæval churches. The University is gone; but three hundred and seventy-eight years ago this was the most celebrated seat of learning in Germany, and young Luther, who had just been made a master of arts, was one of its brightest ornaments. A few weeks later he had abandoned all his academical prospects and buried himself in the Augustinian monastery, henceforth to appear in the streets only with a wallet at his back, begging provisions from door to door for his brethren of the hood and cowl.

The monastery building, no doubt considerably changed, and turned to the better purpose of an orphan asylum, is pointed out near the centre of the city.

A few miles further west, on the border of the Thuringian forest, we reach Eisenach, with its picturesque surroundings and beautiful gardens. In one of the streets is shown the house of the kind-hearted Ursula Cotta, who when Luther was a schoolboy here, dependent on charity and singing at the doors for bread, took him in and gave him a comfortable home. On the summit of a high hill that rises abruptly to the south, stands the Wartburg castle, where twenty-three years later he was kept for ten months a prisoner by order of the friendly elector. A steep, winding footpath, which one is glad to find shaded part of the way, leads up to the castle gate. To the right, after we have passed the gate, a few steps forward, we are shown the room where the Reformer was domiciled, and where he labored so successfully on his translation of the New Testament, the bookcase which he used, the table on which he wrote, and the knightly armor with which he was disguised.

Almost midway between Leipsic and Berlin is the mediæval city of Wittenberg, which, unlike Eisenach, owes its sole interest for the traveler to its connection with the Reformation. What associations cluster about the name. We feel as we leave the station and enter the old town by the Elster gate as if we were stepping back into the early decades of the sixteenth century. Here to the left is the Augustinian monastery, now a theological seminary, where Luther so long had his home and where his apartments are still preserved. Here close at hand is the University, now transformed into barracks for soldiers, to which throngs of students were then attracted from all parts of Germany. A little further on is the house where Philip Melanchthon lived, and taught, and died, as the tablet in the wall announces. Above the motley groups in the market-place is seen the colossal statue of Luther standing with open Bible, that of Melanchthon near by; and still further to the west the old castle and University church, where the German Reformation properly began, to the doors of which the ninety-five theses were affixed, and within which Luther and Melanchthon lie buried; and near the railway station on the opposite side of the town, the traditional spot where, in the presence of professors and students, a bonfire was made of the papal bull, December 10th, 1520.

The stream of travel to these and other places associated with the name of Luther is unusually large during the present year; and it is not made up exclusively of foreigners. The German, as well as the American, with spectacles on and guide-book under his arm, is taking in these historical scenes with lively interest. In view of the approaching four hundredth anniversary of the reformer's birth, public attention is turned to his life and character as it has not been for many years past. Scholars are gleaning among the well-worn records in search of incidents hitherto overlooked. New biographies to meet the popular demand are issuing from the press. Professors in the universities are giving great prominence in their historical courses to the German reformation. Lectures and sermons in the churches are made to sparkle with anecdotes from Luther's life, and quotations from his writings and table talk. Periodical literature abounds in historical sketches of sixteenth century life in church and state. The present generation of Germans, however they may deal with the great reformer's *faith*, are evidently not going to allow his *memory* to suffer from their neglect.

They are not likely to attach undue importance to the influence of his life and labors. Nor are Protestants elsewhere likely to over estimate the debt they owe to him as the champion of a pure gospel, an open Bible, and of civil and religious liberty. There were, perhaps, greater theologians than he both among his contemporaries and in the generation which succeeded him. There were men of more profound and accurate scholarship. There were those whose talents were no less consecrated to the cause of Christ and the promotion of his truth. There were men who were not his inferiors in controversial ability. But Luther possessed that rare combination and balance of qualities which fitted him above all others for *leadership* in the great spiritual movement of the sixteenth century. He was eminently a representative of the common people, was acquainted with their spiritual condition, sympathized with them in their wants and aspirations, and knew perfectly how to touch their hearts and kindle their enthusiasm. In his preaching, his tracts, and his translation of the Bible, he availed himself of the language of everyday life, and so skilfully did he mould this to his purpose that the German tongue still retains the character which he impressed upon it. He aimed always at "the instruction of the rude, common man," rather than the gratification of scholarly tastes. He was a man of unflinching courage. Perils from which others shrunk, served only to quicken his energy and rouse his determination. "I hear," he writes, in concluding one of his treatises, "that bulls and other popish devices have been prepared, in which I am urged to re-

cant or be proclaimed a heretic. If that be true, I would have this little book serve as part of my recantation." He was a man of untiring industry and singular endurance. It requires a good portion of a lifetime simply to read the twenty-four quarto volumes which contain his writings; yet during the twenty-eight years in which these were produced, he was burdened with incessant cares, and almost constantly engaged in preaching and teaching. Some of his treatises were thrown off hurriedly, but there is evidence that his more important works were elaborated with great care. Parts of his translation of the Bible were subjected to no less than fifteen careful revisions before being sent to the press. In connection with these exalted qualities he possessed in singular degree the characteristic of humility. It was through no craving for personal distinction that he assumed the attitude of reformer. He took the first step only when compelled, in faithfulness to his charge in Wittenberg, to utter his protest against the shameful traffic in indulgences; and every subsequent step was taken in obedience to what he recognized as the voice of conscience and the voice of God. More important than all else as contributing to his influence and greatness, he was one whose exalted powers and attainments were fully consecrated to Christ and his cause. The truth which he defended, and for which he was willing if need be to shed his blood, was that which had turned his own darkness into light. He had learned in the spiritual struggles through which he had passed to appreciate it as dearer than life. Rome had thrust this candle under a bushel. The Church was benighted, souls were perishing for want of it. It must be again restored to its candlestick at whatever hazard. To shrink from labor, or sacrifice, or danger, in this cause would be to prove recreant to his trust and faithless to his Master. "I can do no other, so help me God."

Leipsic.

Luther and the Reformation.

BY THE REV. R. M. PATTERSON, D.D.

ON the evening of the 31st of October, 1517, Martin Luther posted up on the doors of the Electoral College, in Wittenberg, his celebrated *Ninety-five Theses*, or Propositions, against Indulgences.

The notorious Tetzel, loaded with papal pardons for sins of all kinds, past, present and future, was making Germany ring with his blasphemies. No transgression was too great for him to pardon, no wretch, dead or living, was too vile to be forgiven and to be delivered from the fires of purgatory and introduced into celestial bliss, if only money was dropped into the strong box which was exposed to the people. This was, in its most repulsive form, the preaching which was then sounding forth from the high places of Germany under the patronage of the Papal See.

Luther was still a devoted subject of Rome; but his heart was stirred within him when he saw so many given over to believe a lie. He expostulated privately with the people who came to him with indulgences in their possession. He preached from the pulpit. He addressed his ecclesiastical superior. Finding all of no avail, he at length determined to denounce the vile scheme and challenge any who chose to discuss it with him. Thus it came to pass that the pilgrims who crowded to the Church to witness the sacred relics which, on All Saints' Day, were publicly exposed, had exhibited to them the far richer relics of divine truth which God had preserved, notwithstanding the corruption that surrounded them. No one responding to his challenge, Luther preached upon the subject, and expanded into a sermon the Propositions which he had thus published.

This was the public beginning of the great Reformation in the particular phase in which it has come down to us. At the foundation of that Reformation was the restoration of the doctrine of justification by faith alone to its proper place in theoretical and practical theology. Luther understood this, though he did not systematize the whole circle of revealed truth as clearly as Calvin did; and, therefore, he said, that "Justification by faith is the article of a standing or falling Church." This doctrine cannot be fairly held, and any important part of the Christian system rejected. But around it, and intimately connected with it, there were certain great truths which especially assumed a very prominent position in the movement. These are the great Protestant catch-words: The Bible the only infallible rule of faith; individual responsibility and accountability to God, and hence the right to read the Bible and the right of private judgment under all the light that the mind can obtain; the spirituality of the Church and the rejection of the headship of the Pope. All these points, with the exception of the last, had been imbedded in the religious consciousness of Luther before the Wittenberg proclamation. God had led him through a striking individual experience which prepared him for his work. Then, in the course of the reformatory movement, the truths were brought out one by one as the people were able to bear them.

The work in its progress used, and was used by, the secular powers; for "the reformation

was a grand political event, and progress in civil history as well as in moral conviction and religious faith." The name, Protestant, was derived from its connection with state affairs in the German Empire. In 1526, the Diet of the Empire, at Spires, conceded to every kingdom the right of acting according to its convictions in religious matters; but another in 1529 revoked this, and decreed that the Edict of Worms against the Reformed opinions should be enforced, and against this a *protest* was presented April 19, 1529, by those who sympathized with the movement; hence the whole body were called *Protestants*.

The sparks of divine truth, struck from the anvil at Wittenberg, flew far and wide over Europe, and everywhere found the human mind ready for ignition. Because it was political as well as individual and religious, the movement was marred by impurities and mixed up with worldly affairs, and helped forward or resisted by statesmen and warriors.

It roused anew the power of Rome, which in 1534 originated the order of the Jesuits to aid, in a most diplomatic and ecclesiastical form, in crushing the movement; and the Council of Trent, commencing its sessions in 1546, put the crowning mark of apostasy upon the papal system by enacting into positive laws, with unsparing anathemas against their rejecters, the worst errors which had gradually grown up through the ages and been announced in disjointed forms by successive popes and councils.

The reformation penetrated even Spain and Italy, but beneath the iron hoof of the inquisition it was crushed; and those two countries, rejecting the truth, were long, though among the fairest on earth, the laughing stock of Europe; but the Reformation is now working in them both. It made great progress in France, but the massacre of St. Bartholomew buried it in a bloody ocean, and left France to this day the sport of revolutions, anarchy and uncertainty. The nations in the middle of Europe, Protestantism divided with the Papacy. But the hardy nations of the North, and England, Scotland and America received Protestantism in greater or less degree of purity, and have ever since been the abodes of freemen, the hives of industry, and the thrones of government for the civilized world.

The Protestant governments of the world rule over more than 14,000,000 square miles of the territory of the earth, and over more than 408,000,000 of its inhabitants, while Roman Catholic governments control less than 10,000,000 square miles and 180,000,000 inhabitants. So successful has been the Reformation movement.

Martin Luther, the man who, under God, originated that movement, was born November 10, 1483. Hence the tenth of November in this year will be the four hundredth anniversary of his birth. It is to be widely commemorated. All Protestants and Reformed should unite in the commemoration, and make themselves familiar with the life and work of the great Reformer. Let there be Sunday-school observances of it.

Teaching Young Men.

BY A TEACHER.

THE thoughtful teacher must sooner or later be confronted with the difficulty of determining what to teach. In the allotted space of half an hour it is impossible to teach all matters of history, geography or theology that spring out of the lesson, and the difficulty is found in deciding which department is most important. Is the Sabbath-school for instruction in biblical history or geography, or does it take the place of or supplement the pulpit in the inculcation of Christian ethics?

It does not take long to perceive that underneath the hard, healthy skin of the young workingman of our land there beats a heart as brave and true as any fabled knight ever bore. It may be hard to reach that heart. Habits of sin and sinful thoughts, evil associates and associations, all have conspired to choke up every exhibition of manly impulse; but congenial soil, Christian atmosphere and the sunlight of human sympathy all conduce to drive away the foul weeds and to show the heart in its true manhood. The workingman of to-day, separated from the Church, has also not enough of ideality in his life. He has no great character towards which to grow, no embodiment of human perfection as a model, an exemplar, an inspirer. His life tends too much towards weary toiling, with no rest save that of the grave. He needs a hero to worship. The unconscious desire for a model is seen in the swaggering gait of the boy who believes himself to be the equal of his master; in the funereal garb and solemn expression of the youthful devotee, who has no ambition beyond the ancient ideas that regulated the facial lineaments and outward adornment of the parish minister. The desire to copy is implanted in the heart.

Here, then, we have two facts; first, that there is a heart to work upon, and second, that the heart is either consciously or unconsciously craving a model. Experience teaches the truth of what has just been written, and when its truthfulness is appreciated, the lesson will no longer be one of geography, history or theology, but an earnest endeavor to bring out the manly

impulses of the scholars by directing them to the Model of all models, the Exemplar of all exemplars. Questions of etymological interpretation or doctrinal exegesis will give place to what we may be pardoned for calling living issues. Unsatisfying theories of the other world of which we know so little—almost absolutely nothing—will be laid aside while we deal with practical questions of the everyday world. The Bible-class will become a school of applied Christian ethics, having for its object-lesson the historical life of our Redeemer. His life will be shown as the flower and fruit of a true obedience to the moral law as explained and exemplified by himself. We will teach that faith cannot over-ride the mandate of "Thou shalt not." Christianity will be the beautiful and graceful outgrowth of the stern old Mosaic dispensation, the perfection of the old law; and the chief question will often be not, How shall we be saved hereafter? but, How shall we live in sight of God and man? Without obedience to the moral law there is no growth of the Spirit, and while salvation is wholly by grace, yet there is no manliness or happiness apart from faithful adherence to the commandment. The freedom of the Christian is not the license that will permit him to do all things; it is rather the condition that gives free scope for growth to all his best impulses, and this condition is never attained while there is subjection to sin. Freedom from the moral law simply consists in unconscious obedience to it, and looming up, above and beyond all free men in all ages, there will be placed before the eyes of the scholars the perfect man, the ideal of all humanity. To teach the moral law in its grandeur and beauty, the teacher will only have to point to Christ, the living embodiment of its precepts. He entered into its spirit, and rose above its letter.

Insensibly, too, in thus contemplating Christ, there will arise a desire to discover, if possible, the principles that prompted his acts. There will be longing to know the philosophy of his life. Here opens a wide field for instructive investigation—six days of the week the workingman is living in an atmosphere of maxims based on the primary principle of selfishness. Capital and labor are at arms length, and each is fighting for its own. In the quiet half-hour of the day of rest, however, opportunity is given the teacher to counteract the tendency of these maxims, and to enforce the precept that selfishness is not the principle of Christian economy. The natural world is held together and regulated by natural forces, called by us men, laws. The stars swing in their orbits, the birds fly in their courses, in obedience to these forces. So the life of man is controlled by regular laws, and just as we live in obedience to them or consciously oppose or despise them, so will we grow in all manliness or dwindle into spiritual dwarfishness. By living precept and example, Christ formulated and explained these laws. The lilies grow, the birds are fed; so the heavenly Father will provide for us. Oh, men, wherever you are, there is a God who knows our wants and who will provide for us. Teach, then, to those around you this great truth, and you will know by the flash of the eye and the color of the face that your words have found a lodging place.

But how shall we so study the lesson as to interest the scholars? are you asking. Lay this down as a cardinal point: Truth spoken from the heart always interests. Spirit speaks to spirit, deep answers to deep. But it must come from the heart.

"Thou must be true thyself, if thou the truth wouldst teach;
It needs the overflow of heart to give the lips full speech."

Two Young Teachers.

BY ERNEST GILMORE.

"I CAN'T see what possessed me to make such a rash promise," Belle Hunt said wearily.

"As what, for instance? Are you dreaming, Belle?" asked her friend Jessie Wright.

"Why, promising Miss Avery to take charge of her class until her return. Dreaming? you ask. I wish it were all a dream, that I, Belle Hunt, am a teacher to those tiresome girls, who never know their lessons or seem to pay the least attention to anything I say. Yes, I wish it were only a dream! Then I might hope to awake and find my hands free."

"I'm filling a vacancy, too, you know," Jessie said, laughingly. "How much pity have you to spare for me?"

"None whatever; you need no pity. You seem thoroughly to enjoy teaching those bothersome children."

Over Jessie's sweet face there flitted a slight cloud as she said, sadly: "Yes, it is *sometimes* only seeming. I, too, get weary of it all; but I shall persevere until the end, and perhaps after a while the 'only seeming' will be swallowed up in a blessed reality."

"*Until the end*, you say. Do you mean until Miss Avery returns in September, or for the rest of your mortal life?"

Jessie laughed again as she answered: "I hardly know myself. Of course when Miss Avery returns she will take her class again, so

that will be the end of my teaching *that* class; but I may enjoy teaching so much by that time that I shall want a class of my very own."

"Humph!" Belle exclaimed, scornfully; "it is very likely you may. But I'm sure this summer is the Alpha and will be the Omega of *my* teaching. If I dared break a promise made to Miss Avery, I would pass over the class at once to other hands; but I do not dare; so I'll brave it through as best I can."

The two young teachers were new members of the church, and were just being initiated into church duties. Miss Avery, an old and experienced Sunday-school teacher, having been called from her charge for the summer, had divided her large class into two parts, leaving them in care of Belle Hunt and Jessie Wright. For two or three Sundays afterward the classes had behaved well. After that, they became inattentive and irregular in attendance. Belle, as you have discovered, grew discouraged over the state of things, without endeavoring to bring about a change. Sunday after Sunday she went before her class with a weary face and a martyred air. With a listless manner she heard them recite their poorly-learned lessons, when any of them made the least pretense at having learned them, or else shook her head disconsolately as most of them said they "hadn't studied any lesson," or "hadn't had anybody to help 'em learn their lesson," or "didn't know how to get a lesson."

The first Sunday that Jessie found her scholars inattentive and unprepared as to lessons she was exceedingly troubled. The second Sunday she undertook to find the reason of the change. She questioned each child separately, and received the following six answers from her class of six girls:

"Mamma is sick, and I had to do so much work about the house that I thought I'd let the lesson go."

"The baby's crosser than a sick cat, an' folks can't take care o' cross young ones an' learn lessons at the same time."

"Billy's the meanest boy in the whole world; he took my lesson paper to light the kitchen fire, an' when I pulled his hair he called me a fiery red-head."

"I didn't learn mine 'cause—'cause—I forgot it."

"I lost my lesson paper."

"I couldn't learn mine—there's no one to show me how." (With a sob.)

Of course Jessie was much amused at these answers, but she was aroused, too. After returning to her pleasant home she sat down in a garden chair and had a long, serious talk *with herself.*

"Now, Jessie Wright," she said, "you did not become responsible for your half of Miss Avery's class just for fun. There's earnest work for you right in your path. You've got to do it or else you'll be a shirk. Would you be a shirk, Jessie Wright?"

And Jessie Wright answering herself, said: "No, indeed I would not. I'm on the Lord's side, and I'll be true to my colors, and I'll do my best to be true to him in caring for these girls he has put under my care."

Before another Sunday, Jessie had visited every one of her six scholars. To the sick mother she had carried a bouquet of roses and some fruit. To the impertinent little girl who had called her teething baby sister "crosser than a sick cat," Jessie had gone with the soft words that turn away wrath. She had even held the cross baby for half an hour, while she helped the tired little sister with her next Sunday's lesson. To Billy, "the meanest boy, etc.," Jessie had given some *Sabbath-school Visitors*, and had obtained an awkward promise that he "wouldn't tease his sister any more." To the little girl who was always losing her lesson paper, Jessie had given a box, with the understanding that the lesson paper should be kept within it when it was not being studied. Then Jessie, in her own pleasant yard, devoted an hour to going over the lesson with the little girl who was always "forgetting her lesson," and with the one who "had no one to show her how to learn" hers.

Fall came, and with it Miss Avery. Her heart ached as she relieved Belle Hunt from her charge. Three of the six had strayed from the fold. Even Miss Avery failed to draw them within it again. As for the other three, she found them sadly changed, not only inattentive and irregular in attendance, but discouraged. One of them said, dolefully: "It seems as if we hadn't learned a thing this summer. We've just kind of drifted along."

But a great joy filled Miss Avery's heart as she again took possession of her six girls fresh from Jessie's earnest care.

"You are a blessed girl, darling," she whispered to Jessie. "Your scholars have been walking steadily upward all through these long, hot weeks. You have had strong power over them. It is because you gained their hearts at the start. One of the girls said to me: 'We *can't help* loving Miss Jessie Wright, for we're sure she loves us.'"

"Yes, I certainly do love them, Miss Avery, although at first I did not. I only wanted to feed his lambs, you know, so as to let him know that I loved him, and then I ended by loving the lambs, too."

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FOURTH QUARTER.

1. Oct. 7.—Eli's Death. 1 Sam. 4: 10–18.
2. Oct. 14.—Samuel the Judge. 1 Sam. 7: 3–17.
3. Oct. 21.—Asking for a King. 1 Sam. 8: 1–10.
4. Oct. 28.—Saul Chosen King. 1 Sam. 10: 17–27.
5. Nov. 4.—**Samuel's Farewell Address.** 1 Sam. 12: 13–25.
6. Nov. 11.—**Saul Rejected.** 1 Sam. 15: 12–26.
7. Nov. 18.—**David Anointed.** 1 Sam. 16: 1–13.
8. Nov. 25.—**David and Goliath.** 1 Sam. 17: 38–51.
9. Dec. 2.—David's Enemy—Saul. 1 Sam. 18: 1–16.
10. Dec. 9.—David's Friend—Jonathan. 1 Sam. 20: 32–42.
11. Dec. 16.—David Sparing his Enemy. 1 Sam. 24: 1–17.
12. Dec. 23.—Death of Saul and Jonathan. 1 Sam. 31: 1–13.
13. Dec. 30.—Review.

Lesson V. **SAMUEL'S FAREWELL ADDRESS.** Nov. 4th, 1883.

1 Sam. 12. 13–25. Memorize vs 23–25.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you."—1 Sam. 12: 24.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 1 Sam. 12: 1–12...*Samuel's Integrity.*
T. 1 Sam. 12: 13–25..*His Parting Words.*
W. Deut. 8: 5–20.....*Moses' Counsels.*
Th. Acts 20: 17–38....*Paul's Parting Words.*
F. Hos. 6: 1–11.....*"What Shall I do unto Thee?"*
S. Lam. 3: 21–40.....*"Of the Lord's Mercies."*
S. Ps. 106: 23–48....*For his Name's Sake.*

TOPIC.

The Duty of Serving God.

LESSON PLAN.

1. Condition of Blessing. vs. 13–15. **2. Sin Recalled.** vs. 16–19. **3. Counsels and Blessings.** vs. 20–25.

Time.—About B. C. 1095. **Place.**—Gilgal.

Catechism.—Q. 43. *What is the preface to the ten commandments?* A. The preface to the ten commandments is in these words, *I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.*

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 130: "Jesus, thy blood and righteousness." Other hymns, 192, 215, 216, 410, 513.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

INTRODUCTORY.—After Saul had been chosen by lot to be king he returned to his home at Gibeah, and in a modest way took up again the pursuits of his former life. The position of Israel at this time was very desperate. The people had been disarmed, and were oppressed by the heavy tributes exacted by their conquerors. Some time after Saul's election the Ammonites laid siege to Jabesh-gilead, a town of Mount Gilead, east of the Jordan, threatening to put out the right eyes of the men. One evening, as Saul was coming after the herd, the oriental wail, announcing some great calamity, burst upon his ear. It was the cry of the runners from Jabesh-gilead. It aroused Saul's dormant spirit. He slew on the spot two of the cattle he was driving home, divided them into twelve pieces and sent one piece to each tribe, summoning them to the help of the besieged town.* The people responded with enthusiasm, and the invader was driven away with great slaughter. This deliverance at once won Saul the support of the people, and a national gathering was called at Gilgal for his confirmation as king. There Samuel delivered his "farewell address."

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

13 Now therefore behold the king whom ye have chosen, *and* whom ye have desired! and, behold, the LORD hath set a king over you. [1 Sam. 10: 24; Hos. 13: 11.

14 If ye will fear the LORD, and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you continue following the LORD your God: [Josh. 24: 14.]

*With this method of calling a nation to war, compare the "fiery cross" which used to be sent to summon the Scottish clans. See *Lady of the Lake*, canto iii, 8–11.

15 But if ye will not obey the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall the hand of the LORD be against you, as *it was* against your fathers.

16 ¶ Now therefore stand and see this great thing, which the LORD will do before your eyes. [Ex. 14: 13, 31.]

17 *Is it* not wheat harvest to-day? I will call unto the LORD, and he shall send thunder and rain; that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness *is* great, which ye have done in the sight of the LORD, in asking you a king. [James 5: 16–18.]

18 So Sam'u-el called unto the LORD; and the LORD sent thunder and rain that day: and all the people greatly feared the LORD and Sam'u-el. [Ex. 14: 31; Ezra 10: 9.]

19 And all the people said unto Sam'uel, Pray for thy servants unto the LORD thy God, that we die not: for we have added unto all our sins *this* evil, to ask us a king. [James 5: 15.]

20 ¶ And Sam'u-el said unto the people, Fear not: ye have done all this wickedness: yet turn not aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart;

21 And turn ye not aside: for *then should ye go* after vain *things*, which cannot profit nor deliver; for they *are* vain.

22 For the LORD will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: because it hath pleased the LORD to make you his people. [Ps. 94: 14; Mal. 1: 2.]

23 Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way: [Acts 12: 5; Col. 1: 9.]

24 Only fear the LORD, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great *things* he hath done for you. [Eccles. 12: 13; Isa. 5: 6.]

25 But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king. [Josh. 24: 20; Deut. 28: 36.]

In all this narrative of Saul's election and coronation the character of Samuel shines very brightly. Though himself deposed by the election of a king, he yet made the great sacrifice cheerfully, leading the people in each step, and guiding them with his clear wisdom and steady hand. He did not withdraw from public life because another was made the chief ruler, but continued to serve the people as prophet and counsellor. He now lays down the office of Judge, delivering the authority into the hand of the newly elected king. His whole farewell address should be studied. He reminded them again of the way in which the king had been given, that they themselves were responsible for the change in government. He then referred to his own career as ruler, challenging them to show that even in the smallest matter he had defrauded or oppressed any one. This appeal drew from the assembly a response of assent to his self-vindication. Next he reminded them of the Lord's mercies, touching upon the principal points of their history, and then upbraided them again with their ingratitude and unbelief in requesting a king.

13 *Behold the king whom ye have chosen . . . behold the Lord hath set a king over you.* Both the human and divine parts appear in these words. The people had demanded a king, and God had granted the demand, though it was an act of rejection and hostility toward him. They had received what they wanted, and now the experiment was in their hands.

14 *If ye will fear the Lord.* The Lord was not going to turn away from them, though they had turned away from him. They would have all possible help in working out the choice they had made. A better reading of this verse is: "*If ye will fear the Lord, and serve him, and obey his voice, so as not to rebel against the mouth of the Lord, and will be, both you and your king that reigns over you, followers after the Lord your God*—" The sentence is left incomplete, but the meaning is evident. If they do these things it shall be well with the new kingdom—just the opposite of the result of disobedience, marked in v. 15. Notice, however, the conditions of the divine favor here marked out: (1) They must fear the Lord; (2) serve him; (3) obey his voice; (4) not rebel against his commandment; (5) continue following him.

15 *If ye will not obey.* The reverse side of the promise is a threatening. *As it was against your fathers.* See v. 9. The Septuagint adds, "And against your king," as in v. 25.

16 *Stand and see this great thing.* The sign was meant to confirm Samuel's words, and impress them indelibly upon the people's hearts.

17 *Is it not wheat harvest?* The wheat harvest was from May 15th to June 15th. At this season rain almost never fell in that country; hence the shower that followed would appear to all the people as a direct sign from heaven given in attestation of Samuel's solemn warning. *I will call.* It came as an answer to prayer while the people stood and watched. *Thunder.* Literally, *Voices*, thunder being spoken of in the Old Testament as God's voice. See Ex. 9: 28; Ps. 29: 3–9. *That your wickedness is great.* They were not allowed to forget that they had sinned in asking a king, and that therefore there was double reason for walking carefully and softly under the new government.

18 *The people greatly feared.* The thunderstorm deeply impressed them. See Ex. 14: 31. They feared Samuel, too, as the messenger of God.

19 *Pray for thy servants.* See chap. 7: 5; also Ex. 9: 28, 10: 17; 20: 19. Samuel had great power in prayer, and the people turned to him as mediator. *That we die not.* Evidently they were in great terror. The miracle had brought to them an overwhelming sense of God's presence.

20 *Fear not.* Their fear was terror, not that reverent fear commanded in v. 14. *Ye have done all this wickedness; yet turn not aside.* He does not soothe them by trying to lessen their feeling of guilt. He does not tell them that their sins are not so great as they think. He lets the conviction of guilt burn deep as it will; but he tells them that although they have so sorely sinned, there is hope yet. If they will now walk close to God he will still bless them.

21 *For* is omitted in the best manuscripts. Read: "Turn not aside after vain things." *Vain things.* Literally, *Emptiness.* The false gods and idols of the heathen to which they would go if they turned away from God, and which could not help or deliver them. See 1 Cor. 8: 4.

22 *The Lord will not forsake.* A promise of the Lord's unchanging love and unfailing presence and help. This is in contrast with what has just been said of idols—"vain things." *For his great name's sake* For the sake of his own honor, for if he did forsake or fail his people, the heathen would say that he was not the Lord he claimed to be. God's own honor is pledge that he will keep his promises. See Ex. 32: 12; Num. 14: 13; Josh. 7: 9, for appeals based on this very thought. See also Rom. 11: 1, 12. *It hath pleased the Lord to make you his people.* He had made free choice of Israel to be his own people. See Deut. 7: 6–11.

23 *As for me.* This is Samuel's answer to the people's appeal in v. 19. God would not forsake them, and the prophet would not cease to intercede for them. Indeed, it would be a sin for him to do so. *I will teach you.* He would not only pray for them, but would continue to show them the good and right way, the way of God's commandments. He would still be to them both priest and prophet, although they had rejected him as ruler.

24 *Only fear the Lord.* The conditions of blessing must not be forgotten. *Consider how great things.* Literally, *The great wonder*, referring primarily to the miracle of the thunder and the rain. However, this can scarcely exhaust the meaning of his words, for he must also have had in mind all the great wonders God had wrought for Israel in the past.

25 *But if ye shall still do wickedly.* Samuel's address closes with another solemn warning. God would do his part faithfully, but there must be loyal obedience on the people's part, if there was not, both the people and their king should perish together.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

It is a great thing to be able to say at the close of a long or short life what Samuel said in the opening of this farewell address. vs. 2–5. It is the end of a life that tests it. How does it appear when it is looked back upon from amid the gathering shadows of the grave? What kind of a dying pillow do its memories make? Samuel was able to stand up before all the nation and before God and say these words, because his life, from beginning to end, had been upright, true and pure. There were no skeletons hiding away in any secret transactions of his life which could come out to shame him. There ought to be a great lesson here for every boy and young man. Who does not want just such a life-ending as this? It is possible to have it, but possible only in one way. Only a noble and blameless life can give such comfort and satisfaction. Old age is the harvest of all the years that have gone before. What you sow in the days of your youth and prime, you will gather when your hair is white and your steps are feeble.

If ye will fear the Lord, and serve him, and obey his voice—. God is always willing to give us another chance. We may rebel against him and take our own way instead of his, jerking ourselves by our wilfulness out of his perfect plan; yet he comes to us again and tells us that he will still be our Father, and will help us to succeed in the new course we have chosen, if we will only be obedient and faithful to him. What would any of us do if God never gave us a second chance, and a third, and a hundredth? Yet we must not forget that any chance that is given is based on obedience to God. He is very merciful, and is even ready to take us back and try us again, yet his mercy does not set aside the eternal principles of his law. If any one wants to enjoy the divine favor and mercy he must walk in the way of the divine commandments.

If ye will not obey the voice of the Lord . . . then shall the hand of the Lord be against you. That is very plain. There can be no mistake about the meaning of the words. It is utterly

and for ever impossible to have God on our side if we are not on his side and faithful to him. What an absurdity it is, therefore, to talk about receiving help from God, and to pray to him for mercy and favor, when we know that we are living in disobedience and are wilfully disregarding his law! Mr. Lincoln was right when he said during the war to a visitor, who expressed the hope that the Lord was on our side: "That doesn't trouble me any; I only want to make sure that we are on the Lord's side." That is all any of us should be concerned about. There is no doubt about the Lord's favor and help if we are right ourselves. *Are* we? How is it with *you?*

All the people feared the Lord. When God works some great wonder men are filled with awe, but why are they not touched and impressed also by his ordinary workings? Really these are a thousand times greater and more wonderful than any of the miraculous or extraordinary things that he does. A shower of rain sent out of season, in answer to prayer, brings a whole assembled nation down upon its knees in trembling awe; yet years and years of seasonable showers of rain, refreshing the earth and making it fruitful, make no impression upon the same or any other people. Yet really this is infinitely more wonderful than that. But it is just the same with us. We go on for years, enjoying the countless blessings of daily providence, yet never thinking of God in them. Then some day there is an unusual occurrence; we are saved from a terrible accident, or rescued from great peril, or unexpected help comes in the exact moment of need—and at once we call it "providential," "a special providence." Certainly it was, but not a whit more so than the ten thousand other blessings of the year. Now it is neither superstition nor fanaticism that sees God in the unusual; but it is atheism that does not see him as well in the usual. Every shower of rain, every morning's miracle of sunrise, every day's bread, should bring us to our knees in adoration.

The people said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God. It is a great thing to have a friend who lives near to God, and is on familiar terms with him, and has influence at his throne. Of course we can all pray for ourselves, but most of us live too far from God to have the greatest power with him. At the last supper Peter wanted to ask a question of the Master, but he was down toward the foot of the table. John, however, was close to Jesus, his head leaning on his breast; so Peter beckoned to him to ask the question because he was so near. Those who live nearest to God have easiest access and greatest influence in prayer, and if you are in sore trouble you are pretty sure to want one of these to speak to God on your behalf. These are the friends you will want about you when you come to die. No matter how bad a man is in the days of his health, nor how he despises God and God's servants, when he gets very sick and is in danger of dying, he wants one of these despised people to come and pray by his bedside.

Ye have done all this wickedness; yet turn not aside. . . . The Lord will not forsake his people. They had surely sinned. Samuel does not comfort them by telling them that their sin was a light matter. But though they had sinned they must not despair. They must not give up trying to serve God because they had made such a failure in it. They must not turn away from him altogether because they had turned away in one matter; and the reason was that the Lord would not forsake them or cast them off, though they had done so wickedly. When a Christian has been overtaken by temptation, and has fallen into sin, he is in danger of despairing and giving up. Many who fall once never rise again, never try again to serve God. This is very sad, for there is so much mercy in God that though we fall seven times a day, we should never give up, but should ever rise again and begin anew.

God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you. They had been ungrateful to him and had rejected him as their ruler, yet he would not on this account cease to intercede for them. Samuel's case may often be paralleled in common experience. Those for whom we have done a great deal, and who owe us honor and love, may turn away from us in ingratitude, but we must not for this cause cease to love them and do all in our power for them. Samuel's faithful love for the people illustrates Christ's love for us, which is very patient and long-suffering, and is not turned back even by our sins. Indeed, his intercessions for us only grow the more intense when we wander from him, like a true parent's for a prodigal child. This word of Samuel's also shows what an important duty of friendship intercession is—so important that it is a sin against God to cease to pray for others, even when they have wronged us.

LESSON POINTS.

1. A well-lived life gives a happy, peaceful old age. vs. 2–5.

2. It is the way our actions look from the end of life that tests their moral character.

3. God is always ready to give us another

chance, even when we have torn ourselves out of his plan. vs. 13, 14.

4. There is never any condition of divine favor but the one—obedience to the divine law, loyalty to God. vs. 14, 15.

5. God's hand is against all who rebel against him, there is no use to pray for divine favor unless we are keeping the commandments. v. 15.

6. The fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth. vs. 17, 18, with James 5: 16–18.

7. We should learn to see God as much in ordinary providence as in extraordinary interferences. v. 18.

8. It is a great thing to have one who lives close to God to pray for us in our trouble. v. 19.

9. Though we have sinned we should not despair, for God's mercy fails not. v. 20.

10. To whom shall we go if not to God in our sinfulness and need? v. 21.

11. We should not allow ingratitude or wrong suffered from others to make us cease to pray for them. v. 23.

12. The good and right way of life is the way of God's commandments. vs. 23, 24.

13. The end of rejection and disobedience is ruin. v. 25.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

BY JAMES A. WORDEN, D.D.

I. IN PREPARATION.

1. Carefully *study* Dr. Miller's notes, specially noting those suggestions which are most needed by your scholars.

2. Pray that God will enable you to "discern the spirit" of each scholar in your class.

3. Carefully write out your principal questions. You can then look at them and see if they are suited to your class.

II. IN TEACHING.

1. Briefly call for incidents in Samuel's early life, in his manhood, in his later life.

2. Briefly recall the history contained in the eleventh chapter, Saul's great victories, and of the confirmation of the kingdom.

3. Rapidly go over the points of Samuel's speech. 1 Sam. 12: 1–12.

4. Now read the lesson in concert with the class, then ask for the golden text. You can cluster around it the entire lesson.

REASONS FOR SERVING JEHOVAH.

Begin by asking, What is it to serve Jehovah? Show that Jesus is our Jehovah. To serve him is to *trust* him (John 6: 29), to *love* him (Matt. 10: 37, 38), to *obey* him (John 14: 21), *confess* him. Rom. 10: 9.

1. Read v. 14. What did that promise mean for Israel? What for us? Illustrate the fact that if we *serve* Christ, Christ will *preserve* us, by the lives of Peter, Paul, and of Christians about you.

2. Have v. 15 read. What reason is here given for serving Jehovah? Illustrate the truth that God will forsake those who forsake him by the history of Israel, their captivities and destruction, and by the lives of Judas, Ananias and Sapphira.

3. Have vs. 16–19 read. Ask what time of year was this? What was there remarkable in Jehovah's sending thunder and rain then? What reason do these verses give for serving Jehovah? *His awful wrath against all who rebel against him.* What warnings against the doom of sin does God give in his word? Mark 9: 44; Matt. 25: 46; 2 Thess. 1: 9; Rev. 14: 11. Where is the evidence in these verses of the power of true prayer? What effect did this miraculous sign have upon the people? In what sense should we *fear Jehovah?* In what sense should we *not* fear him? What did the people ask Samuel to do for them? Why should we request the prayers of God's people? What is better even than the request for others to pray for us? To pray for ourselves; but both should go together. Illustrate by incidents from revivals in which many have requested the prayers of the church; have prayed also themselves and have been converted.

4. Have vs. 20, 21 read. What reason is given in v. 21 against turning aside from Jehovah? Illustrate the "vanities" after which people go who reject Christ, *e. g.*, spiritualism, infidelity, worldly pleasure, wealth, fashion. Show that none of these things can "save" us, "cannot *profit* nor *deliver*."

5. What argument for serving Jehovah is found in v. 22? What is meant by the words, "For his great name's sake?" The glory of God is involved in the complete salvation of his people. Ezek. 36: 22.

6. What reason for serving Jehovah is found in v. 23? God will give us helpers. Whom does God now give to pray for us, and to teach us the good and the right way? Parents, pastors, superintendents, teachers, books, etc. Why does Samuel call ceasing to pray for the people *a sin?* James 4: 17.

7. What two arguments for Jehovah's service are contained in vs. 24 and 25? Gratitude and fear. What great things had Jehovah done for Israel? What great things has Christ done for us for which we should serve him? Ps. 103: 1–3; Rom. 5: 8; 1 John 4: 12.

Special Questions for Older Classes:

1. What is the true translation of v. 14?
2. How is Samuel's magnanimity shown in all his treatment of Saul?
3. In what sense is this discourse properly termed Samuel's farewell address?
4. Compare Samuel's farewell address with Joshua's in Josh. 24: 1–18.
5. What caused the terror of the people?
6. Why is it a sin to cease to pray for sinners?
7. Why is it a greater sin in us to reject Christ than it was in Israel to reject Jehovah?
8. What is true *fear* of God?
9. What are some warnings which God gives us against forsaking him?

Questions on Lesson for November 11th:

1. What had God commanded Saul to do?
2. How did Saul disobey?
3. Who were the Amalekites? Why did Jehovah command Saul to destroy them?
4. How did Saul try to excuse his disobedience?
5. How was Saul to be punished?
6. Why is it more pleasing to God for us to obey him than for us to offer sacrifice?
7. What was there wrong in Saul's confession of sin?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

BY J. HOWARD SEAL.

SUGGESTIONS.—"The good and the right way," and "Only fear the Lord and serve him in truth," may be placed upon the board and exposed to view during the lesson study in the classes, omitting the heart outline. Refer impressively to the noble character of the departing judge; his integrity, such as is not always found in public men; his fidelity, remarkable throughout all his life from early youth to old age. His parting words are characteristic of the true leader that he was, "tender, solemn and discreet. They are words that we need to hear and to heed. He shows us "the good and the right way" to live, and warns us against "doing wickedly." Draw an outline of a heart around that part of the golden text which you have placed upon the board, to complete and impress the lesson of the first sentence, and teach that such hearts *will* "consider how great things God hath done for them, and will show their gratitude in obedience to his will."

Directions for Coloring.—"The good and the right way," yellow shaded with brown; "Only fear the Lord," white shaded with light blue; "And," plain white; "Serve him in," red shaded with orange; "Truth," orange shaded with white; heart outline in flesh color.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

BY MRS. G. R. ALDEN—"PANSY."

A good blackboard picture for introducing this lesson would be an open Bible, with a heart resting on it, the words, "All your heart," printed in the heart, and beneath the Bible, the words, "Turn not aside." Over this picture, make a blue arch, to stand for the promise in v. 22: "The Lord will not forsake his people."

This picture it would be well to make in the presence of the class (having it outlined beforehand in order to save time), calling from them the explanation of it, as found in Samuel's words to the assembled people.

It will also be worth your while to prepare two large "IF's," cut out of paper and pasted

on board. One, black letters, and one white, on a blue ground. Show the white "IF" first, and let class tell you about it. Samuel said. "If you and your king will fear the Lord, and serve him, and obey his voice, he will take care of you." That is, put the blackboard picture into words. Obeying the law of God with all the heart is fearing him and serving him. But if not—and here comes in the black "IF." The solemnity of it is found in the last verse of the lesson, and should be explained carefully.

The story of the rain-storm may be told or omitted, according to the amount of time which the teacher has and the capacities of her scholars. If told, it might be introduced by a conversation about snow.

What would the children think if on last Fourth of July, in the middle of the very hot day, it had begun to snow, and soon the trees and flowers had been covered with white! The rain in harvest time in that country was as strange as snow in July would be to us. God sent it to the people as a proof of his power.

The application of the lesson is obvious. God was not pleased with the Israelites for asking a king. Yet, if now they would try to do right he would lead them and care for them.

God is not pleased with us for many things that we have done, yet to-day, if we will decide to serve him with all our hearts, he stands ready to forgive and keep us. The two "IF's" stand to-day. The law is the same, the directions are the same, the promise is the same. Even the motive held out in the golden text is the same: "Consider how great things he hath done for you."

This thought recalls the lesson wherein we considered the greatness of his doings for *us*. We may profitably remember it.

The willingness of God to forgive and receive seems to me the great central thought.

The lesson should close, as so many of our lessons this year have done, with a direct personal appeal to the children to make the decision called for—to come under the arch of his love, where his promise can reach them.

Lesson VI. **SAUL REJECTED.** Nov. 11th, 1883.

1 Sam. 15: 12-26. Memorize vs. 24-26.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice."—1 Sam. 15: 22.

HOME STUDIES.

M Ex. 17: 8-16.....*Moses and the Amalekites.*
T. 1 Sam. 15: 1-11.....*Saul and the Amalekites.*
W. 1 Sam 15: 12-26..... *Saul Rejected.*
Th. Heb 12: 14-29.....*Esau Rejected.*
F. Jer. 7: 21-28.....*Obedience, not Sacrifice.*
S. Mic. 6: 1-9.....*What the Lord Requireth.*
S. Heb. 10: 1-10.....*Sacrifice and Offering.*

TOPIC.

The Penalty of Disobedience.

LESSON PLAN.

1. Saul's Disobedience and Hypocrisy. vs. 12-15. **2. His Reproof and Defence.** vs 16-21 **3. His Condemnation and Rejection.** vs 22-26.

Time.—B. C. 1079. **Place.**—Gilgal.

Catechism.—Q. 44. *What doth the preface to the ten commandments teach us?* A. The preface to the ten commandments teacheth us, that because God is the Lord, and our God, and Redeemer, therefore we are bound to keep all his commandments.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 747: "When thou, my righteous Judge." Other hymns, 456, 463, 473, 474.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—Shortly after Saul's confirmation as king he gathered an army of three thousand men. Hostilities against the Philistines were commenced by Jonathan. Saul then proclaimed war, and summoned all the people to arms. The assembling was at Gilgal. The braver men came, while the timid fled beyond Jordan or hid in the caves or clefts of the rocks. Samuel had directed Saul to wait seven days till he would come. The seventh day was at hand, and Samuel had not yet appeared. Saul grew impatient, for his army was beginning to scatter, and determined himself to offer the sacrifices necessary before going into battle. But while he was beside the altar Samuel appeared and rebuked him sharply for his great sin in following his own will rather than obey God. He also announced to Saul that by this act he had forfeited the throne, and that the Lord had sought another, a man after his own heart, who should be king. Some years after this Samuel brought to Saul the divine commission to smite the Amalekites, thus another opportunity was given to him to show an obedient spirit. Our lesson passage gives the sequel.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

12 And when Sam'u-el rose early to meet Saul in the morning, it was told Sam'u-el, saying, Saul came to Car'mel, and, behold, he set him up a place, and is gone about, and passed on, and gone down to Gil'gal. [Josh. 15: 55.]

13 And Sam'u-el came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed *be* thou of the LORD: I have performed the commandment of the LORD. [Gen. 14: 19; Luke 18: 11.]

14 And Sam'u-el said, What *meaneth* then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear? [Ps. 36: 2; Mal. 3: 13–15]

15 And Saul said, They have brought them from the Am'a-lek-ites: for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed. [Gen. 3: 12; Prov. 28: 13]

16 Then Sam'u-el said unto Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee what the LORD hath said to me this night. And he said unto him, Say on. [1 Kings 22: 16.]

17 And Sam'u-el said, When thou *wast* little in thine own sight, *wast* thou not *made* the head of the tribes of Is'ra-el, and the LORD anointed thee king over Is'ra-el. [1 Sam. 9: 21]

18 And the LORD sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Am'a-lek-ites, and fight against them until they be consumed. [Num. 16: 38; Job 31: 3.]

19 Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the LORD, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the LORD? [2 Chron. 36: 12.]

20 And Saul said unto Sam'u-el, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have brought A'gag the king of Am'a-lek, and have utterly destroyed the Am'a-lek-ites. [v. 13, Luke 10: 29.]

21 But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gil'gal. [v. 15]

22 And Sam'u-el said, Hath the LORD *as great* delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey *is* better than sacrifice, *and* to hearken than the fat of rams. [Ps. 50: 8, 9: Isa. 1: 11; Heb 6: 6.]

23 For rebellion *is as* the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness *is as* iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from *being* king. [1 Sam. 13: 14.]

24 ¶ And Saul said unto Sam'u-el, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice.

25 Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD. [Ex. 10: 17.]

26 And Sam'u-el said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD hath rejected thee from being king over Is'ra-el. [1 Sam. 2: 30.]

The Amalekites were a fierce race of people, who dwelt in the desert to the south of Judea, toward Egypt. They were untamable savages, who lived by plundering. When Israel was on the way from Egypt the Amalekites attacked them, and the command was then given to exterminate them. Ex. 17: 8–16; see also Num. 24. 20; Deut. 25: 17–19. They had continued the bitter foes of Israel, and had frequently annoyed them. See Num. 14; 45; Judg. 3: 13; 6: 3. The time had now come for the execution of the divine command upon this people, and the commission was entrusted to Saul. His instructions were very explicit. He was utterly to destroy the people, man and woman, infant and suckling, with their cattle and all that they had. Saul entered promptly upon the duty assigned. He surprised Agag the king and smote the Amalekites. But here again Saul failed in obedience. He spared the king and the best of the spoil.

12 *When Samuel rose early.* When he heard of Saul's disobedience the second time he was sorely grieved. He loved Saul and still clung to him, hoping that he would now prove obedient and yet be a blessing to the nation. Or the words (v. 11) may mean that Samuel was angry with Saul, who in this second trial had again failed so shamefully to obey God's command. He had spent the whole night crying to the Lord (v. 11), no doubt interceding for the disobedient king, that he might be forgiven and his heart changed. Samuel was probably at his home at Ramah, and he rose early to start on his journey to Saul. *To Carmel.* See Josh. 15: 55. It was in the mountains of Judah, about ten miles south-east of Hebron. *Set him up a place.* That is, a monument to celebrate his victory. The literal meaning of the word is "a hand." It may have been a stone cut into the shape of a hand. It is the same word rendered "pillar" in 2 Sam. 18: 18. The hand is a symbol of strength and power. *Gone about . . . to Gilgal.* The scene of the inauguration of Saul as king with such high promise and hope.

13 *Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of the Lord.* Welcoming the prophet as if nothing were wrong, perhaps hoping to conciliate him by his friendly words. See Gen. 14: 19, Judg. 17: 2. *I have performed the commandment.* There is a boastful tone in his words. He seems to have thought that he had carried out the commandment at least strictly enough to receive Samuel's approval. His monument set

up at Carmel shows that he thought he had done a fine thing. Or he may have intended to hide from Samuel the fact that he had not fulfilled the command to the letter.

14 *What meaneth then this bleating?* Saul meant to be silent about the spoil he had brought back, intending to deceive Samuel, but the bleating of the sheep and the lowing of the oxen betrayed him. The evidences of his disobedience were inconveniently near, and were indisposed to be a party to his hypocrisy.

15 *They have brought them.* He meanly tries to put the blame upon the people, as did Aaron at Sinai. Ex. 32: 22. It may have been true that the people did it, but Saul was responsible as king. It had not been done without his knowledge. *To sacrifice unto the Lord.* He sought further to palliate the sin of disobedience by alleging a good motive. True, they had violated the strict letter of God's command, but it was with a holy purpose; they wanted to do honor to the Lord. Such flimsy excuses for his disobedience indicate a complete breaking down of moral character in Saul. *Thy God.* The word "thy" seems to contain a complimentary allusion to the prophet as a representative of Jehovah. *The rest.* See v. 9. "Everything that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly."

16 *Stay and I will tell thee.* Samuel will not listen any longer to such hypocritical words. He is fully ready now, after hearing so much, to acquiesce without further struggle in the justice of the sentence the Lord had made known to him. It had been hard for Samuel to give Saul up, but now he is evidently convinced of the hopelessness of his moral wreck. *This night.* Hence Samuel must have met Saul at Gilgal (only fifteen miles from Ramah), and not at Carmel, where Saul first halted. He could easily have gotten to Ramah the same day, but could not to Carmel.

17 *When thou wast little.* Rather, "*Though* thou wast little." There is a reference to Saul's own words of humility when he knew that he was to be king. 9: 21. Samuel would remind him what he had been before God chose him for this high office, and that therefore he owed all his elevation to the Lord, whom he ought for this reason to have served most faithfully. There is no ground for human arrogance and pride when all we have we receive from God.

18 *On a journey.* That is, against Amalek. *The sinners the Amalekites.* Their character was very bad; they were robbers and murderers, and their destruction was the just penalty for their crimes. The special sin mentioned, for which this extermination was the punishment, was their opposition to God's people. v. 2.

19 *Fly upon the spoil.* The word implies great greed and eagerness. Instead of destroying it utterly, Saul and the people had rushed upon the rich booty to secure it for themselves. As so often, covetousness was at the bottom of the sin.

20 *Yea, I have obeyed.* He seeks to justify his conduct. He had made the journey on which the Lord had sent him against the Amalekites. He had captured Agag the king, and had brought him back to grace his triumphal return. He spoke boastingly of this, and does not seem to have thought for a moment that Agag's presence was but another evidence of his disobedience.

21 *But the people took of the spoil.* If there was blame here the fault was not his. *Chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed.* Literally, *The devoted things.* Saul seems to be making an argument for defence, namely, that being "devoted" to God, it was proper to offer of the best of these things to the Lord. According to Deut. 13: 15–17, however, such a sacrifice was not lawful. *To sacrifice unto the Lord thy God.* Saul's tone is patronizing. He speaks as if Samuel ought to be pleased at the homage the conquering army proposed to offer to his God. Saul's tone, too, is sharp and arrogant, as if intimating that he had more zeal for God's glory than had the prophet himself.

22 *And Samuel said.* Unawed by the king's haughty bearing. He will unmask his hypocritical pretension. *To obey is better than sacrifice.* Saul had disobeyed the explicit command of God, and sought to palliate his sin by saying that the spoil taken was to give to God in sacrifice. Samuel assures him that the Lord wants nothing but obedience, that he will accept no offerings the bringing of which involves disobedience See Ps. 40: 6–8; 50: 8; 51: 16, 17; Isa. 1: 11–15; Jer. 6: 20; Hos. 6: 6. In these and many other passages in the Old Testament the same truth is declared—that God must have the heart of the worshiper before any external or ceremonial observance will be accepted. The sacrifice he wants is the will.

23 *Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft.* The meaning of *witchcraft* here is "divination by the help of evil spirits," a sin strongly condemned throughout the Old Testament. "Spiritism" is the modern form of the witchcraft here referred to. Disobedience is a sin like this, because it sets God aside and consults itself instead. *Stubbornness.* Obstinate resistance to God, intractableness. *Iniquity.* Literally, *Noth-*

ingness, meaning idols or false gods. *Idolatry.* Hebrew, *Teraphim.* These were the Hebrew household gods, corresponding to the Roman *lares and penates.* The thought is that obstinate resistance to God is really idolatry, because it is setting one's own will on the throne which belongs to God.

24 *Saul said . . . I have sinned.* He admits his sin and sees its guilt, shrinking from its penalty, yet there is no real penitence. His confession is extorted from him by Samuel's terrible indictment, but he does not humble himself. Contrast David's "I have sinned," and the forgiveness instantly granted. 2 Sam. 12: 13. *Because I feared the people.* He still tries to evade the blame and put it off on the people.

25 *Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin.* He seems to fear only Samuel, and not God. He asks Samuel to pardon his sin, and to go with him to the sacrifice which was about to be offered in recognition of the victory over the Amalekites. That is, he did not want Samuel to dishonor him before the people. See also v. 30.

26 *I will not return with thee.* He refused Saul's request, at first, although he subsequently yielded to his entreaties (v. 31), in order to maintain the honor of the king. *Thou hast rejected the word of the Lord.* In his refusing to obey his commands to the letter. *The Lord hath rejected thee.* This was Saul's last trial, and he had failed again; therefore his doom was now sealed. Samuel turned to leave the king, but Saul in his despair clutched the prophet's garment, to keep him by main force from going away. As Samuel struggled to go, the garment was torn. Samuel used this incident as an omen, and cried to Saul: "The Lord has rent the kingdom from thee this day and given it to a neighbor of thine, that is better than thou." In response to Saul's piteous appeals Samuel went with him to the altar. Then he ordered Agag into his presence and had him cut to pieces. After that he went home to Ramah and came to see Saul no more. In chap. 19: 24 we are told of a visit made by Saul to Samuel, but that is not inconsistent with what is said in chap. 15: 35.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

Saul said . . . I have performed the commandment of the Lord. So he had in his own way. He had obeyed in general, doing just as much of what God had commanded as he felt inclined to do, and leaving out such parts of the command as he felt disinclined to perform. There are a great many people who obey God in the same way. They render a general obedience, but pay no heed to the exact requirements of the divine law. They tell the truth in general, but are not concerned about slight deviations. They are honest in general, and do not think that their little deviations count. They go to church, and are very correct in their beliefs, but in their private lives they do not walk as carefully as God has commanded. Yet they will tell you that they have obeyed God's commands. It will be very instructive at this point to contrast God's and man's ideas of obedience. Saul thought he had come near enough to what God had told him to be regarded as obedient; what God thought of his way of obeying we learn a little further on.

What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep . . . which I hear? Sin is very hard to hide. We may think that we have covered up our disobediences, so that detection shall be impossible, but suddenly something tears away the covering and they are exposed to the gaze of the world. A man carries on a series of dishonesties, and covers them up by expert bookkeeping, thinking he is safe, but he is startled some morning to find that the stolen sheep have been bleating and all the world knows of his peculations or embezzlements. It is the nature of sheep to bleat and oxen to low, and they have not sense enough to keep quiet when they are expected to. Indeed, they are almost sure to make a noise and reveal their whereabouts just when they are expected to keep perfectly still. It is the same with sin. It is a poor friend. It professes well when it is offering its solicitations, but when it has been committed it is a poor confidant. It cannot keep a secret. It is sure to betray the man who depends upon it for prudent silence. In most of our lives there are some bleating sheep and lowing oxen, faults, evil habits, blemishes of character, which tell the story of the imperfectness of our obedience.

Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites. He could not deny the disobedience now, with the evidence sounding in the prophet's ear; but he will throw the blame on the people. *They* brought these sheep and oxen. Thus he showed a spirit of meanness, an utter want of manliness. Was not he king? Would the people have brought them if he had forbidden them? Had not he at least connived at their sin by his silence? The command had been given to him, and he was the responsible leader. Nothing is more contemptible than the attempt to put the blame of our sins and mistakes on other people. Yet few things are more frequently done. Adam set the example at the beginning, and many of his children follow him. The true, manly way is to take the blame our-

selves of our own sins. In God's sight—and that is the place always to look at our acts—every one must bear his own burden of sin. If we have done wrong let us be frank enough to confess it. That is the first step toward pardon. We can never get clear of our sins by rolling the responsibility over on some other person.

The people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen to sacrifice unto the Lord. They probably thought that if they used the spoil, though disobediently spared, to make a great triumphal offering to the Lord, he would overlook the disobedience. That is, they would propitiate the Lord after they had broken his positive command, by a great show of sacrifice and devotion. What fearful mockery this was we can see very easily as we read the narrative; yet let us be careful that we never repeat the mockery. We can never satisfy God for our failure in one duty by extraordinary zeal in some other direction. We cannot appease him when we have sinned by bringing to his altar the fruits of our sin. For example, if a man makes money dishonestly God will not overlook the dishonesty if the man lays what he made by the act on the collection plate, or gives it to some holy cause. Men can play all manner of tricks with their own consciences, but none with God.

The people spared the best . . . and the rest we have utterly destroyed. They kept all the fat, plump sheep and oxen, and destroyed the poor, lean, worthless ones, "every thing that was vile and refuse." v. 9. That is about the way with very many people. They are quite ready to devote to God the things they do not much care for, but the things that are desirable for their own use they keep. This spirit is shown in the way most people give to the Lord's service. The gold and silver and the bank notes they keep, while they put the pennies and nickels into the collection. It is shown, too, in the way they treat their own vices and sinful lusts. Those which they do not particularly love they crush out with amazing zeal; but their favorite vices, and fat, rich sins they spare.

Samuel said unto Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee what the Lord hath said. Men can go on and do as they will, but the Lord hath something to say about their acts. If they could leave him out of their life altogether and get clear of meeting him, disobedience would not be such serious business. But this is impossible. He stands in men's paths as they return from their sins and utters *his* word. We never can avoid meeting God after our acts. We cannot get through life by any path so as to miss judgment. Indeed, the voice of conscience tells us at once, as God's prophet here told Saul, just what God says. If we are wise we will ask beforehand what God will have to say, and shape all our acts so as to receive his approval.

The Lord sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites. Every one of us is sent on a similar expedition with a similar commission. The Amalekites we are to destroy are the sins and evil things in our own hearts, and we are to destroy them utterly. Yet how many of us, like Saul, cut away at the little Amalekites and then spare the great Agags?

To obey is better than sacrifice. In its reference to Saul's act the meaning of this saying is very obvious, but there are other applications less obvious. Many people set a great deal more importance on religious ceremonials than upon practical obedience. They will be very faithful in attendance upon all church services, and very devout and reverent in worship, and yet in their daily life they will disregard the plain commandments of God. They fill the week with selfishness, with pride, with bitterness, with evil speaking, and all manner of little deceptions and falsehoods, and then come on the Sabbath, with great show of devotion, to engage in the worship of God. Does not this word apply to all such, that to obey is better than sacrifice? What God wants before our worship can be acceptable is that we do what he commands us. He bids us to love one another, to be unselfish, not to speak evil of others, to be thoughtful, patient, kind, to be honest, pure, true, amiable: and to keep these commands is better than formal worship, and unless we do obey these and other commands, the worship, no matter how costly or conspicuous, is not acceptable. There are many other phases of the truth taught in this saying. It is exact obedience and not something else of our own substituted that God wants. When he tells a mother to care for her child, he is not satisfied if she neglect that to write a book or look after a sick woman, or go out on a temperance crusade. When God wants a man to go and help a poor family in some obscure street, he is not satisfied if instead of that lowly service the man does some brilliant thing that seems to bring ten times as much honor to the Lord. The words teach that the supreme thing in Christian life is to obey God; that without obedience nothing else counts at all.

Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned. The same words have been spoken in such a way as to bring instant pardon. Why did they not in Saul's case? For one thing, there was no real penitence in them, no deep sense of sin. He was not sorry he had done wrong, but sorry only for the consequences, the sore punishment

that had been announced. Contrast David's confession after he had sinned. It is important to know why Saul's confession brought no forgiveness, and why David's sin was so quickly and graciously forgiven.

Thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee from being king. No one is fit for God's service who will not obey him. If we would be employed as his servants, to do work for him, we must learn to do just what he says. Saul was rejected and thrust down from the throne of Israel because he persisted in taking his own way rather than God's. May this not be the reason in many other cases where men with great abilities never rise to any high spiritual influence and power? God will trust his servants with responsibility just as far as they prove worthy to be trusted; but when one fails in smaller trusts the larger will not be given and the smaller will be taken away. Let us not fail to get the truth into our hearts, that if we want the Lord to use us in his work we must learn to obey him implicitly and unquestioningly.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Men's idea of obedience and God's differ. Compare vs. 13 and 22.

2. Sins are sure to reveal themselves. v. 14.

3. It is a poor confession that tries to shift the blame on some other person. v. 15.

4. It is mockery to excuse sin by saying it was meant to honor God the more. v. 15.

5. After all our acts we must stand to hear what God says about them. v. 16.

6. Gratitude to God for his goodness ought to lead to obedience. v. 17.

7. Each one of us has a commission to destroy the Amalekites in our own hearts. v. 18.

8. Nothing but full and complete obedience will be acceptable to God. vs. 20, 21.

9. The sacrifice which God wants first is the surrender of the will to him. v. 22.

10. No amount of worship will avail if we are not obeying God's commands. v. 22.

11. Rebellion against God is the worst of crimes. v. 23.

12. One who will not obey God implicitly cannot be employed in God's service. v. 26.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

1. Give a brief review of the last lesson and the intervening events. 2. Dwell a little on vs. 8–14 of the thirteenth chapter, bringing out Saul's first great sin, in offering sacrifice himself instead of waiting for Samuel. Here we first see the effect which success and power had upon Saul. 3. In considering the expedition against the Amalekites, upon which God commanded Saul to go, and Saul's half-hearted performance of his instructions, apply thus: What special enemies has God commanded *us* utterly to destroy? Our besetting sins. These are our Amalekites. We are not to spare them. Matt. 5: 29, 30; Gal. 5: 24; Col. 3: 5. How are we obeying these commands? Are we doing it by halves? Are we utterly destroying the ugly sins and vices (swearing, intemperance, etc.), and sparing the best, "the darling sin?"

CLASS TEACHING.

I. SAUL'S VAIN EXCUSES. vs. 12–15.

Call for a description of the scene at Gilgal. (Young scholars delight in word-pictures, in illustrations, and in stories.) A royal tent, guards standing near, pennons flying, great military pomp, huge herds of cattle and flocks of sheep. The tall king sees the old gray-headed Samuel coming. Who speaks first? What did he say? What noise betrayed Saul? What did Samuel say? How did Saul answer? What had Jehovah told Saul to do to Amalek? v. 3. Had Saul done so? Instead of trying to give excuses what should he have done? Prov. 28: 13; 1 John 1: 9. What has God told us to do with our besetting sins? Have we done so?

II. SAMUEL'S FAITHFUL REPROOF. vs. 16–22.

Bring out the striking words of Samuel, and Saul's repeated excuses. There are especially two points which admit of close application to the young. One is, that Saul *was little in his own eyes.* God made him king. Bring out examples of the poor boys, the unknown youth, whom God has made princes and mighty men. There may be examples in your own town. But success and power test them. Will they when great obey that God whose providence has made them great? The other point is v. 22. Nothing pleases God so well as *obedience.* You cannot join evil companions with the excuse that you will do them good. You are not to do wrong in order to gain influence or money to use for God. Nothing will excuse us for *disobedience.*

III. SAUL REJECTED. vs. 23–26.

What three sins are here charged against Saul? 1. Rebellion. 2. Stubbornness. 3. Rejecting God's word. How would God punish Saul? Read again Saul's confession. vs. 24, 25. What was there wanting in this repentance and confession? 1. Saul had tried all the time to hide his sin. 2. He felt no sorrow until Samuel threatened him with the loss of his crown. 3. He was not sorry for the *sin*, but only desirous to escape punishment. 4. He cared more to lose the respect of men than to lose the favor of

God. See v. 30. 5. He confessed his sin to Samuel, and prayed to Samuel and not to Jehovah? What is true repentance? Compare Saul's repentance with David's in the fifty-first and thirty-second Psalms. How can you tell whether your repentance is genuine? Matt. 3: 8. From what kingdom shall you, if you disobey God, be rejected? Matt. 25: 41–45.

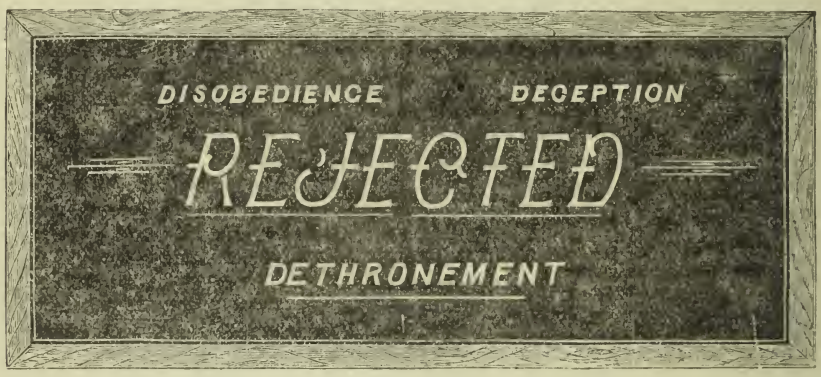
Special Questions for Adult Classes:

1. How had God tested Saul in the thirteenth chapter?
2. How was this command to destroy Amalek a *test?*
3. Why did God command the utter destruction of the Amalekites?
4. What was the root-sin of Saul?
5. Why is rebellion or disobedience like witchcraft?
6. How did Saul's disobedience at last lead him to witchcraft?
7. What is the great warning of this lesson?
8. What is the danger of success?

Questions for November 18th, to be assigned in writing:

1. Where did Jehovah send Samuel? For what purpose?
2. How was Samuel to avoid detection?
3. How many sons had Jesse? What were their names?
4. Why did Samuel think Eliab was the anointed?
5. Whom did Jehovah choose?
6. How did God train David for being king?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



SUGGESTIONS.—"Rejected," red letters shaded with brown, large and bold, to be placed upon the board previous to the opening of the school. Note Saul's "Disobedience," and "Deception," and his "Dethronement," printing each as you refer to them. Remember Gal. 6: 7. Every sinner's disobedience and deception will be exposed and punished, and in the end he will be rejected and *dethroned*, however high he may appear to be in the world's estimation. "The very moment that man or angel seizes upon any other idea to express his relations to God than that of prompt, simple, complete obedience, he has set up an independency in the sovereign domain of God, and brought himself into direct conflict with Jehovah," *and he will be rejected.* The following may be used if considered a better plan to teach this lesson:

GOD SEES / NOTES / EXPOSES / PUNISHES EVERY **SIN.**

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

As objects with which to impress this lesson, prepare two straight rules of pasteboard or thin board. Pieces a foot long, and an inch wide, will answer your purpose. Have printed on these the word "O B E Y," in letters large, and far apart, so they will cover the length.

Give the lesson story, or call it from class—Saul's obedience in several points, but in one he disobeys. Break a piece from the end of the rule. Its beauty is gone—its usefulness as a foot rule is gone. Part of it is all right, and yet, as a rule, it is spoiled.

A curious and interesting point in the lesson story is the fact that the bleating sheep told the story of Saul's disobedience.

ILLUSTRATION.—Emma was told not to touch a certain rose bush in her mother's garden, but in arranging a bouquet she was tempted and broke off a cluster from the forbidden bush.

The mother, coming into the room, smelled the perfume of the special rose, and Emma said: "Oh, mamma, it was so pretty, I picked it for you!"

Encourage class to tell in how many points Emma's history was like Saul's. Also, to tell whether they think the mother was pleased.

The golden text fits properly here. What was the final result? Emma's mother was about to send her little daughter on an important and pleasant errand, but she decided that she could not be trusted. In other words, she rejected her. Saul also was rejected from being king.

APPLICATION.—For this, use the other rule. On one side it has the word "OBEY;" on the other, four divisions, marked—

Read the Bible.	Attend Church.
Be Diligent.	Love Jesus.

Tell the story of a boy who read a chapter in the Bible every day; was always at church; was faithful to his work and his lessons, but who, nevertheless, showed in many ways that his heart was full of self, and had never been given to Jesus. Break the rule, as before. The boy obeyed in some things, but the beauty of his life is spoiled because he did not obey in all.

The illustration is faulty, and needs careful explanation to impress the fact that the boy disobeyed the great command, making the rest of his life worthless.

There is a solemn closing thought: "God will surely reject all who do not obey; and until the command to love Jesus is obeyed, no other "sacrifice" is acceptable.

These ideas must be put into simple language, that the children may grasp them.

Lesson VII. **DAVID ANOINTED.** Nov. 18th, 1883.

1 Sam. 16: 1–13. Memorize vs. 6, 7.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him."—Ps. 89: 20.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 1 Sam. 16: 1–13....*David Anointed.*
T. Ps. 89: 15–29.....*David my Servant.*
W. 1 Sam. 16: 14–23...*David before Saul.*
Th. Ps. 78: 60–72.....*From the Sheepfold.*
F. Ps. 23: 1–6.....*The Lord my Shepherd.*
S. Matt. 4: 1–11 .....*Christ Anointed.*
S. Ps. 45: 1–8.....*Christ's Throne and Sceptre.*

TOPIC.

God's Choice the Best.

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Secret Errand. vs. 1–5. **2. The Mighty Rejected.** vs. 6–10. **3. The Humble Chosen.** vs. 11–12.

Time.—B. C. 1063. **Place.**—Bethlehem.

Catechism.—Q. 45. *Which is the first commandment?* A. The first commandment is, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*

Q. 46. *What is required in the first commandment?* A. The first commandment requireth us to know and acknowledge God to be the only true God, and our God; and to worship and glorify him accordingly.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 266: "The Lord my Shepherd is." Other hymns, 271, 369, 454, 461.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—In our last lesson the announcement of his final rejection as king was made to Saul. He was not yet dethroned, however. He continued to reign for several years, but his doom was fixed. He knew that the kingdom was to be taken from his house and given to another who would do God's will more perfectly. Who this man was he did not know. It was probably not a great while after the rejection of Saul that Samuel was sent to anoint his successor. He did not himself know who it should be. He was sent by divine command to Bethlehem to anoint one of Jesse's sons. These all passed before him, and David was pointed out as the Lord's choice, and was straightway anointed. He was evidently quite young at this time, and one reason for this anointing so long before he was to be called to reign was no doubt that, knowing his future duty, he might be prepared for it.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

1 And the LORD said unto Sam'u-el, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Is'ra-el? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jes'se the Beth'le-hem-ite: for I have provided me a king among his sons. [1 Sam. 15: 23, 35.]

2 And Sam'u-el said, How can I go? if Saul hear *it*, he will kill me. And the LORD said, Take an heifer with thee, and say, I am

come to sacrifice to the LORD. [1 Sam. 9: 12; 20: 29]

3 And call Jes'se to the sacrifice, and I will shew thee what thou shalt do: and thou shalt anoint unto me *him* whom I name unto thee. [1 Sam 9: 14]

4 And Sam'u-el did that which the LORD spake, and came to Beth'le-hem. And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and said, Comest thou peaceably? [1 Sam. 21: 1.]

5 And he said, Peaceably: I am come to sacrifice unto the LORD: sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice. And he sanctified Jes'se and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice. [Ex 19: 10, 14.]

6 ¶ And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on E-li-ab, and said, Surely the LORD'S anointed *is* before him. [1 Chron. 27: 18]

7 But the LORD said unto Sam'u-el, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the *LORD seeth* not as man seeth: for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart. [Ps. 147: 10, 11; 2 Cor. 10: 7.]

8 Then Jes'se called Abin'a-dab, and made him pass before Sam'u-el. And he said, Neither, hath the LORD chosen this.

9 Then Jes'se made Sham'mah to pass by. And he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this. [2 Sam. 13: 3.]

10 Again, Jes'se made seven of his sons to pass before Sam'u-el. And Sam'u-el said unto Jes'se, The LORD hath not chosen these.

11 And Sam'u-el said unto Jes'se, Are here all *thy* children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Sam'u-el said unto Jes'se, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither.

12 And he sent, and brought him in. Now he *was* ruddy, *and* withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this *is* he.

13 Then Sam'u-el took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren; and the Spirit of the LORD came upon Da'vid from that day forward. So Sam'u-el rose up, and went to Ra'mah. [Ps. 89: 20]

1 *How long wilt thou mourn?* There is a gentle reproof in these words. God had rejected Saul, and Samuel ought to have accepted the Lord's will as final, not only, but also as best and right. He seems, however, to have continued his mourning as if unable to submit to the Lord's rejection. Saul had many qualities of greatness (see 2 Sam. 1: 19–27), and the disappointment of Samuel was very keen. *Fill thine horn with oil.* For the purpose of anointing the new king to be pointed out. *Jesse the Bethlehemite.* Jesse was the chief man of the town, the sheik they would call him now. His was an old family, whose pedigree reached back to the days of the wandering in the wilderness. Boaz was in the line of its ancestry, and by his marriage Ruth was brought into the line with her Gentile blood. Jesse must have been an old man at the time of Samuel's visit. His family consisted of eight sons and two daughters.

2 *If Saul hear it, he will kill me* The announcement Samuel had made to Saul that God had rejected him from being king and would give the kingdom to his neighbor, better than he, would arouse Saul's jealousy and lead him to watch suspiciously all of Samuel's movements, to discover his rival. To anoint another king while Saul still reigned would be regarded by him as an act of treason. Samuel knew enough of Saul's character to be aware of his own danger if his visit to Bethlehem and its purpose should be known to the king. *The Lord said, Take an heifer with thee.* To allay Saul's suspicion. It was necessary for several reasons that the anointing of David should be done secretly. While Saul was rejected by the Lord he was to retain the throne for the present. The public declaration of another king at this time would have been treason, and would have led to civil war. The anointing of David so long before he was to be called to reign was intended only as a secret intimation to himself—that the divine choice had fallen upon him. He was not to take any step to obtain the throne. There was no duplicity therefore in the course which Samuel was directed to take. It was necessary that the primary object of his visit to Bethlehem should be concealed, and hence only the secondary intention—to offer sacrifice—was declared.

This incident has been frequently quoted, as if in it God gave sanction to untruth—but this is a baseless notion, entirely unsupported by the facts of the case. To lie, to tell that which we know to be untrue, is one thing; to refrain from telling everything we know or intend to those who have no right to this knowledge, is another and widely different thing. We must hold to absolute opposition to lying, but this does not compel us to tell to every man everything we know or everything we propose doing. In a court of justice, the witness may properly be required to tell the truth not only, but "the whole truth" bearing on the matter in question. He is there to give all the light that can be thrown by the facts on a question of guilt or innocence. His knowledge is not his own; it belongs to justice. But no rule of morals requires the "making a clean breast of it"—the telling of all we know or intend—to those who have no right to such knowledge, and would make a bad use of it if it were given them. To

tell everything we know is to stir up strife and ill-will on every side. Samuel was to tell no lie, but he was to withhold doing mischief and endangering the lives of innocent men.

3, 4 *The sacrifice.* Such sacrifices, followed by feasts, must have been common in Samuel's administration, or Saul's attention would still have been drawn to this meeting. *The elders . . . trembled.* Probably such visitations usually implied some wrong committed by the people of the town which required rebuke and expiation, or at least investigation. This would account for the trembling of the chief men. Or the fact of the breach between Samuel and Saul may have made the elders afraid to receive the prophet, lest thereby they should incur the king's wrath.

5 *Sanctify yourselves and come with me.* This sanctification was by ceremonial washings, and by abstaining from things unclean. See Ex. 19: 10–15; Josh 3: 5. *Jesse and his sons.* Samuel seems to have taken special care that these should be purified.

6 *When they were come.* It was probably between the sacrifice and the feast that this occurred. If so, then David was not present at the sacrifice. v. 11. It may be, however, that the scene here described took place before the sacrifice, while the ceremonies of purification were going on. *He looked on Eliab and said.* It must be remembered that Samuel did not tell any one but David himself the object of his visit. What he said, therefore, was said to himself or to the Lord, and not aloud. He was impressed by the appearance of Eliab, who, no doubt, was of fine physical proportions.

7 *The Lord said.* Answering Samuel's thought, and speaking only to his heart. This king was not to be chosen as Saul had been, for his physical qualities, but for qualities of the heart.

8–10 *Then Jesse called.* The summoning of his sons to pass before the prophet was part of the ordinary courtesy of the occasion; Jesse did not know what was going on in secret in the prophet's own heart. The seven older sons came in succession into Samuel's presence, but the Lord chose none of these. Jesse seems from this to have had eight sons, although in 1 Chron. 2: 13–15 only seven are ascribed to him. *The Lord hath not chosen these.* There was no intimation in these words to Jesse of the particular object to which Samuel had reference.

11 *There remaineth yet the youngest.* There was probably a great difference in age between David and his older brothers. He was apparently only a lad, and was looked upon by the others more as their attendant or servant than their equal. See also chap. 17: 17, 28. He would not have been called from the field at all for this feast had not Samuel so directed. *We will not sit down.* Or, surround the table, that is, for the sacrificial feast.

12 *Ruddy.* Red-haired. See Gen. 25: 25; 1 Sam. 17: 42. This color, with the complexion accompanying it, was greatly admired, as belonging to the highest type of manly beauty in the East, where the men were mostly dark-haired with sallow faces. *A beautiful countenance.* Referring to his eyes. *Goodly to look to.* Referring to his face and figure. David's beauty was evidently very striking. Compare Gen. 39: 6; Ex. 2: 2, and Acts 7: 20.

13 *Then Samuel . . . anointed him.* Anointing with oil was a ceremony of setting apart for several offices—those of prophet, priest and king. *In the midst of his brethren.* The act apparently was performed in the presence of the family, although some authorities claim that the words mean *from among* his brethren, not necessarily in their presence. The mere anointing, however, would not indicate the object for which the boy was thus set apart. It might have signified only that Samuel had chosen David for a pupil in the school of the prophets, and it is not improbable that he was thus trained. It is evident at least that David's family did not suspect that he was to be king. Josephus says that Samuel took David apart and whispered into his ear the meaning of the act of anointing as he performed it. *The Spirit of the Lord came upon David.* As upon Saul also when he was anointed. See chap. 10: 6. New divine power at once rested upon him, and the preparation for his high and sacred calling at once began. But he kept his momentous secret in his own breast. He was never disloyal to Saul. He never did anything to get the place for which he had been anointed. Yet the knowledge of his destiny must have exercised a wondrous influence over him during the years that ensued.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him? When God renders a decision we should be ready to acquiesce. Yet sometimes it is hard when the decision touches any of our hopes. We are apt then to grieve just as Samuel did. The Lord's words imply that it ought to have been enough for Samuel that the Lord had rejected Saul. It was a divine purpose, and therefore it must be right. Besides, when God acts the servant should be

silent. It ought to be enough for any one, in private or public sorrow, that the Lord has so ordered. Grief is not in itself sinful, for Jesus wept, once softly, in sympathy with friends in sorrow, and once in loud lamentation over the self-wrought ruin of a nation. Yet grieving may become sin. It *is* sin when it is insubmissive. The sorrow of a child of God should never be rebellious. Even when no ray of light can be seen God's wisdom and love should be trusted. It should be enough that *he* does it, and the tears should be dried.

I will send thee to Jesse . . . I have provided me a king among his sons. The Lord is never at a loss for a man. When one fails he has another ready. His plans and purposes go on in spite of human failure, and through all seeming disaster. This shows us, too, that God has a plan for every one's life. Here was a boy, keeping the sheep in the fields, probably never dreaming of greatness, and yet God had him marked out to be the king of Israel. The boys in the classes that will study this lesson to-day do not know what God has in mind for them to be or to do in this world. They may be sure, however, that for every one of them he has some plan. There is something distinct and clear in his thought for each one of them. It may be a great place or a small one, as the world rates greatness or smallness, but every boy should feel that to be just what God made him to be, is the grandest, noblest, best thing possible for him in this world. If God made him to be a carpenter, and by his own restless struggles and strivings he gets to be a member of Congress or President of the United States, his place is not half so high and great in the angels' sight as if he had been the carpenter he was meant to be. The greatest thing any one can do in this world is God's will; the grandest place any one can attain is the place God intended him to fill. Is all ambition wrong then? Yes, unless its aim is to fulfil God's plan for our lives, and unless we let God lead us in all our striving and aspiration. How can we know what God made us for and wants us to be? By doing his will day by day, with quiet fidelity, in whatever place we find ourselves. Then he will lead us to that which he has for us to do. Failure in the lowlier duties will hinder our promotion to the higher.

Call Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will shew thee what thou shalt do. God does not usually show us all our duty at once. He gives us our work piece by piece. He opens the way step by step. When one is traveling through a hilly country he can from one hill-top see his road before him to the next hill-top, but there it seems to end. However, he has but to journey on, and when he gets to the next summit another stretch of road is seen, and so on to the end. It is so in life. We can only see our way a certain distance. Thus far it is clear, but what shall we do after that? No matter. Do what is plain now, and when you get that done you will be shown what to do next. When a man starts out at night with a lantern to walk a mile, the lantern does not light his whole path. But it does light space enough before him always for another step, and, as he takes that one, for still another, until at last it lights him to his own home-door. So God lights the path of duty if we take the lamp he gives us—not the whole course of life at once, but one step at a time, till at length we reach the end at heaven's gates. All we need want to know for any hour is that hour's duty; when we do that God will show us what next.

Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. And there is often a great difference between the two. Many men who are splendid physically are lacking in both mental and moral qualities; and many who are insignificant in outward appearance have grand souls. The lesson for us to learn is, that God's standard is not physical stature or beauty, but the life that is within. When soldiers are wanted, applicants are measured and weighed and their health tested; when God wants soldiers he applies moral measurements. In these modern days there is a great deal of attention paid, especially in our colleges, to physical culture. Some of the boys would rather stand well in base-ball clubs and rowing clubs than in the class-rooms. They think more of fine muscles than of a fine mind or of a beautiful soul. It may be well to inquire what really makes a man—muscle, or mind and heart? Eliab was a fine fellow as to his body, yet he was not the man the Lord chose when he wanted a king. Of course it is right to give attention to physical culture, but it will be a pity if in doing this the culture of the soul is neglected.

There remaineth yet the youngest . . . he keepeth the sheep. It was not thought worth while even to have this lad brought in from the field to the feast. Apparently he came near being overlooked altogether. It is often the way that those whom the Lord chooses for the great places in his kingdom are the ones men overlook. The Lord knows the men he wants, though they are clad in shepherd's garb.

Samuel . . . anointed him . . . and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David. The oil was but a symbol; the Spirit was the real anointing. It

set him apart for God's service. It began to work in his heart the needed preparation for the holy and responsible service to which in due time he would be called. We all need a heavenly anointing to fit us for God's service. Let every lad in the classes to-day bare his head for the heavenly oil. You do not know what God made you for—something very noble, you may be sure, even in this world, if you will fulfil his thought and purpose. But did you know that he wants you to be a king, too? He does, for the Bible says that he redeems all of us to make us "*kings* and priests."

LESSON POINTS.

1. We ought to submit without complaining to God's disposition of men and things in his own world. v. 1.

2. The Lord always has a man for every place; when one fails he has another ready. v. 1.

3. The Lord is the Chief Ruler; he pulls down one and sets another up. v. 1.

4. The Lord conceals his purposes from men until they are ripe. vs. 2, 3.

5. God shows us our duty only step by step as we go on. If we do not take the one step we shall not be ready to take the next. v. 3.

6. God often passes by those that men would choose and finds his great servants among those overlooked by the world. vs. 6, 7.

7. It is more important how our hearts appear than our bodies. v. 7.

8. The Lord's chosen are often left out when men make feasts. v. 11.

9. We all need the divine anointing to fit us for life and its duties. v. 13.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

APPROACH.

QUESTION ON THE LIFE OF SAUL. What were the acts of rebellion for which Saul was rejected? What was the secret of his failure to destroy all the spoil of the Amalekites? What was his sin at Gilgal, recorded 1 Sam. 13: 1–10? Recall the closing scene of the last lesson—Saul's rude grasp of the prophet's mantle; the fresh sign that the kingdom was rent from him; Samuel's hewing Agag into pieces before the Lord. Nothing will prove so appropriate a background to the bright and glorious history of David as the gloomy and disappointing career of Saul. Bring out the striking contrast.

LESSON OUTLINE.

DAVID ANOINTED
BY
JEHOVAH'S
- COMMAND. vs. 1–5.
- CHOICE. vs. 6–12.
- CONSECRATING RITE. v. 13.

QUESTIONS AND APPLICATIONS.

I. *David Anointed by Jehovah's Command.*

Bring out the nobility of Samuel's unselfish mourning for Saul. How it illustrates Prov. 24: 17. What was Jehovah's word to the mourning prophet? Why should our disappointments over our efforts for some men not restrain our efforts for others? What lesson is there from Jehovah's mention of the family from whom the new king was chosen? God knows and marks the families which call upon his name. God knows where his chosen resides—"the Bethlehemite." How did Samuel reply? What reason had Samuel for hesitation as to the mode of obeying Jehovah's command? Saul had probably manifested even then that jealous and revengeful spirit which afterward possessed him. For what reasons can we see that there was no deception in the plan given by Jehovah? Secrecy and concealment are often necessary, and are not deception. Samuel did go for sacrifice; that was enough to remove suspicion from his journey. He was under no obligation to reveal the other, the secret part of his mission. Why did the elders of Bethlehem tremble at Samuel's approach?

II. *By Jehovah's Choice.* vs. 6–12.

What feast followed the sacrifice? How many sons had Jesse? See also 1 Sam. 17: 12; 1 Chron. 2: 13–15. What was the name of the eldest? Why did Samuel suppose Eliab to be the Lord's anointed? With what words did Jehovah answer Samuel's thought? Mention some things which influence men by their outward appearance? Physical beauty, intellectual power, fashion, social accomplishments, wealth, manners, eloquence, wit, learning, bodily strength. Illustrate the fact that even Christian people are influenced by such things in estimating persons. See Jas. 2: 1–4; 2 Cor. 10: 7. These things often decide Christian people in the choice of a church, a pastor, a husband, a wife, a school. Is this wrong? Why? The essence of the motive of such choices is worldliness. 1 John 2: 17. Jehovah's choice is different. On what does he look? Meaning of this? The character—what the man really is in God's sight; the sum total of his principles. How can we tell what is the real character of a person? Matt. 7: 16–20. How can we apply the principle of choosing persons or institutions by their true character before God, to our choice of friends, of pastors, teachers, school? Picture all the sons of Jesse rejected by him who looketh upon the heart. Where was David? Why had he not been called to the

sacrifice? What was he doing? What is the lesson here for the young? Prov. 22: 29. What was Moses doing when Jehovah called him? Ex. 3: 1, 2. Gideon? Judg. 6: 11. Elisha? 1 Kings 19: 19. John and James, Peter and Andrew? God always calls *industrious* for his anointed men. He never calls an idler, nor one too proud to work. What was David's appearance? What were his physical endowments? Ps. 18: 33, 34; 1 Sam. 17: 34, 35. His name means "beloved," "the darling."

III. *By Jehovah's Consecrating Rite.*

Bring out the significance of this anointing. But the supreme matter is given in the words, "The Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward." The lesson from all this is what? God *chooses;* God *marks* out; God *qualifies* his workers. For what has God chosen *you?* How has he marked you out for it? Have you received the special baptism of the Spirit of God to fit you for that special service? How can you know for what God has chosen you? 1. Know your aptitudes. 2. Know your inclination. 3. Study God's providential leadings. 4. Counsel wise friends. 5. Ask God, How can you secure the anointing of the Holy One?

Questions for November 25th:

1. How did David come to be in camp at this time?
2. Why did he refuse to go in Saul's armor?
3. With what weapons did he fight?
4. What advantages had these weapons in such a duel?
5. What giants have we to fight?
6. With what weapons must we meet them?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

SUGGESTIONS.—Saul, disobedient, dishonored, is disowned. God provides himself a king. He does not hurry in his work. It is about thirty years since chap. 13: 14. In his directing, controlling and choosing he seeth not as man seeth, and he makes no mistakes. Israel had failed through pride and unbelief. God steps in and selects a lad from the pasture fields who shall be a man after God's heart. "He chooses the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty . . . that no flesh should glory in his presence." And God's choice is always the best. His wisdom is wonderful. On the reverse side of the board may be placed in a brief sentence the character of the king selected, as follows:

FAIR WITHOUT, WITHIN.

Directions for Coloring.—"I have provided me a king," yellow shaded with red; "GOD," orange shaded with white; "Directing, Controling, Choosing," pink; lower line, white shaded with green.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The Teacher Before her Class.—Commence with a review of last lesson, recalling the fact that a new king was needed. Follow Samuel in his journey to Jesse's house. Make marks for him and for Jesse.

I suppose Jesse understood that one of his sons was to be chosen for a high place. I think he believed that his handsome son Eliab would be the one. This mark stands for him.

What did Samuel think when he saw him coming? What did God say to him? Eliab must stand aside; he is not the one. Here comes Abinadab. Will he be chosen? No, he must stand aside.

Follow the story through the various rejections. Listen to Samuel; he is asking a question: "Haven't you another son?" "Yes," Jesse said. "I have David, my youngest boy, but he is away, taking care of sheep." Then Samuel said he must be sent for.

Over here is the sheepfold. This mark is for David sitting among his sheep. Here is a mark for the one who was sent to call him. Imagine a conversation between David and the messenger. Follow them to the house, and detail the scene. Try to make the entire story *vivid.*

PRACTICAL APPLICATION.

Central Thought.—The Lord picking out his servants. How does he choose them?

A pasteboard heart would make a helpful object with which to impress this lesson. One side of it pure white, to represent the "outward appearance;" the other side black, to represent the way in which the heart too often looks to God. All hearts are black in his sight, unless the name "JESUS" is written on them.

A third heart, covered with red paper, with the name Jesus in gold letters, might serve to further impress this truth.

Only such servants are "chosen" for God's work. Have your children an ambition to be chosen to serve him? The way is plain. Their duty may be to rock the cradle instead of watch the sheep; but God is watching them, and knows whether they are faithful in their own little corners.

Lesson VIII. **DAVID AND GOLIATH.** Nov. 25th, 1883.

1 Sam. 17: 38-51. Memorize vs. 45, 46.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The battle is the Lord's."—1 Sam. 17: 47.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 1 Sam. 17: 1-11 ..... *Goliath's Challenge.*
T. 1 Sam. 17: 13-37 ..... *David Israel's Champion.*
W. 1 Sam. 17: 38-51 ..... *David and Goliath.*
Th. 2 Chron. 32: 1-23..... *Hezekiah's Courage.*
F. Ps. 46: 1-11..... *God our Refuge.*
S. Rom. 8: 31-39..... *God with us*
S. 1 Cor. 1: 19-31..... *The Weak—the Mighty.*

TOPIC.

Victory by Faith.

LESSON PLAN.

1. David's Armor. vs. 38-40. **2. The Giant's Disdain.** vs. 41-44. **3. David's Confidence.** vs. 45-47. **4. The Giant Slain.** vs. 48-51.

Time.—B. C. 1063. **Place.**—The valley of Elah, fourteen miles south-west from Jerusalem, on the way to Gaza.

Catechism.—Q. 47. *What is forbidden in the first commandment?* A. The first commandment forbiddeth the denying, or not worshiping and glorifying, the true God as God, and our God, and the giving that worship and glory to any other, which is due to him alone.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 951: "Stand up, stand up for Jesus." Other hymns, 511, 512, 515, 518, 666.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—From this time David is the principal figure in the history. Several years must have passed between his anointing and the incident of this passage. His first introduction to Saul, following the order in the Scripture narrative, was as a skilful musician. Saul, after his rejection, settled down into a sort of gloomy insanity. The Lord withdrew his Spirit from him, and he passed under the power of "an evil spirit from the Lord," which "troubled him." To soothe him his friends suggested music, and David came to play on his harp before him. Apparently his stay at this time was brief, as when Saul saw him again at the time of his encounter with the giant he did not recognize him. He had returned to his duties as a shepherd, and was thus engaged when sent on an errand to his brothers in the army.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

38 ¶ And Saul armed Da'vid with his armor, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail.

39 And Da'vid girded his sword upon his armor, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved *it.* And Da'vid said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved *them.* And Da'vid put them off him. [Hos. 1: 7; 2 Cor. 10: 4, 5.]

40 And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling *was* in his hand: and he drew near to the Phi-lis'tine. [Ps. 20: 7.]

41 And the Phi-lis'tine came on and drew near unto Da'vid; and the man that bare the shield *went* before him. [Judg. 3: 31.]

42 And when the Phi-lis'tine looked about, and saw Da'vid, he disdained him: for he

was *but* a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance. [Ps. 123 : 3, 4 ; 1 Cor. 1 : 27, 28.]

43 And the Phi-lis'tine said unto Da'vid, *Am* I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Phi-lis'tine cursed Da'vid by his gods. [2 Sam. 3 : 8 ; 2 Kings 8 : 13.]

44 And the Phi-lis'tine said to Da'vid, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field. [1 Kings 20 : 10, 11.]

45 Then said Da'vid to the Phi-lis'tine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Is'ra-el, whom thou hast defied. [Ps. 124 : 8.]

46 This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Phi-lis'tines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Is'ra-el. [Deut. 28 : 26 ; Josh. 4 : 24 ; Isa. 52 : 10.]

47 And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle *is* the LORD'S, and he will give you into our hands. [Ps. 44 : 6 ; Hos. 1 : 7.]

48 And it came to pass, when the Phi-lis'tine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet Da'vid, that Da'vid hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Phi-lis'tine. [Ps. 27 : 1.]

49 And Da'vid put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang *it*, and smote the Phi-lis'tine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth. [1 Kings 22 : 34 ; 2 Kings 9 : 24.]

50 So Da'vid prevailed over the Phi-lis'tine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Phi-lis'tine, and slew him: but *there was* no sword in the hand of Da'vid. [1 Sam. 21 : 9.]

51 Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Phi-lis'tine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Phi-lis'tines saw their champion was dead, they fled. [Heb. 11 : 34 ; Ps. 7 : 15.]

The occasion which led to this exploit of David was a gathering of the Philistines against Israel. Dr. Dulles ("The Ride Through Palestine") thus describes the locality: "A fifteen minutes' ride brought us to a ridge-top from which we looked down upon the oval, hill-girt plain identified as the scene of this eventful conflict. On the opposite ridge stands Shuweikeh, the old Shochoh. Between the two lies a beautiful amphitheatre, with a steep hill sloping down to a green meadow on each side, and the torrent-bed (now known as Wâdy es-Sunt) winding between—a river of white pebbles and stones. This amphitheatre I judge to be here nearly a mile in width and three miles in length, running nearly east and west. It presents more than I looked for in its entire adaptation to the dear old Bible story. The army of Saul would find admirably secure camping-ground on the northern hillside, in communication with the hill-country at their back and a fine plain in front for military movements. On the other side of the wâdy (or torrent-bed) the Philistines had a position equally good, with their own land behind them. The plain between at the time of our visit was clothed with young wheat. The 'brook' was nearly dry, even after a week of rain—a bed of stones."

It was customary at that time for a champion to come out of an army and thus to challenge any one of the opposing force. This Philistine champion was a gigantic man, of the race of the Anakim. Josh. 11 : 22. He stalked out and defied the army of Israel to send a man to fight with him. Thus for forty days in succession, but there was not a man to accept his insolent challenge. King and people listened in dire dismay. Great rewards had been offered to tempt some brave man to go out to meet the giant, but in vain. At this point David came to the camp, from Bethlehem, fourteen miles away, with food for his brothers. He heard the war shout as he came to the edge of the camp, and leaving the provisions in charge of the keeper of the baggage, he hurried to the front just in time to hear the defiant challenge of the giant as he stalked out and stood between the two lines. David at once proposed to accept the wager of battle. Eliab, his brother, was angry at his offer, but the youth would not be dissuaded. Saul hearing of his proposal sent for him, and after listening to his earnest plea to be permitted to go against the giant, gave his consent.

38 *Saul armed David with his armor.* Rather, "Clothed David in his war-dress." This does not refer to his armor, but to the soldier's coat, which was worn under the armor, and was girt close about the body by a sword-belt. *An helmet of brass.* Covering and protecting the head. *A coat of mail.* A corselet; literally, *A coat of scales.* A covering for the body, consisting of plates of brass, overlapping each other like the scales of fish, or shingles on a roof. His being able to wear Saul's armor at all shows that he was now a full grown man.

39 *Girded his sword.* Saul's sword. *Assayed to go.* Tried to walk with these trappings on him. *Had not proved.* He had never before worn any such equipment, and therefore found himself unable to move about freely. *Put them off.* They would be an incumbrance to him; he must meet the champion in his own way.

40 *He took his staff.* Probably his shepherd's staff, to assist him in climbing the banks of the

ravine. He wore simply his ordinary shepherd's dress. *Five smooth stones.* Pebbles from the bed of the stream which ran through the ravine between the two armies. This channel, as seen to-day, is covered with little stones worn round and smooth by the action of the water. *Shepherd's bag.* A small wallet made of skins, in which food and other articles were carried. *His sling.* Made probably of goat's hair plaited. The sling was much used by the shepherds. The Benjamites were expert in its use. Judg. 20: 16. This was the weapon which David knew how to use, and his skill in handling it gave him great advantage over the giant, who was armed only for hand to hand fight.

41 *The Philistine.* For his size and a description of his armor, see vs. 4–7.

42–44 *When the Philistine looked.* Drawing nearer he saw that his antagonist was but a youth, unarmed, and he disdained him. *Am I a dog?* Dogs were despised in the East, and the way in which David came against Goliath seemed to indicate his contempt for the giant as an antagonist, as if he were only a dog. *I will give thy flesh.* Showing his utter contempt for the lad before him, and his boastful self-confidence.

45 *A shield.* Rather, *A javelin*, an offensive weapon. *In the name.* The Philistine came wrapped in armor, and relying on his weapons and his great strength; but David came only in the name of the Lord.

46, 47 *This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand.* David was confident, too, but on different grounds. There was no boasting in his words; there was grand faith. He was under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and hence his words were a prophetic announcement of the result of the contest. *That all the earth may know.* It was for the honor of the Lord that he had undertaken this encounter, and the Lord would honor himself in the victory about to be won. *Not with sword.* Not with force and human strength, but by spiritual power. See Ps. 44: 6, 7; Hos. 1: 7; Zech. 4: 6; 1 Cor. 1: 27, 28.

48 *When the Philistine arose.* He had probably been sitting. Now he arose and stalked forward to crush his disdained antagonist.

JEWISH SLINGER.

David hasted. He was eager for the combat, and in his light dress could run rapidly. *Toward the army.* The Philistine army.

49 *In his forehead.* We are not told how it came that the forehead was exposed. It is supposed by some that the helmets worn at that time had no visor, and that the forehead was left bare. Others suggest that in his boastful bravado the champion had left his helmet off. Others think that the stone pierced the helmet; this view seems to be supported by the Septuagint, which adds the words, "through his helmet." David's aim was perfect, and the giant fell by the first stone cast from the sling.

50, 51 *No sword.* He had relied entirely upon his sling, and had made no provision for hand to hand encounter. This shows both his courage and his confidence. *Therefore David ran.* The giant had not been killed by the stone, but only stunned. The work must be

finished, and David ran quickly, leaped upon the fallen champion, drew his great sword from its sheath and slew him. See v. 46. *Their champion.* Their mighty man. They had staked all on him, and his defeat and death sent panic and terror through their ranks. The army of Israel pursued and gained a great victory over the Philistines. David took the giant's head and his armor as trophies of his victory.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. David was right. A shepherd lad who had never been trained for war could not fight in a king's heavy armor. He must meet the giant in his own way. In a contest of arms, sword and spear and helmet and coat of mail, David would have been no match for Goliath; but armed with his sling the giant was no match for him. The lesson is, when you go to fight the battles of the Lord take the weapons you know how to use. For example, if you are not familiar with science, do not try to refute the speculations of Darwin and Huxley, and other great scientists. Stick to your simple little sling, and do not attempt to throw anything but the picked stones out of the gospel brook. Too many of our modern Davids persist in fighting Goliath in Saul's armor, and it is no wonder they are defeated. One who knows how to use the word of God is more than a match for any giant in the world. That was the weapon Jesus used when he met the great Goliath, Satan, and vanquished him.

There is another good thought here. David's fine throwing that day was no accident. He was a skilful slinger. He could have struck the centre of that great forehead every time. And it was not by special divine help or guidance that the stone went so straight to its mark. He had learned in his shepherd life to do this thing well. He had practiced with his sling until he could strike a hair's breadth and never miss. If you would be ready for such occasions in your life you must prepare in the quiet days of childhood and youth. If David had not been an expert slinger before that day he could not then have prepared himself, nor could he have brought down the champion by any "lucky stroke." Learn all you can in youth. Acquire every art you can. Become skilful in whatever you do. You do not know what good service your expertness, even in trifling things, may some day serve you. Especially become skilful in the use of God's word. You may not seem to find use for all of it now, but some day you will need it and it will be your very life.

When the Philistine . . . saw David, he disdained him. So the world disdains the Christian. It asks with contempt, What can he do? What strength has he in his feeble hands? Where are the weapons he is going to fight with? The giant saw only a shepherd's staff in David's hand, and what was that against his great spear? The world sees only a Bible in the Christian's hand, and what is that against all its philosophy and science and reason? Yet the Christian is not so defenseless and powerless as he seems. His weapons are not of the earthly kind, and therefore do not appear formidable, but they are really powerful, and like David here he is able with them to subdue giants.

Thou comest to me with a sword . . . I come to thee in the name of the Lord. There was more than a mere sentiment in David's words; there was a sublime faith in God. It was the Lord's battle he was about to fight, and he knew the Lord would give victory. The law of the heavenly kingdom is, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." There are a great many things that human power can do; but when you turn to the really essential things in life, it can do none of them. It cannot convert souls; it cannot change hearts; it cannot lift up the fallen; it cannot overcome sin and Satan; it cannot comfort sorrow nor give peace to the dying. "Not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord," must these things be wrought. So it is a great thing to be able to work "in the name of the Lord." This is the power that overcomes the world. You say you cannot live right. You try hard, but still you fail. You are defeated by the tempter. The trouble is you are fighting in Saul's armor; lay it off and try David's.

So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone. So we will prevail over every Philistine that stalks out to meet us, if we go against him as David did against Goliath. The battle that gives victory is the Lord's. If we go in his name we shall conquer. Paul said, "I can do *all things* through him that strengtheneth me." There are Goliaths in our own hearts, even after conversion. Like the Philistines in Canaan, the Philistines of sin are terribly hard to subjugate. And there are giants among them as there were in the olden days. Your "besetting sin," whatever it is, is a Goliath. It may seem to you that it never can be vanquished. And it never can till David comes—*your* David—Jesus. Call for him to come and

slay the giant for you. There are giants in the world. Intemperance is one. Skepticism is another. Worldliness is another. They stalk out and hurl their defiance at the army of God's people, and there seems to be no one who can overcome them. Now is the time for faith in God. We must go out against these giants in the name of the Lord, not with philosophy and science and culture, but with the cross, and then we shall prevail.

David . . . took his sword . . . and cut off his head therewith. If he had not, the old champion would have gotten up by-and-bye and walked away, for he was only stunned, not killed by the stone. David made sure work of his victory. A great many of our attacks upon sin in our own hearts and in the world only stun and do not kill the evil. We walk away, thinking we have done a fine thing, and presently we meet the old giant again, stalking abroad as before. He soon recovers from our blow, and we have to fight the battle over again, and perhaps we fight it in the same half way, and thus on and on to the end of life. Most of us have had just such experience as this with our own lusts and passions. We overcome them very often, and think each time that we are through with them, but they are soon active as ever again. We need to learn a lesson from David here, and finish our victories by cutting off the head of every giant we strike down. There is no other way of killing sins. The life is in the head, and the head must come off or the enemy will be facing us again in a day or two with only a scar on his forehead. The only way to get a real victory over intemperance and other vices and evils in the world, is in like manner to cut off their heads. Bruises and gashes are not enough. There must be thorough work done, in the name of the Lord. Half-way measures will not avail.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Men of the world know of no power but that which is in their worldly methods. v. 38.

2. The Christian cannot fight in the world's armor. v. 39.

3. Every one must work and fight in a way with which he is familiar. v. 40.

4. The commonest things one learns to do well in youth may prove of the greatest usefulness in after days. v. 40.

5. The world despises the "weak things" of the Christian, not knowing his true power. vs. 42–44.

6. If we would be victorious in our contests with sin we must go forth in the name of the Lord. v. 45.

7. We must go also in dependence upon the Lord, for the battle is his. v. 47.

8. We must also go with promptness and courage. v. 48.

9. The Lord does not despise human skill but uses it when it is laid at his feet. v. 49.

10. We ought to be sure that we slay our spiritual enemies, and not merely stun them and leave them to rise again. v. 51.

11. Look at David as an illustration of Christ and his victory:

(*a*) Goliath represents Satan. He defied the world. No one could be found to go out to meet him in battle.

(*b*) At last Jesus came and met him, not for himself, but for his people's sake and for the honor of God.

(*c*) Christ's own people despised him. Compare Eliab's treatment of David (v. 28) with the insults offered Christ. Mark 6: 2, 3.

(*d*) Christ did not meet Satan in the world's way, with the world's weapons, but with the power of love and of the divine Spirit.

(*e*) Christ prevailed over Satan, making complete work.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

There is so much of stirring incident in this lesson that it will be easy to get and hold the attention of scholars of all ages. There is so much, however, in the narrative, that the teacher will need to make very careful and definite preparation, so as to get the lesson well through in the time allotted.

A brief review of last lesson will be the best introduction to this. Who was David? What was his occupation as a boy? All boys in the Bible who ever amounted to anything had an occupation; the Lord never looks among idlers when he wants a man. What happened to Saul after his rejection? For what purpose was young David brought to Saul's house? What nation made war against Israel? Describe the place and the location of the two armies. What did the giant do? Why did no one in the army of Israel accept his challenge? How did David happen to be in the army?

I. *David's Armor.* vs. 38–40. Bring out by questions how David came into Saul's presence? To whom did he first suggest meeting the giant How did his brother treat him? vs. 28–30. Notice here David's self-control and good temper when unjustly assailed. See Prov. 16: 32. How did Saul propose to arm David? If it is possible to take a class before the Sabbath to see any pieces of ancient armor, such as are found in many museums, it will help in this part of the lesson. Why did David refuse to go in this way? How did he arm himself?

Any teacher can make a sling, and have some stones, such as David used. David shows his *wisdom* in this choice of weapons.

II. *The Giant's Disdain.* vs. 41–44. Gather from class all facts possible about the giant, his size, his armor, etc. What had he been doing for forty days? What did he say when he saw David step out to meet him? Why did he disdain him? What threat did he make?

III. *David's Confidence.* vs. 45–47. The giant's angry threats would have made many a man tremble, but they had no such effect on David. What answer did he make? Where was his confidence reposed? Why was he so sure of victory? Whose honor did he seek? Two elements of character appear here: 1. His *faith.* vs. 45–47. He believed in God, had undertaken the fight in God's name, was sure of God's presence with him, and had no fear of the giant. 2. His *humility.* vs. 46, 47. It was not he but the Lord who would gain this victory; and it was for God's glory, not his own, that he was going. The way to meet all spiritual enemies and dangers is as David did here.

IV. *The Giant Slain.* vs. 48–51. Describe the scene. David runs—he is eager for victory. How unequal the contest seemed between the giant clad in mail and armed, and the shepherd youth. What was the issue of the battle?

Gather from the Illustrative Notes the practical suggestions, and bring them in where they belong. The teaching of the lesson should all centre about this thought—that every one of us has a giant to fight, not once, but many times in our life; and that to meet this giant successfully we must meet him as David met Goliath.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

SUGGESTIONS.—Prepare the board as above before the opening of the school. Cover all with paper, except the words, "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit." The secret of David's success is to be found in the last verse of the last lesson, which read in concert, "The Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward." David realized this power. Read vs. 45–47 of this lesson. We learn here how to meet all the giants of sin; no confidence in self, but faith in the Lord "and in the power of his might." Have school read Eph. 6: 10–18, during which superintendent removes papers covering the rest of the lesson on board, and at its close impress that these "stones out of the brook" are to be faithfully used if we would overcome our great spiritual adversary, who is a giant mightier than Goliath.

When this lesson was before our schools in 1876, I saw a blackboard illustration which pleased me very much, whose author I do not remember. I mention it here, because some may prefer it to the above. The object was to show some of the giants we meet in our daily life, which were given as follows:

INGRATITUDE,
INTEMPERANCE,
AVARICE,
IGNORANCE,
TEMPER,
SELFISHNESS.

The way to meet the first giant is to use the stone of *love.* "The greatest miracle in the world is God's patience and bounty to an ungrateful world." The second giant is very old (nearly 6,000 years); dresses in rags; has a bloody and scarred face; blackened eyes; often crazy, don't know what he says: has built many prisons and poorhouses; puts men and women into them; takes away the bread from the little ones and lets them starve to death. He can only be met successfully by drinking *cold water.* The third giant is a great one; sure to be known; has a mean and miserly look; face, pocket and heart all contracted. His motto is, *take and keep.* Meet him with the smooth stone

of *generosity*. The fourth giant is a dreadful old monster; sometimes he closes our mouths, but more often leads people to make great fools of themselves, by making them believe they know everything. He wants to keep the Bible out of our public schools, and would like to get it out of the country. The only way to conquer him is with the stone of *learning*. Take him to school. The fifth giant has a wrinkled face; mouth puckered up; always whining; speaks quick and ugly; always sure to get you in great trouble. The smooth stone of *gentleness* will conquer him. Silent prayer always drives him away. The last giant is very ugly; one eye, one ear, one arm—the others are dried up for want of use; sits alone in the corner; takes the largest piece of cake, etc. He can be conquered with the stone *kindness*. This form of presenting the lesson will be found very attractive to the little ones, and is too good not to be repeated.

Directions for Coloring.—"Stones out of the brook," white shaded with red; "Our weapons," orange shaded with blue; "Not by might," pink; "Nor by power," yellow; "But by my Spirit," white.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

I don't know of a better lesson for the presentation of the subject of temperance. If there is a giant in the world to-day that the children ought to fight, it surely is intemperance.

I should introduce the lesson by printing the word "GIANTS" in large letters on the blackboard. See that the class understands the meaning of the word, as applied to Goliath. The height of the class-room door, as compared with his measurement, will help to impress his great size.

The class can safely be depended upon to give the details of the entire story. It is sufficiently dramatic to excite their wondering attention. Teachers will need to prepare a list of questions with great care, in order to hold their scholars to the important parts of the story. What to do with it all, after the veritable Goliath lies dead, slain by little David, is the important thought.

I shall first try to make my children understand that because of the great amount of evil some things can accomplish, we name them giants. Then I shall give them two or three brief, rapidly drawn word-pictures of sorrow through rum drinking, bringing out, at the proper time, a bottle marked—

"GIANT ALCOHOL."

That is the general name for this great foe; but I would have several paper bottles, marked: "Giant Cider," "Giant Beer," etc., explaining that the great giant "Alcohol" appeared in them all.

There are sorrowful illustrations of this enemy's power, so numerous that no teacher will be at a loss. The question is, Will the children fight him? They are young and weak, so was David. He is very strong, so was Goliath; but the God in whom David trusted is ready to help them. "*The battle is the Lord's.*" Where shall they find their little stones?

I think it worth the while of every primary teacher to make careful preparation for this part of the lesson. Select five stones to take to class. Have pasted or painted on them certain words, or initial letters, and show them one by one.

For instance, hold up one which has the word "NO!" painted on it. A splendid stone with which to fight the enemy. To all offers of wine jellies, brandy sauces, sugar in the bottom of whisky glasses, brandied mince pies, any and all forms in which the teacher has reason to fear that the giant will assault her children—teach them to sling a firm and fearless "NO!"

Here is another stone which says, "SIGN!" Oh, the pledge. Encourage every child in your class to carry a pocket pledge-book, and ask *everybody* to sign it. A grand way this to fight the giant.

This stone says, "DON'T!" Use it to encourage the scholars, not only to refrain from having anything to do with this giant themselves, but to coax others not to "touch, taste, or handle."

This stone is marked "LOVE." I consider it a most important element in temperance work. Hate the sin, but love the sinner. Encourage the most intense pity and sympathy for the drunkard. He has fallen; but teach the children to try to save him, and to work for him lovingly.

A fifth stone may be marked "PRAY." It is, after all, the strongest and most hopeful weapon with which to fight this enemy. "The battle is the Lord's." "In the name of the Lord of hosts" teach the children to fight.

Dear teachers, can we not make this lesson an occasion for fortifying our scholars against the possible inroads of the giant intemperance into their midst?

Even the *little* children are not safe, the enemy has such insidious ways. Remember, that the very *candies* which they buy may carry the poison to their lips.

ABOUT NEW BOOKS.

..*The Advance*, the able Congregational paper of Chicago, appreciates one of the new publications of our Board, THE CHURCH IN SCOTLAND ($1.75), by Professor Moffatt, of Princeton. It says: "Professor Moffatt has long been known as an ardent and accomplished student in history. He is enthusiastic in his love of Scottish Church History. A Scotchman himself, he has traced with the devotion of an enthusiast, every step in the development of the Church of his ancestors. He claims, modestly, only to have availed himself of the labors of specialists in the very readable narrative he has given the public, but these who follow the story he has told will not fail to give him credit for lucidity of style, a clear and impressive arrangement of facts, and rare historic candor. The book covers the ancient period of the Church of Scotland, the period of Papal rule, the causes which led to the Reformation, and the Reformation conflict. This conflict ended in the meeting of the Assembly, Dec. 20, 1560. The book should be carefully read, and is deserving a place in every Sunday-school teacher's library."

..THE MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN HISTORY contains in each number several original articles on important historical subjects, with notes, queries and replies. It must do much to foster the study of the history of our own country. In the course of the year it grows into a volume of great value. New York: Historical Publication Company. Subscription price, $5.00 a year; single numbers, 50 cents.

..THE CENTURY brings each month its delightful variety, literary, biographical, scientific and historical. ST. NICHOLAS is always well filled with such matter as its young readers are eager to read. Century Company, New York.

..THE PULPIT TREASURY is a new monthly, designed to present sermons and outlines of sermons, with articles on Christian work and other topics. New York: E. B. Treat. Price, $2.50 a year.

..AMONG THE LAKES. By William O. Stoddard. The boys will be particularly interested in this pleasant story. It introduces us first to a pleasant home in the country, to which come a goodly number of city friends for a vacation visit. Then we have the happy life portrayed of the weeks that followed, with sports and games, and many experiences such as happen only in the country. The boys who figure chiefly in the story turn out well. The book is well written, not overdrawn, and will make very enjoyable reading for boys especially. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. Price, $1.00.

..ROBERT RAIKES LIBRARIES. Ten-Cent Series. Vol. III. The Sunday-School Union continues the publication of these series of books in cheap form. The two previous volumes have been favorably noticed in these columns. Each volume contains ten numbers. The books are in paper covers, and will not endure much handling; but where cheapness is the desideratum, they will be well received. Philadelphia: Sunday-School Union. Price, $1.00 a volume (ten numbers), or 10 cents a number.

..CAMBRIDGE SERMONS. By Alexander McKenzie, D.D. Dr. McKenzie is one of the best preachers in New England. This volume consists of sixteen sermons preached, with one exception, in his own pulpit. They are on themes related directly to salvation. As sermons, they are not stately and formal, but are simple, tender, earnest and forcible presentations of divine truth; they are the delightful talks of a loving pastor to his people, rather than elaborate sermons. The preacher knows what he wants to say, and says it plainly and often in a fresh, striking way that must leave a deep impression on those who hear him. Dr. McKenzie is an extemporaneous preacher, and most of these sermons are from phonographic reports. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price, $1.50.

..The July number of THE JOURNAL OF CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY is a fine number. This excellent quarterly has been noticed already with favor in these columns. It is edited by Prof. John A. Paine, who continues in this number his series of articles on "The New Mount Lebanon," giving now the Scriptural testimony to the place. Prof. Paine is recognized as of high authority on questions relating to the geography of the Holy Land. Of the other articles, Dr. Lyman Abbott's "What is the Bible? and Why I Believe It," and "The Age of Man Geologically Considered," by S. R. Pattison, will be apt first to attract attention. The conclusion of this latter writer is that while science cannot fix the exact age of man on the earth, yet the probabilities point to his first appearance about eight thousand years ago, which he supposes to be consistent with the true chronology of the Bible.

The following are among new publications by the Presbyterian Board:

..THE GREYS. By Abby Eldredge. A temperance tale directed rather against those insidious effects of moderate drinking, which often escape notice outside of the home, than against drunkenness in its grosser forms. It is told with effective quietness. 16mo, illustrated. Price, 85 cents.

..CONRAD AND THE HOUSE WOLF. By Joy Allison. The house wolf is an old jug The book is one of the best kind of temperance stories, both for boys and girls, showing the influence of faithful Christian character and the power of grace to save and lift up. 16mo, illustrated. Price, $1.15.

..FIRST THE BLADE. By Hannah More Johnson. In the history of a family of young people is brought out the lesson of Christian growth—"First the blade, then the ear, etc." The Christian of twelve years must expect to advance by growth in grace, and through trial. 16mo, illustrated. Price, $1.00.

..INDEX OF PRESBYTERIAN MINISTERS. By Prof. Willis J. Beecher, D.D. This large volume contains the name, in alphabetical order, of every Presbyterian minister in the United States from the beginning of its recorded existence, with references to the volume and page of the Assembly Minutes in which the name occurs. 8vo. Price, $5.00.

..THE BANQUET OF LOVE. By the Rev. Jacob Helffenstein, D.D. This is a book, chiefly of devotion, designed for communicants as a preparation for coming to the Lord's table. It is full of tender thoughts, and will find a warm welcome in many a heart. 18mo. Price, 50 cents.

Any of these books may be ordered from the Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1334 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.

THE WESTMINSTER TEACHER.

VOL. XI. DECEMBER, 1883. NO. 12.

—Many persons will receive this number of the WESTMINSTER TEACHER who have not heretofore used it. We ask only that you give it a fair trial in the preparation of the lessons for this month. A great many people have been pleased to say that in no other teacher's help do they find so much real assistance. Particular attention is directed to the Illustrative Notes and Suggestions for Teaching, which are designed to aid teachers in that most difficult part of their work—the practical application of the lesson.

It is believed that parents would find the TEACHER of great aid to them in helping their children to prepare the lessons at home; and that adult scholars cannot for the same small price find so much help in any other form. If pastors or superintendents will send lists of parents and adult scholars who would be likely to subscribe, samples will be sent. We ask all our friends to help us extend our circulation. The price is only 5 cents a month, 60 cents a year, or in packages to one address, only 50 cents a year.

—The new volume of "Half-Hours with the Lessons" is a fine book. It contains forty-eight crisp, earnest, practical sermons on the forty-eight lessons for 1884, prepared by twenty-four of our best preachers. The volume for 1883 was well received and gave great satisfaction. The new volume is better than the last, as we can always do a thing better the second time than the first. Price, $1.50.

—Superintendents and teachers hail with pleasure every new aid in encouraging and stimulating the home study of the lesson by the scholar. "The Westminster Lesson Questions" will prove of great value in this direction, particularly in classes of intermediate and adult grades. This new lesson help is a leaf containing six questions on each lesson, with blank spaces in which the scholar is to write the answers. The leaf is to be given to the scholar one week in advance, and is then to be returned to the teacher on the Sabbath when the lesson is taught. The teacher will make whatever use of these answers is thought best, either examining them privately and returning them to the scholar with correction or approval; or making them the basis of conversation and study during part of the lesson hour, reading and comparing the different answers to each question. It is believed that the earnest and energetic use of these leaves will result in very much better preparation of the lesson at home. Superintendents and teachers are urged to give this new help a trial. Send five cents for a six months set of these "Lesson Questions."

—That admirable man, Professor Samuel J. Wilson, of Allegheny Theological Seminary, was wont to say to his students: "Young gentlemen, study Hebrew roots, pore over Greek verbs, read Latin, and, if you have time and desire, translate ancient hieroglyphics; but I charge you, when you go into the pulpit to preach the gospel, to use the plain Anglo-Saxon." This advice is as good for Sabbath-school superintendents and teachers as for theological students. If there be less danger of their addressing their audiences in high-flown terms and in a Latinized style, yet is there greater harm done when they thus err, as their hearers are less capable of understanding an ambitious use of words. It is not at all uncommon for superintendents to shoot over the heads of the boys and girls before them by the use of phrases to which they are not accustomed. We must study—that is the idea, *study*—to be very simple and clear, and so intelligible.

—Without going here into the question of Sabbath-school festivals—what they should be and how conducted—we are on safe ground in asserting that there should be some proportion between the expenditure on what is mere amusement and what is done by the church for substantial charity. Thus, here is a church expending one hundred and fifty dollars on a grand Christmas tree, in cotton-wool for snow, in greens and decorations for the audi-

ence chamber of the church, in which the celebration is held. The same church gave, in the preceding year, but fifty-four dollars to assist aged ministers, their widows and orphans, through our Board of Ministerial Relief; thirty-nine dollars to build churches, through our Board of Church Erection; sixty dollars to aid in filling our land with a Christian literature, and to aid Sabbath-schools, through the Missionary Fund of our Board of Publication; thirty-eight dollars to educate young men for the ministry, and nothing to our Freedmen's Board. That it did so much proves that it is very far from being an unfaithful church, but is there not a lack of due proportion in expending for transient decorations two or three or four times as much as is given to either of these great works of benevolence? The question is worthy of thought. Perhaps the mistake is in the smallness of the sums given to these Boards, and the amount spent on amusement is a true measure of the ability of the people.

Regretting.

THESE late days in the year are the days when certain classes of people find their chief occupation in regretting. For eleven months they have done scarcely anything but let opportunities pass, and then they spend the twelfth month in regretting the eleven. Neither of these ways of living can be commended. The latter may or may not be better employment than the former. Regretting is a good exercise when it works thorough and genuine repentance and new and faithful living afterward. It was good in the prodigal son, good in Peter, good in Paul. But ofttimes nothing whatever comes of it, save a transient period of sadness and a few resolutions, tearfully made to-day and heedlessly forgotten or ignored to-morrow. The people who this month are regretting their eleven months' poor living, with innumerable failures in duty, can only prove the sincerity and value of their regrets by twelve months next year, if God gives them twelve months more, of earnest fidelity and energetic activity in all duty.

No doubt, however, many excellent people, who really have done their year's work most commendably, have regrets in their personal retrospect during these closing days. Life is much too large even for the best men. Not one of us is ever able to do what seems to be his whole duty. There are many hours every year in which nothing worthy or enduring is accomplished. There are whole days which are practically wasted, though they may have been our busiest days. Nothing comes out of their feverish exertion. All their bustling work proves afterward to have been but like the children's writing and building on the ocean beach when the tide is at the ebb, of which not a trace remains tomorrow. The best of us, in looking back, see many things which we could have done far better had we been more wise or more skilful. We see great opportunities which we let slip while we were running after trifles. True, we thought at the time that we were doing the best and greatest things, but after-wisdom is so much truer than the wisdom we can command as we go along, that we often find we have passed by gold and diamonds and picked up bits of brass and tin.

Moreover, when we come to the end of a year, no matter how much we have done, so many things remain untouched which we had planned to do, or which we now see we ought to have done, that our satisfaction with what we have accomplished is deeply shadowed with regrets over what we have failed to accomplish. Duty always appears too great to an earnest man. When he has done all that it was in his power to do he has only touched the edge of what it seems to him he ought to have done.

> "Labor with what zeal we will,
> Something still remains undone,
> Something uncompleted still
> Waits the rising of the sun.

> "By the bedside, on the stair,
> At the threshold, near the gates,
> With its menace or its prayer,
> Like a mendicant it waits."

Yet many of these regrets are unjust to him who cherishes them. When we have done our duty day by day, faithfully and earnestly, according to the light and the wisdom granted to us at the time, it ought not to cause us regret afterward if it appear that we might have done it with more wisdom or greater skill. We cannot get the benefits of experience until we have had the experience. We cannot see things from the other side till we get to the other side. The true way to live is to bring to each duty, as it comes to our hand, our wisest thought and our best skill, doing what appears to us at the time to be the right thing to do, and then never regretting what we have done. If we see in the retrospect that we might have done better or more wisely, let us lay up the wisdom among the lessons of experience to be used in meeting the duties that come afterward, but let us never waste a moment in unavailing regret over what is now an unalterable fact among the acts of our past. We really have no second chances in life. We never can do anything over again to correct or amend it. It is folly, therefore, to spend a moment in regretting; it is wisdom to

transmute our past mistakes into better and truer doing in the future.

Then, as to leaving things untouched, which we meant to do, or unfinished, which we began to do, that is an inevitable part of all earthly experience. The best and completest of men are only fractions. We are beset by countless limitations. We can do nothing perfectly, and we can do at all but a few of the things that seem to belong to our range of duties. The most skilful hand can never execute all that a quick brain and a loving heart inspire.

"I wonder if ever a song was sung
But the singer's heart sang sweeter,
I wonder if ever a rhyme was rung
But the thought surpassed the metre.
I wonder if ever a sculptor wrought
Till the cold stone echoed his ardent thought;
Or if ever a painter, with light and shade,
The dream of his inmost heart portrayed."

No life ever yet put into act the half of its desire and purpose. The best things any of us do fall far below our intentions. Yet, when we have done what we can, we have done all that is required.

Some of us think we ought to do, or try to do, everything that we see about us needing to be done. We read in the Holy Book that whatsoever our hand findeth to do we ought to do with our might. But the hands that are ready to be useful "find" far more than they can possibly do. No one can do everything. Much that it appears very desirable to do must be crowded out of every good life. The wisdom of true living is not then to attempt a consecration that takes up everything that offers, but to select from the many things that seem to make their appeal to us the most important, those which will have the largest influence for good in the world. We are not to imagine that God has no other servants to do the things which we cannot do; or that, if we die and leave anything unfinished, he will not find some other to take up the uncompleted tasks and carry them on to completion.

"Fret not that thy day is gone,
And the task is still undone.
'Twas not thine, it seems, at all:
Near to thee it chanced to fall,
Close enough to stir thy brain,
And to vex thy heart in vain.

"Somewhere, in a nook forlorn,
Yesterday a babe was born:
He shall do thy waiting task;
All thy questions he shall ask,
And the answers will be given,
Whispered lightly out of heaven.

"His shall be no stumbling feet,
Falling where they should be fleet;
He shall hold no broken clue;
Friends shall unto him be true;
Men shall love him; falsehood's aim
Shall not shatter his good name.

"Day shall nerve his arm with light,
Slumber soothe him all the night;
Summer's peace and winter's storm
Help him all his will perform.
'Tis enough of joy for thee
His high service to foresee."

Saving the Cents.

No class of persons do so much for the poor as do our army of faithful Sabbath-school workers. No class of visitors get so near to their hearts or give them so much comfort. He who loves the child is welcome to the parent. Hence a hint to teachers on a single point of influence may not be amiss—it is on the subject of helping the poor to improvement through economy. It seems strange, but it is a fact, that many a man worth tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands of dollars will be more careful of his "pennies" than the most of those who live by day's labor and have nothing laid by for the "rainy day" so sure to come to all. He has made his thousands through the habit of saving; the saving of the smallest sums is second nature with him. Knowing that dollars are composed of cents, he holds on to the cents, and so has dollars. He may be liberal, may give away generously, but he does not despise the littles which go to make the larger sums. On the other hand, the men and women who do not expect to lay up anything will spend the two cents, the five cents, the ten cents, without thought and without receiving any fair return for it. The teacher, who is consulted on so many questions, and whose sympathy is demanded in all the varied troubles of the family, may be of material service just at this point by suggesting and recommending—of course with cautious skill—the saving of the cents. A bare-footed boy can be persuaded to lay by his pennies until he surprises himself with a fund that will buy a pair of shoes. The girl may be led to save her cents until she has enough for a hat or even a dress. The father and mother can be made to catch the idea through the boy or girl, to the great increase of the thrift, comfort and good appearance of the household. Many a family in which the children cannot go to Sabbath-school because they "have nothing fit to wear," or in which the parents stay away from church for the same reason, could save many dollars every year by checking the waste of a few cents at a time. Where there is no hope of doing better there will not be economy or thrift. Help the unthrifty by teaching them to save the wasted cents, and showing them that they may do better.

The Other Side.

BY KATE W. HAMILTON.

"COUNT your marcies," is the reiterated advice of an old saint in one of our story books, and we are reminded of it as the end of the year draws nigh and we begin to cast retrospective glances over our work. While we are looking back upon the months that are gone, and scanning anxiously what we have done for our classes, it is well to remember also what the class has done for us.

Do you ever think, oh weary teacher! looking only outward for the fruit of all this labor, and mourning often because you see so few tokens of glorious harvest—do you ever think what these years of Sabbath-school work have done for you? We talk of our influence upon those under our charge, of leaving our impress upon our pupils, and we speak truly. But no less surely do they, and our work for them, leave their impress upon us; and it is our right, our duty, to reckon that also in counting up results. "Sow a deed and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap a character; sow a character and you reap a destiny," says a wise writer. How many of us have considered what this habit of Bible study, which the class has compelled, has been worth to us? "Every Christian ought to study the Bible." True; but *would* we have done it, taking up some topic every week, faithfully and regularly year after year? When we were busy or tired, when we had company to entertain, when Bridget was away, when there was sickness in the house, when the Saturday evening concert tempted—have there not been many times when the hour of study would have been crowded out, even considered impossible, but for the class which must be met, and which we could not teach without due preparation?

Then the enforced habit of patience, tenderness, sympathy with young minds and lives—the many lessons learned "between the lines"—have these been of no value to heart and character? We hear much of the difficulties and sacrifices that belong to the teacher's work. It is like Peter's, "Lo, we have left all and followed thee," over which we sometimes smile as we remember a quaint old parson's comment: "Aye bragging, Peter, aye bragging! What had ye to leave but an old boat and a few poor nets?" The Master takes nothing of ours—nothing that we *call* our own, though well he might question our title—without rich compensation. The boat borrowed for an hour on Galilee was granted afterward such a draught of fishes as it had never known before. It is always so. How otherwise could we have employed the hour given to study for our classes that would have brought so rich a return, even in our own intellectual culture? To study thoroughly these lessons of the wonderful Book, with all the facts of history, geography, science and philosophy linked naturally with them, would be in itself a liberal education. And what other course of reading and study would have brought us more constantly in contact with the best minds of the age?

Sometimes, doubtless, it would have been sweet to keep the Sabbath hour for reading and meditation at home, but, after all, what else would have brought us nearer to the Lord than the service for his sake?

Then, how many tangled problems, how many dark providences, have grown clear to us through the medium of that little class! The petty trials that seemed so useless at the time gain a new meaning when, out of the experience they brought to us, we are able to help others over rough places. The doubts and perplexities of bygone years, which would not be put aside until they were thought out and settled, serve as guide-boards now for these other young feet bewildered in the same way. Even the great sorrow we have borne reveals its sacred, tender mission when, because of all it has taught us, we can confidently assure another, "Even in these fearful billows the anchor holds within the vail—*it does hold!*"

Of the social ties, the friendships formed in this work, we cannot speak, though they are well worth counting. We trust that we are leaving influences which shall work on, making strong, helpful, noble lives, long after ours are ended; that we are lighting lamps that shall yet be carried afar into earth's darkness, and that shall kindle other lights on to the end of time; that we are sowing seed from which we shall yet lay down precious sheaves at the Master's feet. But aside from, and nearer than, all good to others and the future reward for which we hope, is the blessing of the here and now which makes the work its own exceeding great reward, and verifies the assurance that those who have left anything for Christ's sake shall receive even "manifold more in this present time." His Church is no mendicant, his "little ones" are no paupers, and for whatever service we render we are paid right royally.

The Rescued Block.

BY PROF. G. B. WILLCOX, D.D.

AS I sit on the marble veranda of a Venetian hotel, with the broad surface of the marble balustrade for a writing-desk, and the gondolas gliding quietly by on

the Grand Canal, and passing one another as smoothly as arrows of opposing armies meeting in the air, a treasure of art that I was admiring in Florence the other day returns to stamp itself again on my memory. It is the marvelous representation in marble, by Michael Angelo, of the young David, that stands beneath the glazed dome of the Academia della Belle Arti. No other wonder of art in all Italy has impressed me so deeply. The shepherd boy stands with firm foothold, yet with his whole frame drawn back as if to gain momentum for the stone, grasped tightly in his right hand, that is in a moment to be sped upon its errand. The left hand holds the sling, in the attitude of a man who sees that not a moment is to be lost. The furrowed brow and eyes, set intently on the giant (for the iris of the ball is chiseled, giving a wonderful force to the glance), show him aware of the crisis—aware that all Israel is breathlessly looking on; but the firmly set lips disclose, too, that the God of all Israel is nerving him within. It is no wonder that the statue, when first unveiled, three hundred and fifty years ago, caused a most unparalleled sensation among all lovers of art. The master-hand of the great sculptor has thrown more soul into this stone than one will find in an average man. You wonder, as you watch the young hero, that he holds back so long with the fatal stone.

But there is a history lying back of this wonder of art. The block from which the beckoning hand of Angelo called it out had been under the chisel of some now unknown and utterly unskilful workman. With his hacking and cleaving he was thought to have spoiled the marble. It had been abandoned as worthless. Doubtless—for it was an immense and costly block of the finest grain—many an artist had looked over it eagerly, studying the possibility of evolving from it some form of nobleness or beauty, and then turned away in despair. For Carrara marble was too precious to be wasted in the chips of the chisel. There were in Florence sculptors by the score who could have wrought out some small work from this mass of solid whiteness. But no; it must wait for a hand that could turn the whole, disfigured and distorted as it was, to some grand account.

What a lesson now in all this for every Christian worker—for every lover of his kind! How many a human soul, in which lay splendid possibilities, has been half ruined by some weak or base manipulator before any master-hand could be laid upon it! A false education has distorted it. Parental weakness has destroyed its balance. A cruel lot has repressed its best proclivities; temptation has drawn out its worst ones. A deficiency here, an excrescence there, has thrown it into ill shape. And so, dilapidated, and broken, and cast off, it seems fit for nothing. The world, in its heartlessness, has no use for such a soul. A philanthropist in New York, some years ago, met, wandering through the streets, a lost child of sin, from whom he heard the old story of her betrayal and desertion and ruin. Was she willing to return to her home and to a good life? he asked. "Most gladly!" she answered, with penitent and bitter tears. "Well, your father must hear of this." "It would do no good. You do not know my father." "But he must have the heart of a parent. I'll try him." He took his address, and wrote, congratulating him on the recovery and the penitence of his long-lost child, and offering, if means were sent for the journey, to send her home by the next train. And this was the answer he soon received: "Dear sir: My daughter had a happy home, with every comfort she could ask. She chose to leave her home, to bring shame on herself and disgrace on her parents—and shall never darken my door again." That is too often all the world can find to do with the damaged marble.

A different spirit was that of the Scotch Christian mother whose daughter, wandering away to a wild life in London, had left her broken-hearted. But afterward, seized with remorse and returning home, she resolved to reach there by night, lest her old playmates should know her on the street. But, late as was the hour, to her astonishment a light was burning in the cottage. Still more to her amazement, the door was unfastened; and, when she entered, her mother, thanking God, received her with open arms. "That door, my child," was her reply to the wonder of the daughter, "has been unlocked and that light burning every night since you went away."

God only, with his infinite skill and recovering power, works his own image in a soul disfigured by "the world, the flesh, and the devil." Men point with scorn at a Christian believer in whom the image is, as yet, imperfect. Why should it not be, from material that had been so distorted and misshapen? The admirers of Angelo's immortal work well know that it is not perfect, that it is not what it would have been from marble fresh from the quarry. But their wonder and his glory are, in even an approach to perfection from such deformity. Let us thank God for the immeasurably finer beauty wrought in human souls from a deformity immeasurably worse. And, looking away to the future, let us still more rejoice in the growth of a soul, that no rigid marble, once chiseled, allows, toward the celestial excellence of Gabriel himself.—*Christian Union.*

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FOURTH QUARTER.

1. Oct. 7—Eli's Death. 1 Sam. 4: 10–18.
2. Oct. 14.—Samuel the Judge. 1 Sam. 7: 3–17.
3. Oct. 21.—Asking for a King. 1 Sam. 8: 1–10
4. Oct 28.—Saul Chosen King. 1 Sam. 10: 17–27.
5. Nov. 4.—Samuel's Farewell Address. 1 Sam. 12: 13–25.
6. Nov. 11.—Saul Rejected. 1 Sam. 15: 12–26.
7. Nov. 18.—David Anointed. 1 Sam. 16: 1–13.
8. Nov. 25.—David and Goliath. 1 Sam. 17: 38–51.
9. Dec. 2.—**David's Enemy—Saul.** 1 Sam. 18: 1–16.
10. Dec. 9.—**David's Friend—Jonathan.** 1 Sam. 20: 32–42.
11. Dec. 16.—**David Sparing his Enemy.** 1 Sam. 24: 1–17.
12. Dec. 23.—**Death of Saul and Jonathan.** 1 Sam. 31: 1–13.
13. Dec. 30.—**Review.**

Lesson IX. **DAVID'S ENEMY—SAUL.** Dec. 2d, 1883.

1 Sam. 18: 1–16. Memorize vs. 14–16.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways: and the Lord was with him."—1 Sam. 18: 14.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 1 Sam. 18: 1–16.....*David and his Enemy Saul.*
T. Gen. 37: 5–28.....*Joseph Hated.*
W. Gen. 41: 14–40.....*Joseph Exalted.*
Th. Ps. 69: 1–18.....*Enemies without Cause.*
F. Ps. 37: 32–40.....*Help for the Righteous.*
S. Ps. 33: 1–22.....*Care for the Righteous.*
S. 2 Cor. 4: 8–18.....*Persecuted, not Forsaken.*

TOPIC.

Safety in God's Favor.

LESSON PLAN.

1. The King's Envy Excited. vs. 1–8. **2. His Attempt to Kill David.** vs. 9–11. **3. His Snares to Destroy him.** vs. 12–16.

Time.—B. C. 1063. **Place.**—Gibeah.

Catechism.—Q. 48. *What are we especially taught by these words, "before me," in the first commandment?* A. These words, "*before me*," in the first commandment, teach us, that God, who seeth all things, taketh notice of, and is much displeased with, the sin of having any other God.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 500: "Oft in danger, oft in woe." Other hymns, 361, 425, 468, 506.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

INTRODUCTORY.—After the slaying of Goliath, David was led into Saul's presence and had a prolonged conversation with the king, concerning himself and his family. Jonathan, Saul's son, must have been present also during this conference, for it was at this time, and by what he then saw of him, that he was first drawn to David in that affection which ripened into such a holy friendship. But while Jonathan's soul was knit to David's from this hour, Saul's jealousy and hate toward David soon began.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

1 And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jon'a-than was knit with the soul of Da'vid, and Jon'a-than loved him as his own soul. [1 Sam. 19: 2; 2 Sam. 1: 26; Prov. 18: 24.]

2 And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more home to his father's house. [1 Sam. 8: 11; 14: 52.]

3 Then Jon'a-than and Da'vid made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. [2 Sam. 9: 1–3.]

4 And Jon'a-than stripped himself of the robe that *was* upon him, and gave it to Da'vid, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle. [Gen. 41: 42.]

5 ¶ And Da'vid went out whithersoever Saul sent him, *and* behaved himself wisely: and Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants. [Matt. 10: 16; Eph. 5: 17.]

6 And it came to pass as they came, when Da'vid was returned from the slaughter of the Phi-lis'tine, that the women came out of all cities of Is'ra-el, singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of music. [Judg. 11: 34; Ps. 68: 25.]

7 And the women answered *one another* as they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and Da'vid his ten thousands. [Ex. 15: 21; 1 Sam. 21: 11; 29: 5.]

8 And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, They have

ascribed unto Da'vid ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed *but* thousands: and *what* can he have more but the kingdom? [1 Sam. 15 : 28.]

9 And Saul eyed Da'vid from that day and forward. [Gen. 4 : 5.]

10 ¶ And it came to pass on the morrow, that the evil spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied in the midst of the house: and Da'vid played with his hand, as at other times: and *there was* a javelin in Saul's hand. [1 Sam. 19 : 24.]

11 And Saul cast the javelin; for he said, I will smite Da'vid even to the wall *with it.* And Da'vid avoided out of his presence twice. [1 Sam. 19 : 20; 20 : 33; Prov. 27 : 4.]

12 And Saul was afraid of Da'vid, because the LORD was with him, and was departed from Saul. [1 Sam. 16 : 13; 28 : 15.]

13 Therefore Saul removed him from him, and made him his captain over a thousand; and he went out and came in before the people. [Num. 27 : 17; 2 Sam. 5 : 2.]

14 And Da'vid behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and the LORD *was* with him. [Josh. 6 : 27; Acts 18 : 10.]

15 Wherefore when Saul saw that he behaved himself very wisely, he was afraid of him. [Ps. 112 : 6; Dan. 6 : 4, 5.]

16 But all Is'ra-el and Ju'dah loved Da'vid, because he went out and came in before them. [Luke 19 : 48; 20 : 19.]

1 *When he had made an end of speaking.* See vs. 55–58 of the last chapter. As soon as the pursuit of the Philistines and the gathering of the spoil from their tents was over, Abner, the general of Saul's army, brought the young champion to the king. Saul apparently did not recognize David as the boy musician who had been minstrel in his palace some time before, and made inquiries of him concerning himself and his family. *The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David.* See Gen. 44 : 30 for a similar expression, which implies the closest and strongest attachment. Jonathan was the son of Saul, and appears all through the story as his father's constant companion. He was brave and skilful, and wherever his name appears in the narrative it is in heroic light. *Jonathan loved him as his own soul.* It will be noticed that the friendship began in Jonathan's heart, not in David's, and that it was pure, disinterested and unselfish.

2 *Saul took him that day.* Impressed by his valor and high soldierly qualities, Saul wished to have David in his body guard (chap. 14 : 52), no doubt hoping to gain much aid from his abilities. Thus first as a musician and now as a soldier, David was brought into close relations with Saul.

3, 4 *Jonathan and David made a covenant.* Not that very day on which the friendship began, but during the time of David's stay in the king's household. It was some time before Saul's jealousy began to show itself. The two friends were together, and their friendship was confirmed and strengthened, until at length they formed this sacred compact, mutually pledging each other perpetual faithfulness. *Jonathan stript himself.* He took off his outer robe, and his military dress, including his sword, bow and girdle, and gave them to David. These gifts were not only tokens of his affection, and marks of public honor, but were also seals of the covenant he had made with David. See Gen. 41 : 42; Esther 6 : 8.

5 *David went out.* That is, on military expeditions. He was probably given some definite command. *Behaved himself wisely.* Margin, *prospered.* The two ideas of prudence and consequent success are in the word. His sudden elevation did not turn his head. *Over the men of war.* Made him an officer. *He was accepted.* He grew into favor with all. His character was winning as his exploits were brave. Considerable time is no doubt covered by the statements in this verse.

6 *When David was returned.* Not from the slaughter of Goliath, as our Version seems to indicate. The marginal reading is correct—"*the Philistines.*" The reference is probably not to the victory obtained in connection with the slaying of Goliath, but to one of the expeditions mentioned in v. 5, in which David had again been the hero and had won some distinguished victory. Some writers, however, suppose that the reference is to the return from the completion of the battle which followed Goliath's death. *The women came out of all cities.* To receive the returning warriors, and to honor them after their success in battle. *Singing and dancing.* The women danced to the sound of the timbrel, singing as they danced and played. Thus they gave expression to their joy, and made a triumph for the returning army. *Tabrets.* Hand drums, instruments yet used by the Arabs, consisting of hoops over which pieces of parchment are drawn, and which are beaten with the fingers. *With joy.* With shouts of gladness. *Instruments of music.* Either "triangles" or instruments with three strings.

7 *Answered one another.* Antiphonally, one chorus responding to another. Ex. 15 : 21. *Saul . . . David.* To David they gave the highest praise. He was their hero and favorite.

8, 9 *Saul was very wroth.* At the preference shown for David. He saw that the people were going over to the young champion, and perhaps now for the first time began to suspect that this

was the "neighbor better than himself" whom the Lord had chosen to be king. *Saul eyed David.* Watched him with suspicious jealousy and growing hatred.

10, 11 *The evil spirit from God.* See chap. 16: 15. Sent from God as his messenger in punishment of Saul's sin. The consequence seems to have been a fit of melancholy madness, as before, when David had been brought to play before Saul. *He prophesied.* The word is used both in a good and a bad sense. It describes an ecstatic condition, due to supernatural influence, which, if good, results in prophetic inspiration; if bad, in insane madness. It was the latter here. For an illustration of the good, see chap. 10: 10. *David played.* On his harp, with the hope of quieting him. *A javelin.* A spear, which served as his sceptre, the symbol of royalty. *Cast the javelin.* Or probably only brandished it, as the words may mean. On a subsequent occasion he actually threw the spear against the wall. Chap. 19: 10. *David avoided.* The literal meaning is *emptied;* he emptied the place, withdrew from the apartment for safety.

12, 13 *Afraid of David.* He began to recognize the truth that the Lord was with David, while he himself had lost the divine favor. See also vs. 15, 29, where this fear or dread is also spoken of. The spirit of courage or bravery in Saul began to die out. His fear was not, however, of any efforts on David's part to injure him, but of David's growing power and popularity. *Reward him.* Sent him away from his presence, giving him a military command that would keep him absent. Thus he seemed to honor David, while really he was seeking to get rid of him. Probably he hoped that David might fall in battle. See v. 25. *Went out and came in.* In his official capacity, or perhaps on military expeditions.

14, 15 *The Lord was with him.* Prospering him in all his ways. *Afraid of him.* A stronger expression than in v. 12; he stood in awe or dread of him.

16 *Israel and Judah loved David.* He was growing into the affection of all the people. His going out and in before them gave them opportunity to see more of him, and to know him better. Saul's banishing him from his own household, instead of diminishing his popularity, enhanced it by bringing him into more public life.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

As the next lesson brings out prominently the beautiful friendship of David and Jonathan, it may be better merely to touch upon the subject in the present lesson, and only by way of contrast or background to Saul's spirit and conduct.

The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David. This is the one bright line in the dark story of the present lesson. What a contrast we have in Saul's household, between the king himself and the king's son! These two men looked upon this same youth, and in one there sprang up a tender love, which ripened into one of the noblest and truest friendships the world ever knew; and in the other there was engendered a hate which grew into darkest passion and crime. The difference was in the two men themselves. In Jonathan there was a noble nature, unselfish, pure, true and generous; in Saul there was a spirit of selfishness, envy, jealousy and all uncharitableness. The same sunshine falls upon a garden and woos out lovely plants and flowers, and upon a foul bog and draws out evil stenches. Two persons look at goodness in another, and one admires while the other sneers. So it is that seeing Christ divides men. One looks at him, and beholding in him every loveliness, is drawn to him in deep and absorbing affection and attachment; another seeing the same things in him hates him, and is roused to fierce opposition. The difference is in men themselves. Our own hearts make our world for us. We see all things outside colored by our own thoughts and feelings.

Saul took him that day and would let him go no more home. Honors gathered fast about the young shepherd. Coming into the army an unknown lad, he had killed the haughty Goliath and become at once the most famous man in the nation. The king's son saw him, and from that hour was his most devoted and faithful friend. The king himself also admired him, and called him away from minding a few sheep out in the field to be a military officer and a member of the royal household. Such rapid promotion would have turned the head of many a young man. There is no sorer test of character than sudden popularity. Young men like such chances in life, and think their fortune made when they come upon them. But very often the result is ruin rather than blessing. David was one of the few young men whom sudden elevation does not destroy. It may be, too, that even he was saved only by the troubles which his advancement brought with it.

Saul was very wroth. While the women sang *his* praises he was well pleased. But as he listened he heard among the strains another

name, the name of his young lieutenant. And as he listened still more closely he found that the refrain ran:

> "Saul hath slain his thousands,
> And David his ten thousands."

This made him very angry. All his former admiration for David changed to bitter hate. Perhaps there flashed upon his mind now for the first time the thought that this was the man to whom Samuel had referred when he said that God would take the kingdom from Saul and give it to his neighbor better than he. The suggestion was like gall to him. It takes a great deal of grace to hear others receive the praise *we* have been accustomed to receive. Some people can't bear to hear others praised, even when it takes nothing from themselves; but it is harder still to see another coming into the place in people's plaudit which we have had before. "The bright day brings out the adder." There are many people who feel just as Saul did, though they may hide their feelings better. As contrasts, recall how Samuel bore himself when Saul was made king, displacing him; and how sweetly John the Baptist "decreased" as Jesus "increased." All of us, some time in life, will have occasion to try, in a smaller or greater way, whether we can behave better than Saul.

> "Base envy withers at another's joy,
> And hates the excellence it cannot reach."

The evil spirit from God came upon Saul. Evil spirits are always watching and ready to enter into a man when they see a chance to make mischief. There is no time when one is so open to these malign messengers as when some bad temper or passion has possession of one. When envy or jealousy is in a heart no one can tell what the result will be. The worst crimes start in just such dark passions.

Saul eyed David from that day. . . . Saul cast the javelin. Envious and angry looks to-day, and to-morrow attempts to kill. The Scriptures say that "whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." This is true, because hatred is of the same quality as murder, and because mere hatred to-day may become murder to-morrow. It is never safe for any one to carry a grudge in the heart, even for an hour, for it may in an unguarded moment impel to crime.

Saul removed him from him and made him his captain over a thousand. Not to honor him, but as seems almost certain in the hope that David might fall in battle, and thus be taken out of Saul's way. See v. 25. This shows the depth of wickedness in Saul's heart. If he suspected at all that David was the "neighbor" whom the Lord had chosen to be king, then Saul's effort to destroy David was not merely to get a rival out of the way, but was also an attempt to defeat the divine purpose. The case is parallel to that of Herod, long after this time, when he had the prophets searched and then used the information he obtained to try to thwart what God had thus foretold.

The secret of Saul's terrible envy was his intense love of self. He thought of no one but himself. He saw things only in their reference to him and his success. If he could have used David to advance his own interests, and to bring new laurels to his brow, he would have been quite content. But when he saw that David's advancement was drawing away the people's eyes and huzzas from himself, he determined to get him out of the way. We all need to be on our guard against this wretched spirit. Set side by side with Saul's spirit that of Jonathan—magnanimous and self-forgetful and large-hearted. We never can know what evil may come of self-adoration. Then it is to be noticed here also that nothing came out of all Saul's scheming and plotting. He did not pull David down. He did not defeat the Lord's purpose as to the kingdom. He only made himself wretched, and brought shame and ruin upon his own soul.

David behaved himself wisely in all his ways. The true thing to do when one has enemies and persecutors is to move right on in the path of duty, day by day, leaving all to God. That was what David did. He did not meet plot with counterplot. He did not try to outmatch Saul. He simply attended to his own business with courage and fidelity, and gave himself no concern about the king's wicked schemes. The result was that Saul was afraid of him and the people loved him.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Noble, generous natures see nobleness and beauty in others. v. 1.

2. An evil nature can admire nobleness while it is able to use it for its own promotion. v. 2.

3. The truly noble know how to obey; David knew that he was to be king, yet as a subject he was most loyal and dutiful. v. 5.

4. Only those of noble nature can stand rapid promotion and sudden honors. Verses 1–7 show a climax of honor for David.

5. Prosperity brings trial, and ofttimes envy and persecution. David's happiest days were when he was a shepherd.

6. An envious nature cannot bear to hear another praised. v. 8.

7. Envy in the heart is apt to grow into hatred and crime. vs. 9–11.

8. When God's Spirit goes out evil spirits flock in. v. 10.

9. No one needs a sorer chastisement than to have God leave him and then to let loose upon him his own bad passions. v. 10.

10. When envy rules in a heart no crime is too dark to be possible. v. 13, with v. 25.

11. The true way to bear one's self in the midst of personal enemies and dangers is to move on faithful in duty. v. 14.

12. The plots of wicked men against God's anointed come to nought. vs. 15, 16.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

BY JAMES A. WORDEN, D.D.

TEACHER'S OUTLINE.

DARLING FRIEND,
DESERVED FAME,
DEADLY FOE.

THE TEACHER IN THE CLASS.

Begin with a few rapid questions on last lesson. Title? Golden text? Events? Then question on Jonathan.

I. *The Darling Friend.* What can you tell of his life? What great deliverance did he once achieve for Israel? Chap. 14. How was he esteemed by the army and people? He was the popular hero—next to Saul, and heir-apparent to the throne. What great exploit had David just done? What effect would that have on the people? How would a popular man, a distinguished soldier like Jonathan, *naturally* regard a new hero like David? How *did* Jonathan regard David? What awakened Jonathan's generous love? Bring out the point that the very thing which made Saul hate David made Jonathan love David. On what accounts is Jonathan's friendship for David remarkable?

1. It was the love of a *prince* by character and by birth for a shepherd lad.

2. It was the friendship of a popular idol for his successful rival.

3. It was the friendship of the heir-apparent for the popular favorite who was to supersede him.

4. There was an intensity and depth in Jonathan's love for David. "He loved him as he loved his own soul." "His love was wonderful, passing the love of women." 2 Sam. 1: 26.

5. It was a friendship *based on religion.* Chaps. 20: 13–15, 23, 42; 23: 16.

What are the advantages of true friendships? What kind of persons should we choose for friends? What have you done for those whom you call friends? What is the best thing we can do for our friends? For what reasons are our friendships a test of our character? On what alone are true friendships based? Where in Scripture are we warned against making unchristian persons our friends? 2 Cor. 6: 14–18. What are the dangers of intimacies with worldly, unbelieving persons? Prov. 13: 20. Of whose friendship is Jonathan's a type? In what particulars is Jonathan's love for David like Jesus' love for us? One may say, It was the love of a king's son to a subject; another, Jonathan gave up his throne for his friend—so Jesus.

II. *Deserved Fame.* Here is a subject for a word-picture. The returning army coming back victors. They come near a city. Out glide a radiant company of maidens in white; they have little tamborines in their hands, some of them carry triangles. They meet the army and begin to sing, and they accompany the music by a dance. Part of them sing thus: "Saul has slain his thousands." The others answer: "David his ten thousands."

What effect would all this praise have on a shepherd boy? What is the danger of popularity and fame? How did David endure this test? How do you know that under it all David remained modest and humble? vs. 5, 14. So when a boy has suddenly become a hero for some exploit, or another has won a prize at school, or another's father has suddenly become rich, or another has been promoted in the office or store, or another is the best player at certain sports—what is the danger? How did David act? He "behaved himself wisely."

III. *The Deadly Foe.* What awakened Saul's jealousy? Why had Saul reason to fear David? 1 Sam. 15: 27, 28. What is said of envy? Prov. 14: 30. What is said of jealousy? Cant. 8: 6. How is this illustrated in v. 11? How would Saul's jealousy increase the love of the people for David? v. 16. What is the true cure of jealousy? God's Spirit alone can give us deliverance. How would David's trial really preserve him from a giddy elation?

Questions on the Lesson for December 9th, to be assigned in writing:

1. What events intervened between the last lesson and 1 Sam. 20: 32–42?

2. What are some of the most remarkable friendships noted in history?

3. What are some of the blessings of true friendship?

4. How do common trials bind true friends together?

5. How does Jesus warn us of dangers?

6. The whole history of the friendship of David and Jonathan.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

BY J. HOWARD SEAL.

SUGGESTIONS.—While David's wise words and actions aroused envy and hatred in the heart of the king, they secured the love of the king's son; "and Jonathan loved him as his own soul." Jonathan saw much in David to love. His every-day life was good, he "behaved himself wisely," "and the Lord was with him." Jonathan gave him his robe, his sword, his bow, and his handsome girdle; a mark of great respect. They were bosom friends. Of course the envy and hatred of Saul, and his attempt to murder David, will not be omitted in the desk-lesson. But do not fail to emphasize the friendship of the king's son. The board prepared as above may be withheld until the close of the desk-lesson, when we endeavor to teach the lesson it suggests, that "The Son of a mightier King than Saul loves YOU." He loved us better than his own life; loved us when we were enemies; loved us sin-stained and vile as we were; gave us his robe of righteousness and took upon himself our filthy rags. His soul was knit with ours. Should we not, then, in return, love, honor and obey him? Will *you* not do so to-day? It may be thought desirable to use the blackboard in teaching the lesson from an outline; if so, the following is suggested, each to be printed as the points are made:

A LOVING SON,
A WISE SUBJECT.

AN ENVIOUS KING.

Or,

THE STEPS TO MURDER.

ENVY,
HATRED,
MALICE,
MURDER.

"He that hateth his brother is a murderer."

Directions for Coloring.—"The Son of a mightier King," white shaded with red; "Than Saul," red shaded with brown; "Loves you," light blue shaded with orange.

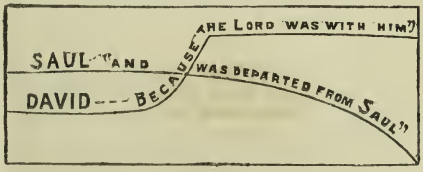
FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

BY MRS. G. R. ALDEN—"PANSY."

Two lines on the blackboard may be used for illustrating this lesson. Make one above the other, marking the upper one "SAUL," the lower one "DAVID." This is the position of the two in the palace. David, subject to Saul, serving him, careful to obey his directions.

By questioning and by narrative, gradually develop the fact that David showed himself superior to Saul, and won the love and respect of the people.

To further impress this, continue the line which represents David, giving it an upward curve, until it stands above Saul's. Then having called the reason for this from the class, print it on the lines, thus—



Now what was the reason that the Lord departed from Saul?

This is a very important point. It leads to a review of a former lesson. Saul's trouble began with disobedience; but he is showing by his conduct here that he has not truly repented.

Not very long ago we had a lesson about a poisonous plant that grew in a heart. Make a picture of the plant; surround it with a heart to represent Saul. Then give the account of the song which the women sang in praise of David, and its effect on Saul.

See if you can teach the thought so plainly that the children will tell you to print the word "ENVY" on the poisonous plant. This plant shot out branches on which grew "ANGER," and then "MURDER," for there was evidently an attempt to kill David.

The two central thoughts are obvious. David's steady increase in favor with God and man, because he steadily tried to do right, and the sin let into the heart, which spread and bore, not good fruit, but evil, like its root. Little lives abound with illustrations of the evil effects of sin.

Let the teacher point the moral in the direction that she considers it the most needed. You will then be brought face to face with the old question, What to do about it? And the answer is always ready, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin."

Lesson X. **DAVID'S FRIEND—JONATHAN.** Dec. 9th, 1883.

1 Sam. 20: 32-42. Memorize vs 41, 42.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"A man that hath friends must show himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."—Prov. 18: 24.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 1 Sam. 19: 1-24.....*Saul Tries to Kill David.*
T. 1 Sam. 20: 1-23.....*Jonathan and David.*
W. 1 Sam. 20: 24-34.....*Saul and Jonathan.*
Th. 1 Sam. 20: 35-42.....*True Christian Friendship.*
F. Prov. 18: 10-24.....*A Friend In deed.*
S. 1 John 3: 10-24.....*Brotherly Love.*
S. Ps. 133: 1-3.....*Brethren in Unity.*

TOPIC.

True Christian Friendship.

LESSON PLAN.

1. Jonathan Intercedes for David. vs. 32-34.
2. He Warns him of his Danger. vs. 35-40.
3. He Renews his Covenant with him. vs. 41, 42.

Time.—B. C. 1062. **Place.**—At the stone Ezel, near Gibeah.

Catechism.—Q. 49. *Which is the second commandment?* A. The second commandment is, *Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them, for I, the LORD thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me: and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.*

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 320: "One there is above all others." Other hymns, 200, 324, 328.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—Saul's enmity against David continued. He plotted to have him killed in war, encouraging him to be valiant, hoping that he would fall in battle. He even descended to such baseness as to give him his daughter Michal to wife, "that she might be a snare to him," luring him to rash exploits in which he might be killed. He tried to turn Jonathan also against David, but Jonathan's affection for his friend made him an intercessor rather than an enemy. Here he has undertaken to find out his father's feelings and intentions and let David know. The interview at the feast table disclosed the fiercest anger in Saul. He even burst into furious anger against Jonathan himself, charging him with treachery, using the lowest and most insulting language, and demanding that David be produced that he might be slain. The lesson passage describes the close of this interview, the subsequent meeting with David, and the tender parting and covenant between the two friends.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

32 And Jon'a-than answered Saul his father, and said unto him, Wherefore shall he be slain? what hath he done? [1 Sam. 19: 5; Matt. 27: 23; Luke 23: 22.]

33 And Saul cast a javelin at him to smite him: whereby Jon'a-than knew that it was determined of his father to slay Da'vid. [1 Sam 18: 11.]

34 So Jon'a-than arose from the table in fierce anger, and did eat no meat the second day of the month: for he was grieved for Da'vid, because his father had done him shame.

35 ¶ And it came to pass in the morning, that Jon'a-than went out into the field at the time appointed with Da'vid, and a little lad with him.

36 And he said unto the lad, Run, find out

now the arrows which I shoot. *And* as the lad ran, he shot an arrow beyond him.

37 And when the lad was come to the place of the arrow which Jon'a-than had shot, Jon'a-than cried after the lad, and said, *Is* not the arrow beyond thee? [vs. 21, 22.]

38 And Jon'a-than cried after the lad, Make speed, haste, stay not. And Jon'a-than's lad gathered up the arrows, and came to his master.

39 But the lad knew not any thing: only Jon'a-than and Da'vid knew the matter.

40 And Jon'a-than gave his artillery unto his lad, and said unto him, Go, carry *them* to the city.

41 ¶ *And* as soon as the lad was gone, Da'vid arose out of *a place* toward the south, and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times: and they kissed one another, and wept one with another, until Da'vid exceeded. [Gen. 44 : 14 ; Ruth 2 : 10.]

42 And Jon'a-than said to Da'vid, Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the LORD, saying, The LORD be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed for ever. And he arose and departed: and Jon'a-than went into the city. [1 Sam. 1 : 17.]

In connection with this lesson it will be well to gather from the preceding and following chapters the passages that refer to this sacred friendship. Without detracting in the least from the character of David, or from his part in all this beautiful story, there is no doubt that it is to Jonathan the chief honor belongs. He was the prince of Saul's house, and therefore of rank far above the shepherd lad whom he loved. It was in his heart, too, that the friendship first began. He saw in David the noble qualities which won his heart. If there was a man in the whole nation who had reason to be jealous of David, it was Jonathan. He was a brave and popular soldier, and here was another whose one achievement made him the hero of the people, even eclipsing Jonathan himself. He was the heir to the throne, and it was not long till Saul at least began to suspect that David was the man chosen to be king, and we may suppose that he would tell Jonathan of his suspicion; but this did not affect Jonathan's friendship for David. He was the one who had everything to lose by David's promotion, and yet he was ready to lose all through the love he bore his friend. Thus it appears that the first honor in this matchless friendship belongs to Jonathan. He saw in David certain excellent qualities, and loved him at once with a purely disinterested affection. Then, as time went on, and David became the nation's hero, even eclipsing Jonathan himself, there was no envy or jealousy in his heart. When he even saw that David was to be king instead of himself his friendship faltered not. When his own father turned against David and sought his death, Jonathan risked all for his friend. Study as illustrating these points, chaps. 18 : 1–4 ; 19 : 2, 4, 5 ; 20 : 4, 9, 14, 15, 17 ; 23 : 16, 17.

32 *Jonathan answered . . . Wherefore shall he be slain?* See v. 31. Saul had commanded Jonathan to send for David, declaring that he should surely die. Jonathan was placed in a trying position, but did not forsake his friend, and here pleads for his life. *What hath he done?* He knew that David had done nothing to deserve his father's wrath.

33, 34 *Saul cast a javelin.* Rather, *Brandished his spear*, not really throwing it. This shows the king's ungovernable spirit. In the presence of his royal court he was threatening to kill his son. *Whereby Jonathan knew.* The temper displayed by Saul was proof of his determination. *He was grieved for David.* His feeling was not anger at the insult done to himself by his father, but grief at the shame done to David in the spiteful assertions Saul had cast upon him in calling him a rebel and deserving of death. The generosity of Jonathan is shown here.

35, 36 *At the time appointed.* Rather, To the *place* appointed. See v. 19. *A little lad.* Less likely than an older assistant to understand the true purpose of Jonathan's brief archery practice. This plan of communicating the result of the interview with Saul had been agreed upon between David and Jonathan. See vs. 20–22. *Run, find out now the arrows.* See v. 20. This sign had been arranged so that in case Jonathan could not get a personal interview with David he could still communicate to him the results of his conference with Saul. Incidentally we learn thus that archery was one of Jonathan's favorite diversions; hence no suspicion would be excited by his carrying his bow and arrows to the field.

38, 39 *Make speed, haste, stay not.* He hastens the lad probably that he might not see David, who was hidden near by. *Gathered up the arrows.* Three arrows were shot. See v. 20. *Knew not anything.* Of the meaning of the little play in which he had acted a part.

40 *Artillery.* Bow and quiver. He gave these to the boy to carry back to the city, thus getting rid of him that he might be left alone to have an interview with David.

41 *A place toward the south.* He had been in hiding "by the stone Ezel," that is, "the stone of departure," probably so named from being the scene of this day's parting. v. 19. From this place David arose when the lad had gone, and came to meet Jonathan. *Fell on his face . . . bowed himself three times.* In token of his respect and loyalty to Jonathan, as the king's

son. The Oriental way of doing obeisance is very formal. See Gen. 33: 3. *They kissed one another.* David had not failed in reverence for his prince as he approached him, but now they meet as friends, kissing each other. The scene is very affecting. *David exceeded.* In his grief. He was overmastered, overcome by it. It was a dark hour to him. He knew now that Saul had determined to kill him, and he was going forth under the shadow of death.

42 *Go in peace.* As we say good-bye. *Forasmuch as we have sworn.* This was the comfort Jonathan had for himself and for David in this dark hour. Their friendship could never fail whatever might come. *In the name of the Lord.* Their friendship was based on their common relation to the Lord. *The Lord be between me and thee.* The Lord was the bond of their attachment, and however they might be separated from each other they would yet be one in the Lord. *He* [David] *arose and departed.* Thus they parted never to meet any more in the home of Saul. Their only other meeting was in the wilderness of Ziph, where they had a brief interview. Chap. 23: 16–18. *Jonathan went into the city.* His filial duty prevented him from sundering himself from his father, while he yet remained loyal to his friend until death. His deep attachment to his father is perhaps overlooked by most readers, in admiration of his devotion to David. But it is also a very beautiful feature in Jonathan. "Now that the final parting was to come, he took his lot with his father's decline, not with his friend's rise—and 'in death they were not divided.'"

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David. Chap. 18: 1. Most friendships are of slow growth, starting in early companionship, in school, or in play, and growing with the years. This friendship of Jonathan and David was sudden in its origin. The young shepherd was brought into the king's presence after his gallant victory over the giant, and as Jonathan looked on him and heard him speak, his heart went out to him in a burst of affection, and from that hour "the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul." This was the romantic beginning of this sacred and wonderful friendship. It began in Jonathan's heart, and was purely disinterested. He, a prince, could hope for no profit from a shepherd lad. It was based on true and simple worth in David; it was a pure and unselfish affection in Jonathan.

Jonathan answered . . . Wherefore shall he be slain? Most sudden friendships are short-lived. Many young people form attachments at school or on the playground which are very intense for a time, and which the parties think and say will never lose their warmth. But busy life comes with its burdens, toils, cares, ambitions, trials and sorrows, and in a little while these youthful "friendships" are forgotten. Saul himself seems at first to have conceived an ardent love for David, but as soon as his personal interests appeared to be in danger from the young hero's promotion, his "friendship" failed. That is about the average way with what are called friendships. We read of Saul's anger when the women sang of his thousands and David's ten thousands, and we may say, "What an ugly spirit!" Well, but would you have acted differently? It is not Saul's bad spirit that is strange, but Jonathan's noble generosity. His friendship for David was not broken by David's popularity, even though he himself was cast thereby into the shade. That was the first test of his friendship, and it stood the test well.

Next came his father's fierce hatred of David; but Jonathan's affection for his friend wavered not. At last Saul discovered that David was the one that God had marked out to be his successor on the throne. Surely now he can break up Jonathan's friendship for David. So he told him that as long as David lived upon the ground he, Jonathan, could not be king. It must have cost a terrible struggle for Jonathan to give up all the hopes of royalty, and to know that his friend, not he, should wear the crown. But his friendship stands this test, too. Instead of combining with his father to prevent this he still pleaded warmly for David, and went out to try to save his life from Saul's rage. There could be no severer test of friendship than this.

Jonathan arose . . . in fierce anger . . . for he was grieved for David, because his father had done him shame. Anger is usually wrong. Saul's anger at this same time was unrighteous; it was full of the spirit of hate and of murder. But there may be anger without sin. "Be ye angry and sin not," says an apostle. Jonathan's anger here was not sinful. It was justifiable. There was no desire in it to injure his father. It sprang out of his deep, pure love for David, and was not on his own account, but because his father had spoken so shamefully and unjustly of his friend. It was grief as well as anger. (See the case of our Lord. Mark 3: 5.) We may be righteously angry when we see others cruelly wronged. It is a noble spirit that

defends a friend in his absence from false or unjust charges. Too much so-called friendship lacks courage to do this, and when absent friends are assailed says nothing, or, still worse, joins in the miserable gossip or aspersion.

As the lad ran he shot an arrow beyond him. It would be interesting here to have a little talk with a class about signals. In war times a system of signaling is used whereby, with flags by day and with lights by night, constant communication is kept up between different camps. Ships at sea use signals. Weather signals are displayed along the shore for the benefit of those on the water. On railroads signals are employed, and largely control the movements of trains. Jonathan's little bit of archery practice had a meaning which only the two friends knew. He was signaling to his friend in his hiding place the result of his interview with the king. In this way he was warning him of his danger from Saul, and bidding him flee for his life. The point is, that faithful friendship will seek to give warning of danger. There are a great many kinds of danger of which we should warn our friends. Most of us would give notice if we knew of a plot to assassinate our friend, but there are other dangers—from evil companions, false friends, temptations, bad habits—and faithful friendship ought in some way to give quick and honest warning of these also.

We have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord. They both loved God and trusted in him, and it was as God's children that they had made their covenant of friendship. There is no really sure and lasting friendship which has not a religious basis. In choosing friends we should choose only those who will be one in Christ with us, with whom we can pray and converse on holy themes, and whose companionship we can have when this world is no more. The hope that seems to cheer Jonathan here is that a friendship in God could not be destroyed; that whatever might come they would still be friends and would meet again. They never did meet again, save once for a few moments, but being friends in God they are friends yet in the immortal life.

Here are two old and familiar but beautiful illustrations: *The story of Damon and Pythias* is very striking. Damon was condemned by Dionysius to die. He desired leave to go home to settle his domestic affairs. Permission was granted on condition that a hostage be found who would die in his place if he failed to return. Pythias, his friend, comes forward, and delivering himself up to the tyrant becomes Damon's surety. The day arrives, the hour, but Damon is not there. Pythias must die in his place, and is ready. He thanks the gods for the adverse winds that retarded Damon's ship, and prepares to die on the altar of friendship. Just as the blow is to fall Damon rushes in. Then follows a strange strife—which shall die. Each is eager to have the other spared. The cruel tyrant is melted and spares both.

Orestes and Pylades, two sworn friends, landed on the shores of the Chersonesus to find themselves seized to be sacrificed to Diana. Doomed to death they were delivered over to Iphigenia, the priestess of Diana, to be offered on the altar. She learns that they are Greeks, from her own native country. Anxious to communicate with her home land she offers to spare one of them on condition that he will become her messenger and bear a letter to her friends. But which shall live? The friendship which had endured for years is now put to its sorest strain. Neither will accept the office of messenger, leaving his friend to die. Each implores to be the victim. While this strife goes on Iphigenia discovers that one of the two is her own brother. She embraces him, and sparing both, flees with them from the cruel shore.

LESSON POINTS.

No subject could be more important to young people than that of their friends, who and what they should be.

1. Every one should seek to have friends. There is a story of a captive in the Bastile, long immured in a lonely dungeon, whose heart craving friendship in some form, found it in a spider which he had tamed.

2. Friends should be chosen in youth. Indeed, it is only in youth, as a rule, that true, lasting friendships are formed.

3. We should choose only those with whom we can form close Christian friendship, those we shall want with us when we are dying, those from whom death will not separate us.

4. In choosing friends, even among Christians, we should look to qualities of heart and life and not to appearance, to rank, or to any elements which may bring profit to ourselves.

5. Once having chosen friends we should be faithful to them through all the experiences of life, no matter what it may cost us.

6. Among human friends there is no better pattern than Jonathan. True friendship is unselfish, disinterested, constant, tender, enduring. Study particularly chap. 23: 16.

7. We should be sure to make Jesus our friend. Every beautiful thing that we find in Jonathan is in him, intensified. No other friend can do all for us that we need; no other can go with us into life's deep vales and death's dark shadow.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

Lines of Approach.

1. Touch lightly *all the intervening events* since last lesson.

2. Concentrate the seven portions of Scripture which narrate the friendship of David and Jonathan. (*a*) Its beginning. Chap. 18: 1–4. (*b*) Warning David and pleading with Saul. 19: 1–7. (*c*) The covenant. 20: 1–23. (*d*) The final appeal to Saul for David. 20: 24–31. (*e*) The farewell. 20: 32–42. (*f*) Encouraging. 23: 16–18. (*g*) David's lament over Jonathan. 31: 1–13, and 2 Sam. 1: 17–27. Have the scholars read these passages.

Teacher's Outline.

Faithful in Absence. vs. 32–34.
Helpful in Danger. vs. 35–40.
Tender in Farewell. vs. 41, 42.

Teacher Questioning and Applying.

I. *Faithful in Absence.* What was Jonathan's position as to the throne? What had David become in relation to the throne? What were Saul's feelings toward David? Where was David at this time? If Jonathan had been governed by selfishness, what would he have done? Suppose two boys or young men are rivals for the same position in a business house, or the same honor at school. One of them is absent, and the head of the business or the school is embittered against him, is planning indeed his defeat. How will the rival that is present speak of the absent? What a chance to overcome the rival and gain sole favor. How did Jonathan act under these same circumstances? 19: 4; 20: 28–32. What did Jonathan endure for David? v. 33. Of what was he now certain? How did his displeasure affect him? What is the duty of friends to an absent friend unjustly blamed? How are absent friends often treated? How are we treating our absent friends? How do we *speak* of them? What are we to do with our sins against true friendship? If you have acquainted yourself with the daily life of your scholar you can from this lesson draw many a warning and encouragement for his everlasting welfare.

II. *Helpful in Danger.* What says John of true love. 1 John 3: 18. How did Jonathan illustrate this verse? What was the sign agreed upon by David and Jonathan? Why did Jonathan choose this means of warning David? What would David understand by Jonathan's action? What qualities of friendship did Jonathan manifest in this? Constancy, wisdom, promptness, helpfulness. In what way are we proving our constancy to our friends? How do we help them? In what way can we practically help our friends in business? In study? In society? In the church? In the Sabbath-school? In overcoming easily besetting sins? Why is the affectionate warning against personal faults the highest proof of friendship? Why is prayer for our friends a most friendly act? Pray for whom thou lovest. Thou canst do nothing for thy friend for whom thou dost not pray! It is in early life that lasting friendships are formed. How has Jesus proven himself to us helpful in danger?

III. *Tender in Farewell.* Have the class read v. 41. Jonathan had planned only to send David away by a sign. But he cannot part with his beloved friend without many a vow and locked embrace. Refer to the habits of Orientals as to bowing and kissing. What does v. 42 teach us as to the foundation of Jonathan's friendship for David? What covenant did David and Jonathan make? How did David show kindness to Jonathan's son? 2 Sam. 9. What lesson thrills our hearts from this parting between David and Jonathan? How did Jesus part from his friends? John 14, 16, 17; Acts 1: 1–9.

Points to be assigned in writing on the Lesson for December 16th:

1. What different passages of Scripture teach us to forgive our enemies?
2. What motives does the Bible furnish to lead us to forbearance to enemies?
3. Give a description of the wilderness of Engedi.
4. What was the forbearance towards his enemies shown by Jesus?
5. What qualities of character did David show in this lesson.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The Teacher Before her Class.—This large letter "D" which I make stands for the name of a man about whom we talked last Sabbath. Who knows his name? This letter "J" stands for his friend. Who knows *his* name? Whose son was Jonathan? (Let class tell the story of David and Jonathan's love for each other, and recall's Saul anger at David.)

What are these that I hold in my hand? How many have I? (Show three arrows, ones cut from thin pasteboard or stiff paper will answer your purpose.)

Over here, where I made the letter "D," you may think of David as hiding. His dear friend had agreed to let him know whether his life was in danger. Said Jonathan: "I will come out

with arrows to shoot, and I will bring a boy with me to pick up the arrows. If I say to him, 'The arrows are on this side,' then you may know that you need not be afraid of my father, but can come home. But if I say to the boy, 'The arrows are beyond thee,' don't come back, for you are in danger." (Imagine David hiding and listening. Describe the shooting.) Jonathan says: "The arrow is beyond thee." Now David knows that he and his friend must part.

The tender scene which follows can be briefly described. Indeed, the entire story is so dramatic that no one accustomed to teaching children will have any difficulty in telling it.

The main point with this, as with many other lessons, is, what to do with it. Two thoughts are prominent: 1. The love of Jesus, as contrasted with that of Jonathan. 2. The work of the lad who brought the arrows. Perhaps the last mentioned should be presented first. The lad was simply doing his every-day duty, without a thought of greatness connected with it; yet really he helped God to save king David.

Story Illustration.—Charley, on his way to the mail with a letter, resisted the temptation to stop and play awhile, because father had taught him to do errands promptly. He did not know that the letter took a message to a dying friend, that was the means of leading her to heaven, but God knew it. Jonathan took much trouble to save his friend. The arrows were, in a sense, a sign or token of his love.

At this point make a heavy cross in red crayon. This is the token which Jesus left us of his love. Will you let Jesus show such love as this, and yet make no return? All he asks is your love.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

SUGGESTIONS.—The board to be prepared, as in diagram, previous to the opening of the school, the only part exposed to view during the class studies being the sentence in the centre, viz., "True friendship can only be made between true men," the rest to be covered with plain paper in such a manner as to be easily removed in the desk lesson. Speak of the strong friendship existing between Jonathan and David; how it was formed, and how it was fostered. They were true friends because they were true men. It has been said that "they do not love, who do not show their love." In David's sore trial Jonathan showed his love. Have a scholar read Prov. 17: 17, and remove the paper covering the top line.

Close the lesson by speaking of the friendship of our best and truest friend—Jesus. Refer to John 15: 14, and remove paper covering the lower lines as the school sings, "One there is above all others, etc."

The reverse side of board may have placed upon it the first two lines of this sweet old hymn in the manner suggested by a well-known worker in 1876, when this same lesson was the theme for study in our schools:

"ONE THERE IS ABOVE ALL
OTHERS,
WELL DESERVES
THE NAME OF FRIEND,
His is LOVE beyond a brother's,
Costly, free, and knows no end."

After singing the hymn, which is No. 320 in the Presbyterian Hymnal, ask for perfect silence, while a little girl reads or recites from memory Jer. 31: 3.

Directions for Coloring.—Top line, orange shaded with white; lower lines, green shaded with yellow; "True friendship can only be made between true men," purple shaded with red. These combinations will produce a beautiful effect.

Lesson XI. **DAVID SPARING HIS ENEMY.** Dec. 16th, 1883.

1 Sam. 24: 1–17. Memorize vs. 15–17.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."—Matt. 5: 44.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 1 Sam. 22: 1–23...*Saul's Vengeance.*
T. 1 Sam. 23: 14–29..*Saul's Pursuit.*
W. 1 Sam. 24: 1–22...*David's Forbearance.*
Th. Matt. 5: 38–48....*Love for Enemies.*
F. 1 Pet. 2: 13–25....*For the Lord's Sake.*
S. Ps. 142: 1–7.....*David's Prayer in the Cave.*
S. Rom. 12: 10–21....*Paul's Counsel about Revenge.*

TOPIC.

Forbearance toward Enemies.

LESSON PLAN.

1. David's Magnanimity. vs. 1–7. **2. His Appeal to Saul.** vs. 8–15. **3. Saul's Penitence.** vs. 16, 17.

Time.—B. C. 1061. **Place.**—En-gedi, east of Hebron, on the west shore of the Dead Sea.

Catechism.—Q. 50. *What is required in the second commandment?* A. The second commandment requireth the receiving, observing, and keeping pure and entire, all such religious worship and ordinances as God hath appointed in his word.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 473: "Guide me, O thou great Jehovah." Other hymns, 215, 410, 432, 442.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—Parting from Jonathan, David went to Nob, where he was assisted by the priest, receiving of the shew bread to satisfy his hunger, and the sword of Goliath for defense. Thence he fled to Gath, where he feigned madness. From Gath he went to the cave Adullam, where his brethren and a motley company of four hundred men, gathered to him. He went thence to Mizpeh of Moab, and soon after to the forest of Hareth in Judah. Saul was still pursuing him with deadly hate. Having heard that Abimelech the priest had given David victuals he massacred him and fourscore priests of the Lord, and destroyed their city Nob. David went from Hareth to Keilah, delivering it from the Philistines, thence to the wilderness of Ziph, where he and Jonathan had a final interview, thence to the wilderness of Maon, and thence to En-gedi, the scene of the present lesson.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

1 And it came to pass, when Saul was returned from following the Phi-lis'tines, that it was told him, saying, Behold, Da'vid *is* in the wilderness of En-ge'di. [1 Sam. 23: 28.]

2 Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Is'ra-el, and went to seek Da'vid and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats. [Ps. 38: 12.]

3 And he came to the sheepcotes by the way, where *was* a cave; and Saul went in to cover his feet: and Da'vid and his men remained in the sides of the cave. [Ps. 57; 142, title.]

4 And the men of Da'vid said to him, Behold the day of which the LORD said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then Da'vid arose and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily. [1 Sam. 26: 8.]

5 And it came to pass afterward, that Da'vid's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt. [2 Sam. 24: 10.]

6 And he said unto his men, The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD'S anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he *is* the anointed of the LORD. [1 Sam. 26: 11; Rom. 12: 17.]

7 So Da'vid stayed his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul. But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on *his* way. [Ps. 7: 4; Matt. 5: 44.]

8 Da'vid also arose afterward, and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, My lord the king. And when Saul looked behind him, Da'vid stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed himself. [Rom. 13: 7; 1 Pet. 2: 17.]

9 ¶ And Da'vid said to Saul, Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, Behold, Da'vid seeketh thy hurt? [Prov. 16: 28; 17: 9.]

10 Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the LORD had delivered thee today into mine hand in the cave: and *some* bade *me* kill thee: but *mine eye* spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he *is* the LORD'S anointed. [1 Sam. 26: 3; Ps. 105: 15.]

11 Moreover, my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that *there is* neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee: yet thou huntest my soul to take it. [1 Sam. 26: 20.]

12 The LORD judge between me and thee, and the LORD avenge me of thee: but mine hand shall not be upon thee. [Judg. 11: 27.]

13 As saith the proverb of the ancients,

Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked: but mine hand shall not be upon thee. [Matt. 7: 16–18; 12: 33, 34; 15: 19.]

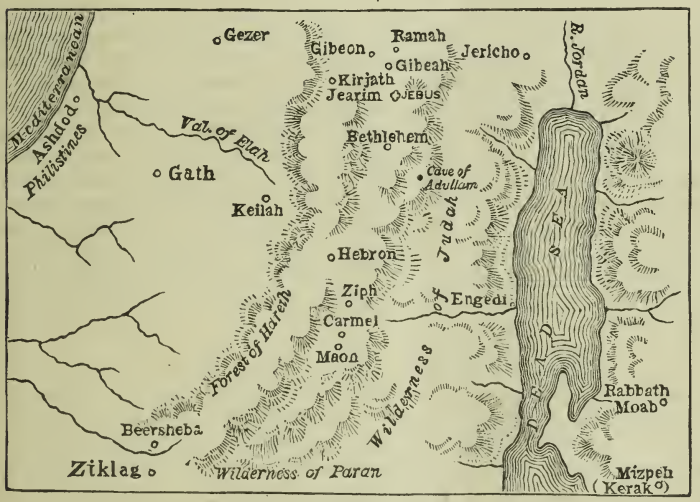
14 After whom is the king of Is'ra-el come out? after whom dost thou pursue? after a dead dog, after a flea. [Job 32: 9; Prov. 5: 23.]

15 The LORD therefore be judge, and judge between me and thee, and see, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thine hand. [2 Chron. 24: 20.]

16 ¶ And it came to pass when Da'vid had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, *Is* this thy voice, my son Da'vid? And Saul lifted up his voice and wept. [1 Sam. 26: 17.]

17 And he said to Da'vid, Thou *art* more righteous than I: for thou has rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil. [1 Sam. 26: 21; Matt. 5: 34.]

1 *When Saul was returned.* See chap. 23: 27, 28. *The wilderness of En-gedi.* En-gedi is a fountain ("fountain of the kid") which produces a little oasis in the wilderness bordering on the western shore of the Dead Sea. The plain is enclosed by precipitous cliffs, in which are numerous caverns which might well have served as hiding places for David and his men, as they do, indeed, for outlaws even now. Solomon seems to have put this spot in high cultivation, covering the hillsides with vineyards (Cant. 1: 14), traces of which are yet seen in the terraces cut in the hills.



THE WANDERINGS OF DAVID.

2 *Three thousand chosen men.* No sooner had Saul returned from his Philistine war than he led the army in a renewed search for David. *The rocks of the wild goats.* The name given to some of the cliffs near En-gedi, from their being the haunts of these nimble creatures, which still abound in that region.

3 *The sheepcotes.* It is still very common in Palestine to find sheepcotes in the mouths of caverns. These "cotes" are made by building a circular wall of loose stones and covering it with thorns as a further protection against robbers and wild beasts. In time of storms and at night the flocks are taken back into the cave. *David and his men remained.* They were hiding in the sides of the same cavern. Being back in the darkness they could clearly see, although they could not be seen by Saul and his men at the entrance of the cave.

4 *Behold the day.* David's men considered the coming of Saul into the cave at this time as a providential deliverance of David's pursuing enemy into his hands. *Of which the Lord said.* Whether there was any specific promise of deliverance from Saul which David had received, we are not informed. Such assurance may have been given by Samuel or Gad. However, there were predictions such as 1 Sam. 15: 28; 16: 1, 12, which implied that David should not perish. From Jonathan's words (chaps. 20: 15; 23: 17), it is evident that at this time it had begun to be understood that David was to be king. David's men thought that now the Lord had put Saul into his power that he might do with him what he pleased. *Cut off the skirt.* David forbore to harm his enemy, though so completely in his hands, but quietly advanced to where Saul was and cut off the edge of his cloak, that he might prove to the king that his life had been in his power and had been spared by him. Saul's robe may have been laid off.

5 *David's heart smote him.* Even for this slight indignity his conscience condemned him after it had been done. *Stayed his servants.* The word is strong, meaning to *lash*, or *crush down*, implying that it was with difficulty he restrained his men from doing violence to Saul.

8 *David . . . cried after Saul.* He hoped that his forbearance in sparing Saul would disarm the king's resentment. *Stooped with his*

face to the earth. Doing obeisance to him as king. He addressed him, too, as his *lord* or *master*, showing by his lowly bearing that instead of being a rebel he acknowledged him as his king and was a loyal subject.

9, 10 *Wherefore hearest thou men's words?* No doubt there were men who wished to keep alive Saul's hatred of David, and represented him as plotting against the king. See the title to the seventh Psalm, making it probable that Cush was one of Saul's adherents, and that he poisoned Saul's mind by inventing all manner of falsehoods about David. But Saul had now proof that these representations were calumnious, for when the Lord had delivered him into David's hand David had spared him. *Some bade me kill thee.* The literal rendering seems to be, "The Lord delivered thee into my hand *and bade me kill thee.*" If this is correct, the meaning probably is, that the fact of God's delivering Saul into his hand seemed at first to David to indicate that he should kill him; that would be the natural reading of the providence. The Vulgate has it: "I thought to kill thee." This is probably the true sense of the words. His first thought or impulse was to kill him, but a better feeling came over him.

11-13 *My father.* He thus saluted him, not because he was his father-in-law, but as a mark of respect and affection. See 2 Kings 5: 13. *See the skirt.* That Saul might know that he had actually been in David's power. *Yet thou huntest.* Recalling Saul's determined pursuit of him in contrast with his refusal to do Saul any injury. *The Lord judge.* David appeals his case to the Lord, in whose hands he leaves it, determined never to lift a finger to avenge himself. See Lev. 19: 18; Deut. 32: 35; Prov. 24: 29; Rom. 12: 19, 20; Heb. 10: 30; 1 Peter 2: 23. *The proverb.* The meaning of the proverb is, that a man's actions are one with his character. If David were wicked, if he had cherished an evil design against Saul, he would certainly have injured the king when he had him so completely in his power. Compare Matt. 7: 16-20.

14, 15 *After a dead dog, after a flea.* Literally, *A single flea.* The terms represent an object insignificant and powerless, implying that David was such. The point in the words is to show Saul how absurd it was for the king of Israel with the armies of the nation to be chasing him over the country. *The Lord judge.* See v. 12; Ps. 35: 1.

16, 17 The effect of David's words upon Saul was to show him how unjust he had been to him, how he had wronged him. He burst into tears. He spoke to David in terms of affection. He acknowledged his magnanimity and the proof it gave that he cherished no evil feeling against the king. It was clear now he said that David would be king, and he asked him to swear not to cut off his—Saul's—family. David swearing this, a reconciliation took place, and for a time Saul's pursuit of David ceased. However, David knew Saul's spirit too well to trust himself in his reach, and he remained in the wilderness.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

When Saul was returned . . . it was told him . . . David is in the wilderness of En-gedi. Of course there was no want of people willing to act as spies and informers. There are always low, mean souls who can find no better employment than to watch the movements of others and then run quickly to report to enemies all that they do or say. These people not only find their vocation in dogging the steps of men like David, but are just as zealous in watching their quietest neighbors and listening at keyholes in boarding-houses and picking up bits of gossip on the streets, and then running to tattle everywhere. The devil finds no more contemptible work in this world for any souls than this.

Saul took three thousand chosen men . . . and went to seek David. What was the motive that prompted all this long, bitter, determined pursuit of David? Was David an enemy of Saul? Was he a rebel, a traitor to his country? Nothing of the kind. We see in Saul the terrible power of an evil passion when it is allowed to gain sway over a man. In his case it was *envy.* David did valiant deeds, and the people proclaimed him a hero. In Saul's breast the base passion arose, and it grew with each fresh honor that David won, until it ruled him like a cruel tyrant, making him a miserable slave. All the business of his life was dropped, and the whole energy of his nature was turned into the one channel of hatred and unrelenting pursuit. And all this by a passion which began in one envious thought, which should have been crushed the moment it arose in the heart. The example teaches us the appalling danger of allowing any evil passion or feeling to spring up or grow in our heart. We are all exposed to the danger. It may be envy, when another gets now the praise that we have been receiving, or when a rival beside us is successful, or when we seem to be overshadowed and lost sight of in the growing influence of some other. It is very easy to let the feeling alone and to cherish it, but we

cannot tell what the end may be if we do. It may grow into such masterful power as to lead us to the basest, darkest deeds of crime. But envy is not the only passion that may thus enslave us. Love of money may do it. So may intemperance, so may dissoluteness, so may desire for pleasure, or for fame or for power. We may boast of our strength, but Saul was a strong man and a king, yet see to what pitiable degradation he was dragged down by a single passion. All shall be lost if we allow any evil to gain sway over us. The only safety lies in destroying every dark feeling when it first arises in our breast. Let it get a start and there may be no deliverance possible.

The men . . . said . . . Behold the day of which the Lord said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thy hand. They regarded the opportunity as providential, and they reasoned that since God had brought Saul into David's power it was the Lord's will that David should kill him. We are all very apt to interpret providences in accordance with our own wishes. When we are looking for guidance in a certain matter, and there is one way we really want to take, we are pretty sure to find providences that seem to favor our own desire. This incident shows us that we must be very careful in interpreting providences. An open door before us does not always mean that we should enter. Opportunity does not always point out duty. When the storekeeper gives back a dollar too much change, there is an opportunity to make a dollar; but who will say that we ought to accept it? When you find in great trouble one who has bitterly wronged you, there is an opportunity to have revenge by simply passing on and letting him suffer; but this opportunity does not justify you in such revenge. The duty in the former case is honesty, and in the latter is love to an enemy, and the providence affords a *test of character* rather than an opportunity to do wrong. In reading providences we must remember that no seeming invitation to do anything in itself wrong is ever to be regarded as a divine leading. It is wrong to take revenge, no matter how good a chance Providence appears to give. So it is wrong to steal, even though "Providence" gives us an easy chance. God certainly leads us by his providence, but he never leads us into any kind of sin.

He said unto his men, The Lord forbid that I should do this thing. "Would it not be manly to resent it?" said one, on receiving an affront. "Yes," was the reply, "but it would be godlike to forgive it." David did the godlike thing. He had a chance to avenge himself. He had his cruel and relentless enemy in his power. The opportunity was most favorable; one stroke and Saul would never have troubled him any more. His men urged it, and he himself was tempted to do it, and even went so far as to cut off part of his robe. Yet he overcame the temptation and allowed Saul to pass out of his hands unharmed. No lesson is harder to learn than that which David's example teaches us. The first impulse even of a child when wronged or injured, is to seek revenge. (The mothers and nurses often help on the impulse by teaching the little ones to beat the chair or the rocking-horse or the toy, by which they chance to be injured.) Older persons, too, are apt to desire revenge if they have been wronged. The Christian lesson at this point is very hard to learn. The basis of it is that punishment of sin is not our prerogative but God's, while our duty is love, which includes forgiveness.

The Lord forbid that I should . . . stretch forth mine hand against . . . the anointed of the Lord. David knew that he was to be king in Saul's place, that the Lord had so decreed. Here was Saul now brought into his power, and he had only to strike him down and go at once to the emptied throne. Here was a short way to success, but David would not take it. He would not reach the throne by any way but God's. He would not lift his own hand to hurry God's providence. This lesson also is very important. There are often things that God intends to give us, but which we must wait to receive in his way. Short-cuts in traveling often bring us into trouble. Short-cuts in life's paths are always losses in the end. Jacob's mother knew that he was to have the blessing, but if she had waited it would have come without being stained, as it was, by her own and Jacob's falsehood and deception. Young men are ambitious, and ambition may be pure and right, but too often they are in such feverish haste to reach what they wish that they take the short-cut of dishonesty or selfishness to get sooner to the coveted place. *It never pays.* David could have been on the throne the next day, but he would have left tracks of blood on the steps as he ascended; it was better far for him to wander on in exile for a time longer and then reach the throne by a clean path. It is pleasant to see young men "get on in life," but we must always ask how they got on, to know whether their elevation is really an honor and a blessing. The only way to true success is God's way.

Wherefore hearest thou men's words? No doubt there was some one who in the dark was stabbing David's name. It is probable that Saul was made to believe that David was his bitter foe, and was plotting all manner of evil against him.

This is a good place to teach a strong lesson on this subject. There are people in every community who are just as bad as Cush. They go to this one and that one and drop dark insinuations about some other person, whose shoe latchet they are not worthy to loose. They never come out boldly, but are always confidential in their communications, whisperers, who do not speak above their breath. They come to one of two friends and let fall some hint only that the other is not quite faithful, perhaps relating some circumstance in such perverted way as to leave an impression of faithlessness. "A whisperer separateth chief friends," says the proverb. The ruin wrought by the slanderer in this world never can be computed—characters blackened, friendships broken up, quarrels started, jealousies aroused, homes destroyed, hearts broken.

"A whisper broke the air—
A soft, light tone, and low,
Yet barb'd with shame and woe:
Now might it perish only there,
Nor farther go!

"Ah, me! a quick and eager ear
Caught up the little meaning sound!
Another voice has breathed it clear,
And so it wandered round
From ear to lip, from lip to ear,
Until it reached a gentle heart,
And *that* it broke."

Wherefore hearest thou men's words? The slanderer's part is devilish, yet he who listens to the slanderer is also to blame. David's question implies that. Saul ought not to have allowed Cush or any other man to poison his mind concerning David. An honorable person will not listen to scandal. He will consider it an insult to have another begin to retail any story in his ear intended to injure the reputation of his friend or damage the character of an absent person. The hearer is nearly as bad as the slanderer.

The Lord judge . . . the Lord avenge me . . . but mine hand shall not be upon thee. David did not say that Saul had done him no wrong, nor that he deserved no punishment. He only said that it was not his duty to inflict the punishment; that this must be left to the Lord, and that his hand would not be raised in revenge. If any one wrongs us that is just what we should do—not retaliate, but commit the matter to the Lord. We have the example of Jesus also, "who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." God will in due time and manner vindicate any of us who may be unjustly dealt with. But we must not take judgment into our own hands in any case. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

LESSON POINTS.

1. Few things are meaner than to act as spies and informers. v. 1.

2. The power of an evil passion is terrible, and when it is allowed to exist it makes slaves of the strongest men. v. 2.

3. We are in danger of misreading providences and interpreting them to suit our own feelings. v. 4.

4. We must not take short-cuts to success, but go always in God's clean, honest way. v. 6.

5. An opportunity may mean an open door, or it may be a test of character. v. 4.

6. We are never to take the revenging of our wrongs into our own hands. v. 6.

7. Slanderers often make infinite mischief by their false words. v. 9.

8. We should never listen to one who comes to us with stories about another. v. 9.

9. The best kind of conquest over an enemy is the kind David won over Saul. vs. 16, 17.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

How to Divide.

David's Temptation. David's Victory.

How to Question and Apply.

I. *David's Temptation.* Begin this point with a brief consideration of this period of David's wandering as a fugitive. Have class turn and glance briefly at chaps. 24 and 26, also 1 Chron. 12: 8, 16–18; 11: 11, 15, 19. Rapidly trace on the map David's course to Nob, thence to Gath, thence to the mountains and caves of Judah, the cave of Adullam, thence to Moab, to Judah again, at Hareth, Keilah, Ziph, Maon. Have them also glance at Ps. 54, 57, 58, 142. You might ask, What would be the natural feelings of an exile, innocent indeed, but pursued like a partridge, toward his oppressor? Draw from the class the startling scene in the cave at En-gedi?

1. What temptation came to David from the memory of his own wrongs? No principle will be harder to root out of your scholars' hearts than that of revenge. "I'll pay him for this," is what the boy says when he is wronged by another. "Charles, you must not strike Henry." "Yes, but he struck me first," is an answer that seems to Charles all-sufficient. Yet will he kneel down at night and pray, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." Show that David had a far greater temptation to revenge.

2. What temptation arose to David from the chance to end his exile from home, his anxious wanderings, and rise to be king at once?

3. What temptation arose from the very cruelty and wickedness of Saul? Would it not be better for the country to kill such a king?

4. Who added to the temptation by their words? How do our friends often tempt us to do wrong? So Eve tempted Adam. Rebekah tempted Jacob. So Abishai tempted David again in the same way. 1 Sam. 26: 8.

5. How did the apparent meaning of God's word add to the temptation? v. 4. How was Jesus tempted in the same manner? Matt. 4: 6.

6. Did not Providence seem to favor David's killing Saul? Was this not a God-given opportunity?

7. What shows that David was tempted? (The latter part of the fourth verse.) What stronger temptation can come to us to injure our enemies?

II. DAVID'S VICTORY. 1. *Victory over Sin.* What was the first sign of victory? "David's heart smote him." Impress and apply the necessity of preserving our conscience sensitive. How do the words, "The Lord forbid," intimate the source of David's victory? See Gen. 39: 9. What other feeling helped to victory? Reverence for the Lord's anointed. Meaning of this? What shows the completeness of David's triumph over the temptation? In what respects was this a greater victory for David than his triumph over Goliath? What says Prov. 16: 22. On what accounts did this victory bring greater happiness? What actions cause us the deepest and most abiding peace? How was this victory more pleasing to Jehovah? What are our worst conflicts? Our unseen struggles with temptation. What are our greatest triumphs? How has this incident added to David's reputation? What effect on David's future would failure at this point have produced? In what ways can you show Christian forbearance toward your enemies? With what weapons can you overcome the temptation to injure them?

2. *Victory over Saul.* Picture the after scene. Which was greater—David's magnanimity in sparing Saul, or his courage in braving Saul and his troops? What things in David's speech show his admirable skill in argument? How was Saul affected by this address? What do Saul's tears show as to the temperament and disposition of the man? How does this incident illustrate Rom. 12: 19–21? Of what was David's forbearance a type? Luke 23: 34. In what respects was Christ's treatment of his enemies higher and grander than David's sparing of Saul? How often are God's enemies in his power? With what ease could he destroy them? Instead of desiring to destroy his enemies, what does God desire? Ezek. 33: 11. How has Christ shown his love toward his enemies. Rom. 5: 8.

Bring answers in writing to the following questions on the Lesson for December 23d:

1. List of events in David's and Saul's lives from 1 Sam. 24: 17 to 1 Sam. 31: 1.

2. Draw an outline map of Mount Gilboa and vicinity.

3. What good qualities had Saul? What bad qualities?

4. What other suicides besides Saul's are mentioned in the Bible?

5. What was the secret of Saul's failure?

6. What warning come to us from Saul's death?

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

We have here a lesson which very simple blackboard work will vivify. Make a rude representation of rocks; select one to represent the cave. Make a purple mark to represent Saul, and many dots for his three thousand picked soldiers. As the story progresses, transfer the purple mark to the cave Saul is within resting. All around the rocks make dots in a different color from Saul's to represent David's men. Give a graphic description of the conversation between David and his men. Transfer David's mark to the cave while you describe the remarkable scene which occurred there. Then the two marks for Saul and David as they meet.

Those not accustomed to the use of the blackboard in such simple ways will hardly be able to realize how much these marks, erased and made again at different points, aid in the understanding of the story. Try the plan, and see how you will hold the attention of your children.

Special Points.—1. David teaches us how to treat our enemies. 2. Saul teaches us the powerful effect of kindness on an enemy's heart. 3. It is very important to be so sure your cause is right, that you can safely leave it with God.

The practical application is obvious. Little children have enemies. Call from them an opinion as to what the natural feeling of the heart is, and then lay God's rule on the thought and see if they match.

I propose for my class to prepare two sentences (with stencil plates), such as are often on children's lips: "I will never speak to you again," and "I don't like you one bit." Also, a pasteboard rule, covered with gilt paper, on which shall be printed in bright letters—

"LOVE," "BLESS," "PRAY FOR."

And on the reverse side, in very large letters, the word—

ENEMIES.

Let class tell you whether God's rule matches these natural expressions of the heart.

Finally, is it easy to obey that rule? David was able to do it, because he had a new heart. Now we are back to the foundation truth: God must change the heart before it can even want to obey his rule.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

SUGGESTIONS.—The Bible rule for the treatment of our enemies is shown in David's conduct toward Saul when he had him in his power. The rule is worth impressing, and the above diagram is intended to aid in this direction. The following may be deemed preferable:

THE UNCONSCIOUS SLEEPER,
THE CONSCIENTIOUS SERVANT.

Contrast the two men, and show how true Christian character manifests and commends itself. Saul would kill David if he could; David spares his enemy, though he has him in his power. He would not raise his hand against the "Lord's anointed," and, as the conscientious servant of God, he leaves his care with the Lord.

DAVID SPARED SAUL,
SO GOD SPARES SINNERS.

"It is of the Lord's Mercy that we are not Consumed."

Have you been Conquered by the Kindness of Christ?

Directions for Coloring.—"The Bible rule," yellow, heavy letters; "Enemy" and "Him," in centre line, red shaded with white, the rest of the sentence in white; "Avenge not yourselves," orange shaded with green.

Lesson XII. **DEATH OF SAUL AND JONATHAN.** Dec. 23d, 1883.

1 Sam. 31: 1-13. Memorize vs. 11-13.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death."—Prov. 14: 32.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 1 Sam. 26: 12-25... *David Again Spares Saul.*
T. 1 Sam. 28: 1-20.... *Saul's Death Foretold.*
W. 1 Sam. 31: 1-13.... *Death of Saul and Jonathan.*
Th. Prov. 14: 16-35... *The Wicked Driven Away.*
F. 2 Sam. 1: 1-16..... *The News Told to David.*
S. 2 Sam. 1: 17-27.... *David's Lament.*
S. Ps. 49: 1-20..... *The End of the Wicked.*

TOPIC.

The Death of the Disobedient.

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Disaster to Israel. vs. 1-6. **2. The Rejoicing of the Philistines.** vs. 7-10. **3. The Kindness of Jabesh-gilead.** vs. 11-13.

Time.—B. C. 1056. **Place.**—Mountains of Gilboa.

Catechism.—Q. 51. *What is forbidden in the second commandment?* A. The second commandment forbiddeth the worshiping of God by images, or any other way not appointed in his word.

Lesson Hymn.—Presbyterian Hymnal, 789: "When I can read my title clear." Other hymns, 747, 791, 797, 798.

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

INTRODUCTORY.—About five years have elapsed since the meeting of David and Saul at En-gedi. Soon after that meeting Samuel died, and was mourned by all the people. David was still a wanderer, not trusting Saul's transient reconciliation. From En-gedi he went to the wilderness of Paran. (See map on page 461.) Saul's jealousy did not long slumber, and he was soon again on the war-path with a large force. By night another opportunity occurred, and David stole to the king's side and carried away his spear and a cruse of water from beside his pillow, but did not harm him. Again Saul was touched by David's magnanimity, and returned from his pursuit. David soon after went again to Gath and then to Ziklag. At length the Philistines prepared for a decisive war with Saul, the result of which was the defeat of the army of Israel and the death of Saul and Jonathan. The account is given also in 1 Chron. 10.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

1 Now the Phi-lis'tines fought against Is'-ra-el: and the men of Is'ra-el fled from before the Phi-lis'tines, and fell down slain in mount Gil-bo'a. [1 Sam. 28: 4; 2 Sam. 21: 12.]

2 And the Phi-lis'tines followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons; and the Phi-lis'tines slew Jon'a-than, and A-bin'a-dab, and Mel'-chi-shu'a, Saul's sons. [1 Chron. 8: 33.]

3 And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him; and he was sore wounded of the archers. [2 Sam. 1: 6.]

4 Then said Saul unto his armorbearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through and abuse me. But his armorbearer would not; for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword and fell upon it. [1 Sam. 14: 6; 2 Sam. 1: 10.]

5 And when his armorbearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him. [1 Chron. 10: 5.]

6 So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armorbearer, and all his men, that same day together. [1 Chron. 10: 6.]

7 ¶ And when the men of Is'ra-el that *were* on the other side of the valley, and *they* that *were* on the other side Jor'dan saw that the men of Is'ra-el fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, they forsook the cities, and fled; and the Phi-lis'tines came and dwelt in them.

8 And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Phi-lis'tines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen in mount Gil-bo'a. [1 Chron. 10: 3; 2 Chron. 20: 25.]

9 And they cut off his head, and stripped off his armor, and sent into the land of the Phi-lis'tines round about, to publish *it in* the house of their idols, and among the people.

10 And they put his armor in the house of Ash'ta-roth: and they fastened his body to the wall of Beth'shan. [1 Sam. 21: 9; Judg. 2: 13; Josh. 17: 11.]

11 ¶ And when the inhabitants of Ja'besh-gil'e-ad heard of that which the Phi'lis-tines had done to Saul: [1 Sam. 11: 3, 9, 11.]

12 All the valiant men arose, and went all night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth'shan, and came to Ja'besh, and burnt them there. [2 Chron. 16: 14.]

13 And they took their bones, and buried *them* under a tree at Ja'besh, and fasted seven days. [2 Sam. 2: 4, 5.]

1 *Now the Philistines fought.* The narrative is here resumed from chap. 28: 1–25, and 29: 1, 2. When the Philistines gathered in the Plain of Esdraelon, Saul was in great terror. He cried to the Lord, but received no answer. His despair is pitiable; in all history there is nothing more pathetic than the passage which tells of his calling upon God only to know that God had utterly forsaken him, and then of his betaking himself to En-dor in the darkness of the night to find the sorceress, and to obtain through her, if possible, an interview with Samuel, the friend and counsellor of his early reign, only to learn of the terrible doom that was to end tomorrow the dark tragedy of his life. *The men of Israel fled.* They seem to have been panic-stricken, and to have broken at the first assault of the Philistines. *Slain in mount Gilboa.* They probably fled to the heights of Gilboa, pursued by their enemies. The scene of this battle was the Plain of Esdraelon, "the great battle-field of Palestine."

2 *Followed hard.* It is probable that when Saul and his sons saw the people fleeing and falling, they tried themselves to make a stand, and that the whole force of the Philistine attack was thus drawn upon them. *Slew . . . Saul's sons.* His sons fell first, leaving Saul alone. Jonathan was a brave and noble man. He had never shared in his father's sins. He took no part in hunting David, but remained his loyal friend to the last. His name shines in the narrative without a blemish or a spot. Yet, though he was not partaker of his father's sins, he clung to him with filial devotion in his decline, and sank and perished with him in the final catastrophe. The lustre of his name, however, was not tarnished by the shame and infamy that blackened the name of his father. Of the other sons of Saul mentioned here nothing is known. See 1 Chron. 8: 33; 10: 2.

3 *The archers.* That is, those who shot with the bow. Saul's sons were killed by his side, but he continued to fight, and fought desperately. The Vulgate renders the first part of this verse: "The whole weight of the battle was directed against Saul." *Sore wounded.* The better rendering is, *He was sore afraid*, or *distressed.* It was a terrible hour for Saul. His army was defeated. His men lay dead on all sides. His sons had fallen. He was alone on the field. He knew that God had forsaken him. He remembered the words heard at En-dor last night. No wonder he was in despair.

4 *Unto his armorbearer.* The archers had found him, and he knew that escape was now impossible. David had been at one time Saul's armorbearer (chap. 16: 21); if he had continued in this position he would likely have perished in this battle. "But God had put him in a place of safety, though it seemed one of great peril." Thus Saul's enmity became the means of David's preservation. *These uncircumcised.* No degradation could seem more intolerable than that he should fall into the hands of the Philistines alive, for he knew they would offer every possible insult to him. See Judg. 16: 21–25. When his armorbearer refused to kill him, he took his sword and fell upon it, thus dying by his own hand.

6 *All his men.* Not to be taken literally. In 1 Chron. 10: 6, "All his *house*," that is, his family or household, probably meaning the soldiers of the royal body guard, who remained faithful to him to the last, and fell fighting around him. Abner, however, the general of the army, escaped. Ish-bosheth, Saul's youngest son, probably not being in the battle, survived.

7 *The men of Israel.* Those who had not been in the battle, non-combatants. *The other side of the valley.* To the north of the plain of Jezreel, where the tribes of Naphtali, Zebulon and Issachar dwelt. In 1 Chron. 10: 7 the expression is, "in the valley," limiting the flight to the inhabitants of Jezreel itself. *The other side Jordan.* Either the panic spread across the river, or the phrase may mean along *the edge of the Jordan.* The people in their terror fled away from their homes and towns, and the Philistines occupied them.

8, 9 *To strip the slain.* To gather the spoils from their persons. *Cut off his head.* According to the customs of ancient war; perhaps also in retaliation for the head of Goliath. *To publish it.* They sent the news of their victory to be told in all their temples and among all their people.

10 *The house of Ashtaroth.* In 1 Chron. 10: 10 it is "*the house of their gods*," as if the armor had been distributed among the various shrines of Astarte. If it was all placed in one shrine it was most likely in the famous temple of Venus in Askelon, mentioned by the historian Herodotus as the most ancient of all her temples. Goliath's sword had been placed in the tabernacle. Chaps. 17: 54; 21: 9. In 1 Chron. 10: 10 the additional fact is given that they fastened Saul's head in the temple of Dagon, probably in Ashdod or Gaza (in retaliation, it may be, for the treatment of Goliath's head. Chap. 17: 54). *Fastened his body.* Also the bodies of his sons. v. 12. They were hung near the gate, so that all who passed by would see this mark of the disgrace of Israel's king. 2 Sam. 21: 12. *Beth-shan.* Afterward Scythopolis, now Beisân, four miles west of the Jordan. This must have been one of the towns from which the Israelites fled and which the Philistines at once occupied.

11–13 *Jabesh-gilead.* A town east of the Jordan. The people had not forgotten what Saul had done for them (chap. 11), in rescuing them from Nahash, and now they seek to repay his brave help by rescuing his remains from disgrace. *Burnt them.* Bodies were not usually burnt among the Hebrews, and probably the motive in this case was to preserve the headless corpses from the possibility of further mutilation or indignity. The bones were buried *under a tree*, properly, *under the tamarisk*, implying some well-known tree of that species at Jabesh. David subsequently removed these remains to the family sepulchre at Zelah. 2 Sam. 21: 12–15. *Fasted.* A sign of grief and mourning. See Gen. 50: 10. Thus they honored Saul's memory.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

The Philistines slew Jonathan. Had Saul proved himself a true and worthy king, Jonathan would have been his successor on the throne. But on account of his father's failure he lost the crown, and not only this, but died in the same disaster in which his father fell. The lesson is, that the sins of parents cut off and destroy the hopes of their children, and rob them of their birthright honors and blessings. There are thousands of children whose lives are blighted, sometimes for both worlds, by the evil ways of their parents. Here the innocent, the brave, the noble, the manly Jonathan perishes in a calamity brought on by his father's persistent disobedience. The guilty father drags down with him into his grave of dishonor his pure and blameless son. No man can go on in a sinful life without involving his family as well as himself in sorrow. I heard a man relate the manner of his conversion. He had formed drinking habits which were fast ruining him. One night he went home, and when he entered the room where his wife and little ones lay sleeping, he looked into the faces of his two children nestled in their crib, and this picture flashed before his eyes: He saw himself rushing down to hell, and these sweet, innocent children clinging to his garments. Startled, awakened to a consciousness of his responsibility for their happiness, he fell upon his knees beside them, and crying to God for mercy, gave himself to Christ for his children's sake. Surely there is motive enough here to lead every thinking parent to live a pure, true, holy and godly life.

The battle went sore against Saul . . . he was sore wounded. There are few sadder pictures in history than this of Saul on Gilboa, rushing on to his doom with the desperation of despair. The teaching is, that judgment will surely come to those who persist in sin. It was many years after the doom of Saul was pronounced upon him before its fulfilment came. Judgment lingered, but did not fail. Men may live in sin and no disaster may come to them. God may seem to be taking no notice of their evil deeds. The sun may shine brightly over them, and the rains may fall upon them, and prosperity may continue. But let them not think that God has forgotten. "He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." "The wages of sin is death," and it is wages that never go unpaid. Payment may be slow, but it is sure, without discount or abatement. "Saul had really prepared for himself this wretched death. He had disregarded the prophet, and so was without consolation. He had killed the priests, and so was without sacrifice or intercession. He had driven away David, and so was without the help of the best soldier in the nation. He had lived, in his later years at least, like a madman; and like a madman he threw himself on his sword and died. As a man sows he reaps. As a life is shaped so is the death determined. . . . One leads a selfish life, hardening his heart against appeal or reproach, and his doom is, to lose all power and experience of sympathy, to pass through the world winning no love, and pass out of the world drawing after him no regret."

Saul took a sword and fell upon it. Suicide is a violation of the commandment which says, "Thou shalt not kill." Human life is sacred in God's sight, and to touch it is a crime. Life is a gift of God, entrusted by him to each one of us, and is to be cherished and preserved until he himself calls back the gift; suicide, self-murder, is unfaithfulness to this trust. We must use our life in the work assigned, and cannot without sin lay it down until the time he has appointed. Even a heathen philosopher said that "we should not abandon the station or post of life without the orders of our Commander, that is, of God." Suicide is an act also of cowardice. It is committed usually, as here, to escape meeting some other trouble or danger. For example, a man has committed a crime, and rather than face his deed before men he takes his own life. But in doing so he rushes into another presence far more terrible. Saul escaped the cruelty of the Philistines, but went, bloody with this last crime, to meet God.

All the valiant men arose, and went all night, and took the body of Saul . . . from the wall of Beth-shan. It was a brave and noble thing for these men to do. Once, when Saul was just beginning to reign, he had done a great kindness to Jabesh-gilead. Now when he was dead, friendless, forsaken, his body mutilated and dishonored, the memory of this kind act was awakened, and under the spur of gratitude these valiant men, at risk of life, did this heroic deed, and gave honor to the mangled remains of their friend and king. Hardly any one can die, no matter in what darkness or dishonor, that in some heart somewhere the memory of a kindness is not awakened. The worst men have always some one to mourn them. Never was there a tyrant who wrought more crimes and cruelties and made more sorrow than Nero. One would say that he was incapable of kindness to any one, and that no one mourned his death. Yet, it is recorded that on the morning after he was buried, amid universal execration, flowers were found strewn

by some unknown hand upon his grave. There was one at least that remembered him gratefully. Many of us are too apt to keep our gratitude sealed up in our hearts till the friend who has helped us is dead, and then bring our flowers to his coffin, and our spices and ointments to his grave. Better then than never, but it is better still for us to bring them while he is alive, that he may be blessed and cheered thereby. While we read this tender record of the kindness of the men of Jabesh-gilead to Saul's dead body, we cannot but recall another instance of a King who hung dead on a cross, his naked body exposed, "a spectacle to angels and to men," when two friends, long silent and secret, came forward to do honor to the torn and dishonored form. It was a brave and noble deed, and it saved that sacred body from being cast away with the bodies of common malefactors, giving to it honorable burial.

They took their bones and buried them under a tree at Jabesh. It has been said that every one lives for a funeral; that the funeral one has tells the whole story of his life. One man amasses great wealth, and when his body lies in state, the rich come and look at him and pass on with tearless eyes. Another devotes his life to doing good. His hands scatter blessings. The needy are cared for, the hungry are fed, the sick are visited, the fallen are lifted up. When he lies in his coffin the poor come, the widow and the orphan, those whom his hands have relieved and helped, and with grateful hearts and tearful eyes take their farewell. Saul owed all the honor he received in his burial to one kind deed of many years before. Had his reign continued as it began he would have had the gratitude of a whole nation when he came to die. One lesson is, that we should all try to live so that we shall be remembered with gratitude, and leave behind us a memory of good deeds. Another lesson is, that we should never fail to show gratitude to any one who has conferred a favor upon us. Then let us be sure that we live so as to obtain honor from God when we come to the end of life. If we miss that, earth's honor will be an awful mockery.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Those whom God has forsaken have no strength to stand before their enemies. v. 1.
2. A father by his sins may cut off the hopes of his children. v. 2.
3. The good and the noble may perish in the doom of the guilty. v. 2.
4. The natural tendency and the end of all sin is self-destruction. v. 4.
5. No sinner suffers alone, but drags others down with him. v. 6.
6. When God is rejected, the old sinful enemies rush in again and occupy the heart. v. 7.
7. The enemies of God rejoice when any of his people are defeated and fall. vs. 9, 10.
8. Misfortune and death awaken memories of deeds of kindness. vs. 11–13.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

How to Begin.

Have the scholar, appointed last Sabbath, read the list of intervening events. This should be accompanied by the class turning to the references. Show how God's school of providence prepared David for the throne. In his wanderings, in his contact with men of all conditions, he learned the nature of the men he afterwards was to govern. He learned watchfulness and unwavering trust in God. In contrast with David's growth in grace and fitness for the throne, bring out the dark and downward career of Saul. Especially trace the awful progress of his sin and rebellion against Jehovah, till in despair he seeks the woman with a familiar spirit. Show how even in despair his thoughts go back to his former faithful guide, and he cries: "Bring me up Samuel."

How to Divide

Defeat. *Death.*

I. *Defeat.* vs. 1–3. What must have been the condition of Saul's army before this battle? What was Saul's state of mind as it appears in chap. 28? How would such a leader affect the soldiers? What in Saul's conduct had driven from him the confidence and affection of his people? Thus bring out the fact that the whole army must have felt that they were fighting for a God-forsaken king and a doomed cause. Call for the map of Mount Gilboa and vicinity. In "Doré's Bible Gallery" is a picture of this tumultuous battle-scene on Mount Gilboa. Saul is in the foreground falling on his sword; his sons lie about him dead. Behind him to the left his faithful armorbearer is imitating his awful example. In the background the Philistines are galloping to the slaughter. Why should such a pure, blameless soul as Jonathan pass away in such darkness and defeat.

II. *Death.* Show Doré's picture, or better describe in words Saul's death. What had God done for the man thus perishing for time and eternity? 1. He gave him a quiet, happy home for long years, in seclusion in Benjamin. 2. He called and anointed him king. 3. As king he would copy for himself the law of God. 4. God gave him repeatedly the special influences of his Spirit. Why is the Lord's anointed defeated

in battle and dying as a suicide? He disobeyed God. 1 Sam. 13: 1–14; 15: 1–31. He rejected Jehovah, Jehovah rejected Saul.

Questions on the Review to be assigned:

1. Bring a list of the persons mentioned in the last twelve lessons.

2. Trace as far as possible the wanderings of David in fleeing from Saul.

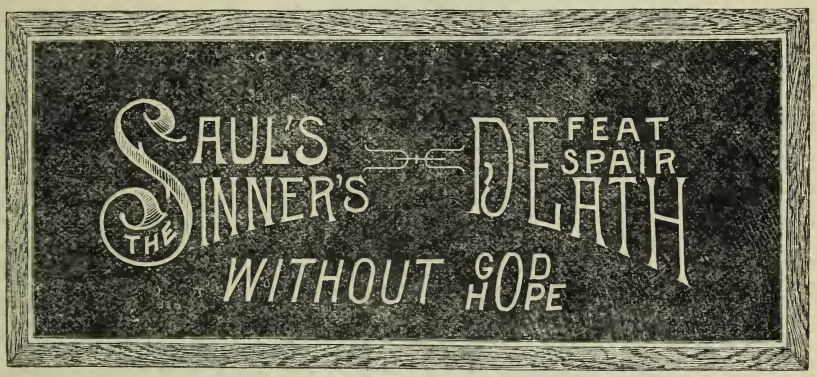
3. What two prominent actors in these lessons proved to be failures? Reasons for their failures.

4. What two prominent actors grandly succeeded? Causes of their success.

5. Some of the warnings in these last twelve lessons?

6. Some of the doctrines brought out in the Quarter's teachings?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



SUGGESTIONS.—Saul's defeat, Saul's despair and Saul's death, may be appropriately used to represent the sinner's defeat, despair and death. It makes a big difference with men, as with nations, whether God be for or against them. In the end there will be hopeless defeat, despair and death to the disobedient and ungodly. They that fight against God will be destroyed.

SAUL SORELY WOUNDED,
ONS SLAIN,
SERVANTS DESTROYED
INFUL DEATH,
AD AY, WHEN GOD FORSAKES ONE.

Directions for Coloring.—"Saul's defeat," orange shaded with red; "Despair," green shaded with red; "Death," brown shaded with red; "Sinners," orange shaded with brown; "Without God" and "Hope," plain red. The effect of these colors will impress the sad lesson.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

There is a sad and yet a suggestive thought in the fact that our work for the year closes with the story of death.

The *facts* of the lesson may be drawn out in the usual way. I propose to prepare for my class a paper door, so made that it will open on little cloth hinges. I have done this with former lessons, and it is not a difficult thing.

On this closed door I will print with black paint the word "**DEATH.**" This door I will pin to the blackboard at the opening of the lesson. I shall depend on the class for a brief review of Saul's life, preparing a list of questions that shall draw out the salient points. I shall outline a crown to represent his position, then draw a line from that downward, somewhat in the form of steps, to mark the gradations in his downward career. The conclusion of the wasted life is death by suicide.

In the last lesson we left Saul weeping, but his was a kind of repentance that did not last. At the proper point in the story I will fasten over the arch of the door a strip of paper (previously prepared to fit it), on which these words are printed: "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness." Another strip of paper, placed below the word "Death," containing this sentence: SO SAUL DIED. A sad picture, truly, but it has another side.

Pin yet another paper over the top of the door, on which is printed in bright letters the name "JESUS." There are death-beds beside which he stands, lighting up the gloom. When he is present, death is but the door leading into heaven.

I shall let the little door open on its hinges, revealing a bright blue background, with the word "HEAVEN" in gilt letters.

One of these deaths must come to each child in your class. Which will he choose?

Lesson XIII. **QUARTERLY REVIEW.** Dec. 30th, 1883.

[*From the Westminster Quarterly.*]

HOME STUDIES.

M. 1 Sam. 4: 10–18; 7: 3–17. Th. 1 Sam. 15: 12–26; 16: 1–13.
T. 1 Sam. 8: 1–10; 10: 17–27. F. 1 Sam. 17: 38–51.
W. 1 Sam. 12: 13–25. S. 1 Sam. 18: 1–16; 20: 32–42.
S. 1 Sam. 24: 1–17; 31: 1–13.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"But God is the Judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another."—Ps. 75: 7.

REVIEW CHART.—Fourth Quarter.

Lessons in 1 Sam.	*Title.*	*Topic.*	*Golden Text.*	*Lesson Plan.*
1.—4: 10–18.	Eli's Death.	Parental Neglect Punished.	His sons made. 1 Sam. 3: 13.	1. The disastrous battle. 2. The anxious priest. 3. The fatal tidings.
2.—7: 3–17.	Samuel the Judge.	National Prosperity.	Hitherto hath the Lord. 1 Sam. 7: 12.	1. National reformation. 2. Victory over enemies. 3. Peace and prosperity.
3.—8: 1–10.	Asking for a King.	A Nation's Ingratitude.	It is better to trust in the. Ps. 118: 9.	1. The people's request. 2. The matter carried to God. 3. The Lord's answer.
4.—10: 17–27.	Saul Chosen King.	God the Ruler of Kings.	And all the people. 1 Sam. 10: 24.	1. The nation assembled. 2. The king chosen. 3. The people rejoicing.
5.—12: 13–25.	Samuel's Farewell Address.	The Duty of Serving God.	Only fear the Lord. 1 Sam. 12: 24.	1. Condition of blessing. 2. Sin recalled. 3. Counsels and blessings.
6.—15: 12–26.	Saul Rejected.	The Penalty of Disobedience.	Behold, to obey is better. 1 Sam. 15: 22.	1. Saul's disobedience and hypocrisy. 2. His reproof and defence. 3. His condemnation and rejection.
7.—16: 1–13.	David Anointed.	God's Choice the Best.	I have found David my. Ps. 89: 20.	1. The secret errand. 2. The mighty rejected. 3. The humble chosen.
8.—17: 38–51.	David and Goliath.	Victory by Faith.	The battle is the. 1 Sam. 17: 47.	1. David's armor 2. The giant's disdain. 3. David's confidence. 4. The giant slain.
9.—18: 1–16.	David's Enemy—Saul.	Safety in God's Favor.	And David behaved. 1 Sam. 18: 14.	1. The king's envy excited. 2. His attempts to kill David. 3. His snares to destroy him.
10.—20: 32–42.	David's Friend—Jonathan.	True Christian Friendship.	A man that hath. Prov. 18: 24.	1. Jonathan intercedes for David. 2. He warns him of his danger. 3. He renews his covenant with him.
11.—24: 1–17.	David Sparing his Enemy.	Forbearance toward Enemies.	But I say unto you. Matt. 5: 44.	1. David's magnanimity. 2. His appeal to Saul. 3. Saul's penitence.
12.—31: 1–13.	Death of Saul and Jonathan.	The Death of the Disobedient.	The wicked is driven. Prov. 14: 32.	1. The disaster to Israel. 2. The rejoicing of the Philistines. 3. The kindness of Jabesh-gilead.
13.—4: 10–31: 13.	Review.	Israel under Samuel and Saul.	But God is the Judge. Ps. 75: 7.	

SUGGESTIONS FOR REVIEW.

The First Book of Samuel, from which the lessons of this Quarter are taken, contains the history of the Israelites from the birth of Samuel to the death of Saul. At the beginning of this period Eli was both high priest and judge. He resided at the tabernacle in Shiloh, and in his old age was assisted in the discharge of his duties by his two sons. During his administration Samuel was born, who at the early age of twelve years was called to the prophetical office and received his first message from the Lord. Our lessons tell us how the predictions of Samuel were fulfilled in the defeat of the Israelites by the Philistines, the capture of the ark, and the death of Eli. They pass rapidly over the administration of Samuel, and then tell us of the choice of Saul to be king, of his sin and rejection, of the selection of David to be his successor, of Saul's hatred and persecution of David, until, defeated by the Philistines and forsaken by God, the despairing king dies by his own hand. In the preparation of the review the entire book of First Samuel should be carefully read and studied.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

ARRANGEMENT.

The general plan of conducting the review should be fully understood and agreed to by every teacher. The time to be devoted to the review by the teachers should be fixed, say twenty-five minutes. The superintendent should be expected to have twenty-five minutes also for his general review exercise. On such occasions I would devote the whole time (except a few minutes for opening and closing worship, books, etc.) to the important work of reviewing.

INTRODUCTION.

Let imagination turn the year's studies into two journeys—one along the green pastures of the New Testament; the other, a march to the battlefields of the Old Testament. You will want two maps—one of Paul's missionary journeys, including Palestine; the other, a map

of Palestine, marking the division of the land among the tribes. You can begin thus—What is this Sabbath? Some one will be sure to say, The last of the year. You can suggest that it is like *a mountain top.* As travelers who have struggled up steep mountain sides, we stand to-day on the summit. Upon what can we look back? One will say, Our Quarter's lessons, or possibly one, On the year's lessons. If this Sabbath is a mountain top, what will we call the year's studies? A journey. Yes, we have traveled two long journeys—one along the New Testament, six months; one along the Old Testament, six months.

THE FIRST JOURNEY.

On what mount did we start? Mount of Olives. In what city did we stop the longest time? Jerusalem. What happened there? Here let scholars mention Pentecost, the lame man, the preaching of Peter and John, Ananias and Sapphira, the choosing of the seven, Stephen's speech and martyrdom. Then from Jerusalem to what places do we follow Philip, Peter and John? Samaria, Azotus, etc. To what strange city do we follow a persecutor? From Damascus into Arabia, thence down to Lydda and Joppa, and up to Cæsarea. We travel as far as Antioch, and then back to Jerusalem, where James is beheaded and Peter delivered from prison. Returning to Antioch, on what voyage do we follow Barnabas, Saul and Mark? It will not be difficult to recall Cyprus, Perga, Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, and the return. Even this rapid review will not be without value when you enter the lessons of 1884.

FIRST PART OF THE SECOND JOURNEY.

Where do we start on our Old Testament march? The other side of Jordan, in the land of Moab. What river must be crossed? What city captured? What defeat must we witness? What national assembly do we attend? What six cities do we survey? How does the old general bid farewell to his troops? What great decline do we see after Joshua's death? What great General do we see testing his soldiers? What mighty athlete do we witness dying? What two women come from Moab to Bethlehem? What model mother do we meet? What model child?

SECOND PART OF THE SECOND JOURNEY.

I. *What twelve milestones do we find marking this part of the march?*

1. E's D.
2. S. the J.
3. A. for a K.
4. S. C. K.
5. S's F. A.
6. S. R.
7. D. A.
8. D. and G.
9. D's E.—S.
10. D's F.—J.
11. D. S.'his E.
12. D. of S. and J.

II. *What inscriptions can we read on these stones?* (Here call for the golden texts.)

1. His sons made— 2. Hitherto hath— 3. It is better to trust— 4. And all the people shouted— 5. Only fear the Lord— 6. Behold to obey— 7. I have found David— 8. The battle is the Lord's— 9. And David behaved— 10. A man that hath friends— 11. But I say unto you— 12. The wicked is—.

III. *What four heads of the nation pass before us?* Eli, Samuel, Saul, David. Which two of these were failures? Which two successful? What traits of Eli's character appear? Of Samuel's? Of Saul's? Of David's?

IV. In the *Sunday-school Teacher*, published at 56 Old Bailey, London, E. C., W. H. Whitbread gives the following acrostic outline for this Quarter:

Sad death of Eli.
Ebenezer, "the stone of help."
Voice of request.
Election of Saul as king.
Never forsake God.
The rejection of Saul.
Youngest son of Jesse anointed.
Youthful hero slays Goliath.
Enemy found in Saul.
A friend in Jonathan.
Refuses to slay his enemy.
Saul's death at Gilboa.

OF ISRAEL'S HISTORY.

He says: "The period covered by our lessons is about seventy years, the limit of the life of man. It was an important period in Israel's history, the closing years of the rule of the judges, the opening years of the monarchy. Death marks its beginning and its close—Eli and Saul." The above may well be used for a slate-tablet or blackboard outline, accompanied with questions on each point. It will be noticed, however, that this acrostic leaves out the lessons on Hannah and Samuel's childhood.

V. *Which lesson contains counsel* (1) for fathers of wilful sons? (2) Wives in domestic troubles? (3) For little children? (4) For rulers in times of revolution? (5) For the young man suddenly promoted? (6) Young people who are rivals? (7) For those oppressed by the great? (8) For those who are troubled by enemies? (9) For those electing rulers? (10) For young friends? (11) For young mothers? (12) For those suffering from gossip?

VI. *Which lesson contains a type of Christ* (1) as a Prophet and Judge? (2) As anointed by the Holy Spirit? (3) As the destroyer of Satan? (4) As the friend who sticketh closer than a brother? (5) As loving his enemies?

Questions to be assigned on the Lesson for Sabbath, January 6th, 1884:

1. How did Jews regard Gentiles?

2. How did this feeling trouble the early Christian Church?

3. What two parties arose in the early Church?

4. What was the exact question to be settled by the conference at Jerusalem?

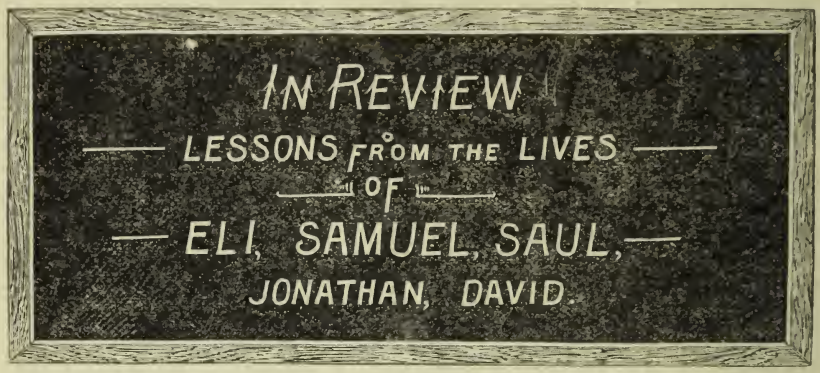
5. For what reasons was it a very important question?

6. Who composed the conference?

7. Who were the speakers? What was the decision?

8. What were the results of the decision?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD



SUGGESTIONS.—The usual form of getting from the school the titles and golden texts as introductory is recommended. Then draw out lessons from the lives of the prominent characters in the Quarter's studies. Having these names neatly printed on the board will aid greatly. A week or two before review notify certain teachers, scholars, or classes, to be ready to give, in a few words, the lessons to be impressed, growing out of the events in the lives of these men. Properly conducted, this will be found a profitable method of review, and will afford variety sufficient to accomplish the purpose, and at the same time secure the interest of the school. (For further suggestions, see Dr. Worden's notes.)

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

This is the lesson of the whole Quarter which needs to be prepared with the greatest diligence and care. Teachers are apt to think that they are so familiar with the lessons of the Quarter that they can, without special preparation, conduct the review exercise; but failure is the only result of such an experiment. For little people the review must be made sprightly, vivacious and interesting. No class will enjoy the lesson more than the primary if proper preparation is made by the teacher.

It is sometimes worth the while of the primary teacher to take a good deal of trouble to help the children prepare for review. If you have not many scholars, or if you have many helpers, what if you should make for each child a little book of twelve pages to take home on the Sabbath preceding review? Don't make the pages too large. Two inches by three is a pretty size. Place on each page the name of some person prominent in the lesson, and possibly a single suggestion as to what you want of the children; though if your book is small, this last may be omitted.

Page 1 would be marked "Eli," and the question might be, What sorrow came to him?

Page 2. "Samuel." What did he do with a stone?

Page 3. "Elders." What did they ask of Samuel?

Page 4. "Saul." How was he chosen?

You get my idea.

Encourage the children to get some one to write out their thoughts, and you will have some quaint little books to read over in class and comment on.

Perhaps you will get more original ideas if you omit the question and give simply the names, encouraging the children to state anything which they please concerning him, or any thought which they had on the lesson.

You will find that very little children will take part in an exercise of this kind, and enlist their mothers and older sisters to do the writing. Sometimes very sweet thoughts are thus developed. For those who prefer some other method of review, I suggest the one outlined on the *Westminster Primary Leaf*.

REVIEW EXERCISE.*

Signal for silence.

Reading of part of Psalm 95.

Superintendent.—O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

Pastor.—Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.

School.—For the Lord *is* a great God, and a great King above all gods.

Supt.—In his hand *are* the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills *is* his also.

Teachers.—The sea *is* his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry *land*.

Supt.—O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker.

All.—For he *is* our God: and we *are* the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.

Singing.—Hymn No. 813 (Pres. Hymnal):

For thy mercy and thy grace,
Faithful through another year,
Hear our song of thankfulness,
Father and Redeemer! hear.

In our weakness and distress,
Rock of strength! be thou our stay;
In the pathless wilderness
Be our true and living way.

Keep us faithful, keep us pure,
Keep us evermore thine own;
Help, oh help us to endure;
Fit us for the promised crown.

Prayer.—Closing with the Lord's Prayer.

Recitation of the Ten Commandments.

Singing.—Hymn 540:

How shall the young secure their hearts
And guard their lives from sin?
Thy word the choicest rules imparts
To keep the conscience clean.

When once it enters to the mind,
It spreads such light abroad
The meanest souls instruction find,
And raise their thoughts to God.

Thy word is everlasting truth;
How pure is every page!
That holy book shall guide our youth
And well support our age.

Notices, collections, etc.

REVIEW QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

LESSON I. **Superintendent.**—What news was brought to Eli?

School.—Israel is fled before the Philistines, and there has been also a great slaughter among the people, and thy two sons . . . are dead, and the ark of God is taken.

Supt.—How did the news affect him?

School.—He fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck brake, and he died.

II. **Supt.**—What memorial of his victory over the Philistines did Samuel set up?

School.—Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.

III. **Supt.**—What did the elders demand from Samuel?

School.—Make us a king to judge us like all the nations.

Supt.—What did the Lord tell Samuel to do?

School.—Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee; for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.

IV. **Supt.**—What did Samuel say to the people when he presented Saul to them?

School.—See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen that there is none like him among the people.

Supt.—What did the people do?

School.—All the people shouted and said, God save the king.

Singing.—Hymn 8:

Around the Saviour's lofty throne,
Ten thousand times ten thousand sing;
They worship him as God alone,
And crown him—everlasting King.

Approach, ye saints! this God is yours;
'Tis Jesus fills the throne above:
Ye cannot want while God endures;
Ye cannot fail while God is love.

Jesus, thou everlasting King!
To thee the praise of heaven belongs;
Yet smile on us who fain would bring
The tribute of our humble songs.

V. **Supt.**—What counsel did Samuel give the people?

School.—Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart; for consider how great things he hath done for you.

VI. **Supt.**—What sentence was pronounced upon Saul?

School.—Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he also hath rejected thee from being king.

VII. **Supt.**—What did the Lord say to Samuel?

School.—I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite; for I have provided me a king among his sons.

* Extra copies of this Review Exercise furnished at 50 cents a hundred, on application to the Board.

Supt.—What took place after David was anointed king?

School.—The Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward.

VIII. **Supt.**—What did Goliath say when David went out to meet him?

School.—Am I a dog that thou comest to me with staves?

Supt.—What did David reply?

School.—I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.

Singing.—Hymn 951:

Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
Ye soldiers of the cross;
Lift high his royal banner,
It must not suffer loss;
From victory unto victory
His army shall he lead
Till every foe is vanquished,
And Christ is Lord indeed.

Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
Stand in his strength alone;
The arm of flesh will fail you,
Ye dare not trust your own;
Put on the gospel armor,
And watching unto prayer,
Where duty calls, or danger,
Be never wanting there.

IX. **Supt.**—How was David honored when he returned from the slaughter of the Philistines?

School.—The women answered one another as they played and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.

Supt.—How did Saul feel about this?

School.—Saul was very wroth and the saying displeased him; and he said, . . . What can he have more but the kingdom?

X. **Supt.**—With what words did David and Jonathan conclude their parting covenant?

School.—The Lord be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed for ever.

XI. **Supt.**—What did David's men say to him when Saul was in his power?

School.—Behold the day of which the Lord said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee.

Supt.—What was David's reply?

School.—The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the Lord's anointed.

XII. **Supt.**—What did Saul tell his armor-bearer to do when he was defeated by the Philistines?

School.—Draw thy sword and thrust me through therewith.

Supt.—What did Saul do when the armor-bearer refused?

School.—Saul took a sword and fell upon it.

Supt.—How did the men of Jabesh-gilead rescue the bodies of Saul and his sons?

School.—The valiant men arose and went all night and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Bethshan and came to Jabesh.

Singing.—Hymn 789:

When I can read my title clear
To mansions in the skies,
I bid farewell to every fear,
And wipe my weeping eyes.

Should earth against my soul engage,
And hellish darts be hurled,
Then I can smile at Satan's rage,
And face a frowning world.

Let cares like a wild deluge come,
And storms of sorrow fall,
May I but safely reach my home,
My God, my heaven, my all.

Review drill on topics, golden texts, Catechism, with whatever further exercises may be desired.

Singing.—Hymn 791:

My days are gliding swiftly by,
And I, a pilgrim stranger,
Would not detain them as they fly,
These hours of toil and danger.

CHO.—For oh, we stand on Jordan's strand,
Our friends are passing over,
And, just before, the shining shore
We may almost discover.

We'll gird our loins, my brethren dear,
Our distant home discerning;
Our absent Lord has left us word,
Let every lamp be burning.—CHO.

Let sorrow's rudest tempest blow,
Each cord on earth to sever;
Our King says, "Come," and there's our home,
For ever, oh, for ever!—CHO.

Secretary's and Librarian's Distribution.

CLOSING SENTENCES.

Part of Psalm 90.

Supt.—So teach *us* to number our days, that we may apply *our* hearts unto wisdom.

Pastor.—Return, O Lord, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants.

Teachers.—O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

Boys.—Make us glad according to the days *wherein* thou hast afflicted us, *and* the years *wherein* we have seen evil.

Girls.—Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children.

All.—And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.

ABOUT NEW BOOKS.

..Among the Alaskans. By Julia McNair Wright. In the last few years Alaska has been opened up and has suddenly grown into great importance. The missionary work among the Alaskans has also been most promptly entered upon and most energetically pursued. It is to Presbyterians a peculiarly gratifying fact that their own Church has led in the carrying of the gospel into that newly opened land. This book gives a great deal of most interesting matter relative to this wonderful country, and also tells the thrilling story of the missionary work among the people. It is illustrated by a large number of excellent engravings. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication. 16mo. Price, $1.25.

..A Bag of Stories. By Anna B. Warner. A mother's talks with her children about some queer things which they found in their Christmas bag. It will be found an exceedingly entertaining book for children, which will awaken in their minds an interest in missionary work. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. Price, 75 cents.

..Nobody Loves Me. By Mrs. O. F. Walton, author of "Christie's Old Organ." The story of "Old Grumpy." Nobody loved her and she loved nobody. She loved a kitten, and it ran away, and a little orphan girl, and she died. A pleasing story for children. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. Price, 50 cents.

..Philosophy and Christianity. A series of lectures delivered in New York, in 1883, on The Ely Foundation of the Union Theological Seminary. By George S. Morris, Ph. D. The course consists of eight lectures on the general theme of the relations which exist between religion and intelligence, the main object being to show that intelligence as such is the true bulwark, and not the enemy, of religion. The lectures will be read with great profit by those who are interested in the discussion of this great theme. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. 12mo, illustrated, pp. 315. Price, $1.75.

..Mosaics of Bible History. By Marcius Willson and Robert Pierpont Willson. On the title page these volumes are further described as "the Bible record with illustrative poetic and prose selections from standard literature." The books of the Bible are taken in order, and after an introduction, in which the plan, purpose and leading characteristics of the book are outlined, a number of the principal topics are presented, with selections bearing upon each, connected by a running thread of narrative or description. One volume is given to the Old Testament and one to the New. Many of the selections are very fine, and will throw light upon the story they are intended to illustrate. The bringing together in this convenient form of so many passages from literature founded upon scenes and incidents in the Scriptures, is itself a work of value. The volumes are gotten up in excellent manner, as are all the books of these publishers, well printed and strongly bound. The plan is well carried out, and the selections are made with discretion and care. New York: Harper & Brothers. 2 vols., 12mo. $3.00.

..How Shall I Go to God? and Other Readings. By Horatius Bonar, D.D. This loved author needs no introduction to our readers. Here are nine short articles on vital themes, full of good, rich, spiritual, Scriptural food, which will prove stimulating and helpful to all who will read them. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. Price, 40 cents.

..The Gospel According to John. By Dr. Milligan and Dr. Moulton. This is the fourth volume of the International Revision Commentary on the New Testament, edited by Philip Schaff, D.D., LL.D. The former volumes of this Commentary have been favorably noticed in these pages. On the whole, there is no other work on the New Testament better adapted to the needs of the ordinary reader. The volumes are of convenient size and form. The notes are clear, plain, incisive and comprehensive. The processes of criticism are left out, and the results only are given; yet we have more here than a bare exposition of words and phrases. The pages are filled with fresh and helpful suggestions, doctrinal, practical and devotional, which make the Scripture text live and glow before our eyes. This volume on John's Gospel will be found peculiarly rich. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. Price, $1.25.

..The Boy-Lollard. By the Rev. Frederic A. Reed, A.M. This is a tale of the readers of Tyndale's New Testament in the times of Henry VIII. The facts and statements are historical, and the authorities are given for verification. The story is interesting, and presents pictures of the days when the first printed English New Testament was being given to the people. Unlike many of the books prepared for Sabbath-school scholars, it furnishes a large amount of most valuable information. We heartily commend it. Boston: Congregational Sunday-school and Publishing Society. 12mo, illustrated, pp. 302.

..My Walk With God. By the Rev. F. Montgomery, D.D., Dean of Edinburgh. My Soul. By the Rev. P. B. Power, M.A. Both these little volumes belong to the series called "Heart Chords," already noticed in these columns. The object of this series is devotional and stimulating. The present volumes are excellent. The chapters are short, pointed and inspiring. The use of such books in connection with one's morning and evening devotions is most profitable, and we earnestly and heartily commend this series for this purpose. New York: Cassell & Co., Limited. Price, 40 cents a volume.

..Morning Thoughts for Our Daughters. By Mrs. G. S. Reaney. This little book was prepared with a view to its being used by young girls in connection with their morning devotions. It contains thirty-one daily readings, thus covering a month. Its words are tender and wise. If young girls could be persuaded to use such a book as this it could not fail to be a blessing to them. American Tract Society. Price, limp, 50 cents; gilt, 75 cents.

..The Century Magazine announces an unusual number of special articles and series of articles for 1884. Among others, Washington Gladden will furnish essays on "Christianity and Wealth;" George W. Cable will write a series of papers; Dr. Eggleston will continue his articles on our Colonial history—"Husbandry in the Colonies," etc. St. Nicholas also announces a fine programme of good things for boys and girls during the year. The Magazine of American History is steadily improving under its new management.

Any of these books may be ordered from the Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1334 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.

INDEX OF VOLUME XI.

Are the Children Safe? 76
Angel Face, The 84
Angel Appearances in the Acts 85
Attaching the Children to the Church 283
Applying the Lesson 364

Bible Correspondence School 323, 366
Bible Class, My 245
Book Notices, 36, 74, 116, 197, 236, 278, 317, 396, 436, 477

Christian Teacher's Mission, The 44
Conversions in the Acts 127
Colporteurs and Sabbath-schools 245

Deaconesses 208
Dr. Morrow's Scholar 286

Editorial Notes ... 3, 33, 83, 123, 163, 203, 243, 283, 323, 363, 403, 443

Forward Steps 4

Getting the Children to Church 289
God Blesses Good Books 288
God's Work in Human Hands 124
Golden Texts in Primary Class 126
Good Man, A 163

How Shall our Scholars be Converted? 86
Hymnal The, in the Sabbath-school 205
Hints and Suggestions 245
Hampton Experiment, The 365
How to Get and Hold Scholars' Attention 366

It May Be Explained 5
Institute, The New York 207

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS:
The Ascending Lord 10
The Descending Spirit 18
The Believing People 24
The Healing Power 31
The Prince of Life 48
None Other Name 54
Christian Courage 61
Ananias and Sapphira 67
Persecution Renewed 88
The Seven Chosen 95
The First Christian Martyr 102
First Quarterly Review 110
Simon the Sorcerer 128
Philip and the Ethiopian 134
Saul's Conversion 140
Saul Preaching Christ 148
Peter Working Miracles 153
Peter Preaching to the Gentiles 170
The Spread of the Gospel 177
Herod and Peter 183
Paul and Barnabas in Cyprus 190
At Antioch 210
At Iconium and Lystra 216
End of First Missionary Journey 223
Second Quarterly Review 230
Joshua, Successor to Moses 248
Passing Over Jordan 254
The Plains of Jericho 261
Israel Defeated at Ai 267
The Reading of the Law 273
The Cities of Refuge 290
The Last Days of Joshua 296
Israel Forsaking God 303
Gideon's Army 310
The Death of Samson 328
Ruth and Naomi 334
A Praying Mother 341
The Child Samuel 347
Third Quarterly Review 353
Eli's Death 368
Samuel the Judge 375
Asking a King 382
Saul Chosen King 389
Samuel's Farewell Address 410
Saul Rejected 416
David Anointed 423
David and Goliath 429
David's Enemy—Saul 448
David's Friend—Jonathan 454
David Sparing his Enemy 460
Death of Saul and Jonathan 467
Fourth Quarterly Review 472

Joshua's Preparation 243

Luther and the Reformation 406
Luther's Country, A Letter From 404
Lessons and Golden Texts for 1884 168

Making Memories 3
Missing Verse, The, in the Eighth of Acts 123
Modern Money Changers 285

Officers of the Apostolic Church, The 203
Other Side, The 446

Pause in the Prayer-Meeting, The 6
Primary Class—Its Importance 6
Personal Letter, A 44

Restful Work 7
Religious Books, Scarcity of 206
Rosary, The Christian's 209
Reserves of Goodness, God's 364
Regretting 444
Rescued Block, The 446

Sabbath-school Work, Our 167
Samuel's Little Coat 326
Saving the Cents 445
Scripture Under the Microscope 325
Shorter Catechism, Plea for 46
Superintendent's Preparation 206
Superintendent, The, in Opening Service 246
Superintendent, The, in Lesson Time 287
Synod, The Voice of a 285

Timeliness in Duty 8
Trusting Best Moods, On 45

Why he Failed 46
Woman in the Early Church 165
Ways of Working, Some 166
Words, The, in Italics 205

Young Men, Teaching 407
Young Teachers, Two 408

THE WESTMINSTER TEACHER.

VOL. XII. JANUARY, 1884. NO. 1.

—Have you renewed your subscription?

—Try *Lesson Questions*. They are designed for scholars who can write. Each leaf contains six questions, with blanks for written answers. They will encourage and stimulate home study.

—Could you give your friend a better New Year's gift than the WESTMINSTER TEACHER for 1884? The cost is very small, and it will keep your thoughtfulness in mind all the year.

—Every teacher will now need "Half-Hours with the Lessons for 1884," to be fully equipped for work. It contains forty-eight delightful sermons, one on each lesson, brief, bright and suggestive. $1.50.

—Some one says: "People look at you six days in the week to find out what you mean on the Sabbath." It is important, then, that we rightly interpret in life on week-days our thoughts and professions on the Sabbath.

—The National Congregational Council came to the conclusion that the denomination must look after Sunday-school work if it would prosper. It was said that the Presbyterian and other Churches were leaving them far astern in the matter of caring for the religious instruction of the young. "The denomination which is going to possess the land is the denomination which has the most Sunday-schools," said the President of the Congregational Publishing Society; and he was not far from being right.

—It is a great deal easier to see other people's faults than our own. Then, we are apt to be much more charitable toward our own defects than those of others. We use a glass of high magnifying power when we look at our neighbor, that no spot or speck may escape us; but we reverse the glass when we come to look at ourselves, and see our own faults minimized and put so far away that we can scarcely perceive them. We find excuses plenty when we ourselves have blundered, but we will hardly accept any excuse or even palliation when it is some other that has blundered. How would it do just to reverse all this? Would it not be a little nearer the way Christ has taught us in his gospel to do?

—Many trees keep records of their years by adding a distinct circle of growth in each. Christian lives ought at least to do as well as trees. Every year should have its well defined accretion. We should be better at each year's close than we were at its beginning. We should be wiser, not merely knowing more, but living more wisely. We should be stronger in every good purpose. We should be more wholly consecrated to Christ. We should be gentler, more kindly and compassionate, more thoughtful of others, larger hearted, broader in our charities. We should be better workers for Christ, not only doing more work, but doing it more effectively. We should be farther on in our work of self-conquest, more masters of ourselves. We should have more of the likeness of Christ shining out in our lives. In a word, each year should write its own record in our lives. If it does not, what is the outcome of all our Bible-reading, praying, meditation, and of all the work of divine grace upon us? What is there to show that we have lived another year if there is no mark of growth in spiritual qualities? Now is a good time to think of this matter, for one year is just gone, and we ought to know what it has done for us; and another is just beginning, and surely we want to get the best from it that it can give to us.

The Power of the Tongue.

"DEATH and life," says the proverb, "are in the power of the tongue." Words seem little things, so fleeting and evanescent that apparently it cannot matter much of what sort they are. They are so easily spoken that we forget what power they have to give pleasure or pain. They seem so swiftly gone that we forget they do not go away at all, but linger either like barbed arrows in the heart, where they struck, or like fragrant flowers distilling perfume. They seem so powerless for good or ill we do not remember that they either tear down or build up fair fabrics of joy and peace in the souls of those to whom we speak.

"On the dull silence breaking
With a lightning flash, a word,
Bearing endless desolation
On its blighting wings, I heard;

Earth can forge no keener weapon,
Dealing surer death and pain;
And the cruel echo answered
Through long years again.

"I have known one word hang starlike
O'er a dreary waste of years,
And it only shone the brighter
Looked at through a mist of tears;
While a weary wanderer gathered
Hope and heart on life's dark way,
By its faithful promise shining
Clearer day by day."

The power to do good which there is in the tongue is simply incalculable. It can impart knowledge. It can speak words that will shine like lamps in darkened hearts. It can pronounce kindly sentences that will comfort sorrow or cheer despondency. It can breathe thoughts that will arouse, inspire and quicken heedless souls, and even whisper the divine secret of life-giving energy to spirits that are dead. The opportunity does not lie alone in formal speech, as in the sermon or the lesson, or in the occasional serious talk, but extends to all conversation, even to the most casual greeting on the street.

What is the staple of conversation, however, among average Christians? Listen for a day and make careful note of all you hear. How much of it is worth recording? How many sentences are spiritually helpful, calculated to kindle higher aspirations or start upward impulses? How much is utterly empty, mere chaff, that feeds no heart-hunger, kindles no joy, helps no one to live better? How much is careless scandal, unjust and injurious criticism of the absent? How much is hypocritical and insincere?

It is startling to think what Christian conversation might be, ought to be, and then of what it is. Why should such a power for good be wasted, or far worse than wasted? Why should our Christian development be retarded by the misuse of the marvelous gift of speech? It were far better that one were born dumb than that having a tongue one should use it to scatter evil and sorrow, or to sow the seeds of bitterness and pain. Our Lord said we must give account for every idle word; and if for the idle words, how much more for the words that stain or injure, or fall as a destructive blight into other hearts and lives!

When we give ourselves to Christ we ought to give him our tongues; when we are regenerated, our tongues ought to be regenerated. It was not without significance that when the Holy Ghost came down on the day of Pentecost the manifestation was in *tongues* of fire. One of the first results, too, of this heavenly baptism was that the disciples spoke with other tongues. It is not a mere fanciful interpretation that sees in all this an intimation that true conversion converts the speech, and that a Christian must speak with a new Christian tongue.

There are many suggestions in the Scriptures as to the kind of words a Christian tongue should speak. For example: "Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth, but such as is good for edifying as the need may be, that it may give grace to them that hear." Two essential features of Christian speech are here touched upon. One is purity; no corrupt word should ever fall from a consecrated tongue. Yet there is much impurity in the speech of some professing Christians. Filthy stories are told, and there are vile allusions and innuendoes which stain the lips that utter them and the heart of him who hears. Christian conversation should be white as snow. The other quality indicated in this quotation is edification. No sentence should be spoken which is not good for edifying, which does not minister grace. Every word should be fitted in some way to build up character and add to its beauty. Our gentle poet's thought is no idle fancy, that the song he sings he will find again long, long afterward, in the heart of his friend. Words uttered, fall and are forgotten, as their echoes die away, but they leave their mark. They either beautify or mar; they either make the life brighter or they sully it; they either build up or they tear down what before was builded. The Christian's speech should always edify and give grace. Yet, on how many lips now garrulous with flippant words would this test lay the finger of silence!

This does not imply that only solemn words should be spoken. There are times when humor ministers grace, when the truest Christian help for a man is to make him laugh. Infinite are the necessities of human lives. We have an errand to each one with whom we hold even the most casual conversation. What it is we may not know, but if the desire be in our heart God will use us to give help and blessing in some way.

Opportunities for such ministry are occurring continually. In a morning's greeting we may put so much heart and so much Christ into phrase and tone as to make our neighbor happier all the day. In the few moments' conversation by the wayside, or by the fireside, or in the midst of the day's heat and strife, we may drop the word that will lift a burden, or strengthen a weary heart, or inspire a new hope.

"Yea, find thou always time to say some earnest word
Between the idle talk."

So we may leave blessings at every step of

our way. Our words in season, throbbing with love, and wafted by the breath of silent prayer, shall be medicine to every heart into which any simplest sentence of our daily speech may fall.

The Gospel as the Law of Liberty.

AMONG the many elements and evidences of its suitedness as the permanent and universal Revelation of God's grace, one of the most striking is the variety of literary forms included in the New Testament. This variety, ordained by its absolute Author, is due partly to the special gifts and training of its several writers, and partly to the differing circumstances of those whom they immediately addressed. Of the apostolic writers of that portion of the New Testament which succeeds the History, the most prominent are, James, Peter, John and Paul. James and Peter represent the Jewish, John and Paul the Hellenistic habit of mind. The first two present the Gospel as based on, and as legitimately succeeding the religion of the Old Testament. The last two present it as meeting and supplying religious wants that are deep as the human soul, and wide as the human race. Moreover, there are differences within the two groups. The Judaism with which James connects Christianity, is the Judaism of the *Law*. The Judaism with which Peter connects Christianity, is the Judaism of the *Prophets*. James unfolds the Gospel as "the perfect *law* of liberty." Peter unfolds it as "the more sure word of *prophecy*." There is a like difference between Paul and John. Paul starts with human sin and guilt; and preaches Christ Jesus and him crucified, as the answering free grace of God. John starts, not with the negative want, sin, but with the positive want, the conscious longing of the soul after God, and he preaches Christ as the Divine answer to this human longing; as the Word made flesh, dwelling among us, whose glory we are permitted to behold.

These four modes of presenting the Gospel are not contradictory, but complementary. Together and not apart, they constitute the New Testament, the one perfect, permanent and universal revelation. There is no more contradiction here than in the wider fact, which a writer has stated in the following language: "It is a distinction of Christianity, among the religions of the world, that, while its substance is one, its largeness and vitality enable it to exist in many literary forms. To assure ourselves that this is true, we need go no farther than to the written word itself. It is the one gospel of the grace of God that is present in the lyrics of the Psalter, in the recorded visions of the prophets, in the life of Jesus Christ, in the history of the Apostolic Church, in the familiar and hortatory letters and addresses of the apostles, and in the profound theological and ethical treatise addressed by Paul to the church at Rome. These are consubstantial, in that the truth, which all embody and express, is the one truth revealed by God for the salvation of men. But, in each case, the truth reveals itself in a new literary mode."

We have been led to make these remarks, because the attention of teachers and scholars is specially to be directed, during the present month, to the Epistle of James, which is in striking contrast with the rest of the New Testament: and we purpose to say something of the ethical character of that noble letter.

The congruity between the letter itself and the character of James, as he is made known to us in the New Testament and by tradition, is very striking. At the first council (Acts 15), James appears as one of the chiefs, if not the chief man of the mother church of Christendom, the Jewish-Christian church of Jerusalem. The historian, Eusebius, has preserved an account of him, written by Hegesippus, the earliest church historian (circa 150), in which James is pictured as frequenting the temple and carefully observing the practices then common among devout Jews. We should expect from such a man an Epistle exactly like that which bears his name.

The letter does not easily yield itself to analysis. But it is not difficult to seize its central and dominating truth. That truth, we take it, is stated in the twenty-fifth verse of the first chapter. The Gospel is "the perfect law of liberty." "Whoso," says James, "looketh into this perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." In this description of the Gospel, the conception of "law" connects it with the old dispensation. Because it is a law, it fulfils, or fills out, the idea of religion with which the Jews were most familiar. Cannon Farrar well says, "The general object of the Epistle, as is shown again and again, is to impress the conviction that Christian faithfulness must express itself in the energy and action of loving service. The ritualism of active love and earnestness in prayer, are with him the means of perfection."

This emphasis of the idea of law, and this pressing home upon those to whom he is writing the necessity of good works, puts the Epistle of James in sharp contrast to the Epistles of Paul. But the contrast is not a contradiction. Beneath their formal differences there is a pro-

found unity. There is no antagonism to the position of James in the apostle who wrote the twelfth chapter of Romans, and who, in the midst of his noblest presentation of the great truth of justification by faith, puts the question and answers it: "What shall we say then? shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we who are dead to sin live any longer therein?"

The Gospel according to James needs, in these days, to be preached both with frequency and earnestness. There is danger that, in our emphasis of God's Fatherhood, and of his readiness to forgive sin, we shall hide the demand made by the gospel, that the Christian exhibit a lofty and severe morality. As against the modern tendency to a weak sentimentalism, it were well if Christians filled their minds with the truth in the form in which it is embodied in this letter.

In the verse which we have quoted, as containing the central truth of the Epistle, the writer shows that he has caught the great truth of the "liberty" of the gospel. But he shows also his determination not to let it degenerate into license; but to hold it subordinate to that "law," of which his Master, and ours, has said, "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass, till all be fulfilled."

A Praying Mother.

BY M. F. JOHNSON.

HOW many of us recall the days when we knelt by the side of the dear one whom we loved the best, while she poured out her soul to God in our behalf! How reverent, how holy, how sublime does the picture seem as we look back upon it, especially when that mother is now a saint in the realms of bliss!

I have in my scrap-book a poem written many years ago by one whose name is unknown, which, I think, many of the readers of the WESTMINSTER TEACHER would be pleased to have reproduced. It is as follows:

Blest mother, I remember thee, from early childhood's hour,
When first my heart awoke to feel maternal love's deep power,
When not a transient tear could dim the smile of infant bliss
That was not dried beneath the warmth of a mother's fervent kiss.

And yet the prayer I learned to lisp at twilight by thy knee,
Is clear upon the deep wrought page of hallow'd memory!
And those soft tones that rose to heaven from out the swelling breast,
They seem to sound upon my ear, though thou art gone to rest!

Blest mother, I remember thee, from youth's fresh buoyant day,
A star thou wert, to guide my feet, of pure and constant ray;
Thy love possessed a charm beyond the light of pleasure's beams,
And 'twas thy counsel that forbade my trust in earthly dreams.

And I remember that soft hand that soothed my aching head,
A tearful guardian eye that watched beside my little bed,
The careful step, the soothing draught, thy kindness had prepared,
And all the tokens of that love thy orphan child once shared.

Blest mother, I remember thee, as guide, companion, friend,
When years mature had taught my heart life's blessings and their end;
When I had learned to share thy griefs, and shed the tear with thee,
Who, in my wayward days, had turned to pray and weep for me.

'Twas mine to cheer thy widowed heart, with all a daughter's love,
And lift thy sinking spirit up to brighter scenes above;
To scatter in thy lonely path, the flowers which kindness weaves,
And bind around thy temples fair, affection's myrtle leaves.

Blest mother, I remember thee, alas! how sad the spot,
On memory's page, which evermore the tear of grief must blot,
When first the power of fell disease passed o'er thy constant heart,
And on thy brow, with death's pale hand, 'twas written, "We must part."

But not a murmur mingled then with faith's assurance given,
And not a fear passed then with thee, through the darksome vale to heaven;
No, God's own rod and staff were there, nor could I wish thy stay,
When angels beckoned thee from earth and all its ills away.

Blest mother, I remember thee, when on thy sable bier,
And followed by an orphan train, which stranger hands must rear,
When laid within thy narrow bed where now the green turf grows—
And we were left alone to stem the tide of human woes.

Yet not alone—for one there is, our Father in the sky,
Who stoops to make our cause his own, and listens to our cry.
Upon his arm our strength was stayed, his hand hath been our guide,
And he who gives the ravens food, for us will still provide.

Blest mother, now I think of thee, as one amid that throng
Who chant on high, before the throne, their everlasting song;
In midnight dreams thy angel form around my couch appears,
And oft thy hand seems stretched again to wipe away my tears.

When gazing at the shining stars, their calm and holy light
Recalls thine own unwavering faith and thy example bright,
And in the firmament on high, a star thou'lt ever shine,
With beams more beautiful and bright, with lustre all divine.

Thousands who have been strong in trials and temptations, and pure amid the seductions of sin, can trace back the sacred virtue of the hour of victory to the sweet memory of childhood, some calm moment when they knelt beside a mother, and from her gentle looks of love and simple words of prayer began to learn of Jesus. Often has a young man, hardened in vice almost beyond reclamation, been brought to the Saviour by the vision of his praying mother. To a great many these scenes are the only bright spots in a dark past. And our hearts go out to those whose spiritual interests have been neglected by their mothers. If there are among our scholars any who never have had a praying mother, let them at least, when they attain maturer years, remember with a thankful heart the picture of a praying teacher, who first led them to a Saviour.

Christians Without Carefulness.

BY MILA F. SMITH.

IT is a rare thing in these days, and indeed, has been a rare thing in the days that are past, to find a Christian who walks serenely on amidst the vicissitudes of this, our earthly life, without a shade of anxiety on his brow, without a worried line in his forehead. Yet to every follower of Christ, the Scripture says in loving tones, yet still in the voice of command, "I would have you without carefulness."

Perhaps there is no verse in the Bible that so fully explains this duty or privilege of being without carefulness, as Phil. 4: 6, 7: "Be careful for nothing; but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds, through Christ Jesus." This is an absolute, unlimited command. There can be no crisis so imminent, no event so unexpected, that a Christian need be anxious. There is absolutely nothing in this life of strange emergencies, of unforeseen circumstances, that can justify a Christian in taking the burden of care upon his shoulders, for here is the plain command, "Be careful for *nothing*." The words mean just what they say, or they mean nothing at all. Only we must remember that this counsel does not forbid wise forethought and earnest planning, in regard to both the temporal and spiritual future; but worry, anxiety, perplexity.

Why are God's children not to worry? Because it is utterly useless, nothing having ever been accomplished by it. Because God would have us employ the strength we expend in worrying, in working for Him. Above all, because it is utterly needless, God having provided a sure relief for all worry. It is simply this, "In everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." You do not have to manage your own life, alone and unaided; least of all, do you have to manage circumstances. When you feel that either is impossible, or when you waywardly wish that either were possible, then, instead of fretting and chafing, tell your heavenly Father. "Let your request be made known unto God," and the peace of God *shall* keep you.

When the Saviour was talking with his apostles on this question, he said: "Take no thought for your life . . . for after all these things do the Gentiles seek; for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." How keenly these words rebuke us, as we acknowledge that we often worry more than do the heathen, who know not that they have a loving Father who would care for them.

But, some one may say, "I do go to my Father with all my desires and disappointments, and yet I am not at peace. All is turmoil and unrest." Are you fully trusting your Father? The white dove of peace spreads her wings and flits frightened away, if the serpent of distrust does but show itself within the human heart. Do you realize all that is meant by the gracious permission? Do you realize that you may make known every request to your Father, that he will pay loving attention to every desire? Do you realize that he can grant *any* petition? Do you offer your requests with thanksgiving for the blessed truth, that the Father loves you enough to withhold as well as give? And can you trust him when he withholds? In a word, do you pray so that God may know what your will is, and let you have it; or do you pray with the earnest desire that every request shall be in harmony with the divine will, or else be denied? Perfect trust brings perfect rest,

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FIRST QUARTER.

1. Jan. 6.—**The Conference at Jerusalem.** Acts 15: 1–11.
2. Jan. 13.—**Hearing and Doing.** James 1: 16–27.
3. Jan. 20.—**The Power of the Tongue.** James 3: 1–18.
4. Jan. 27.—**Living as in God's Sight.** James 4: 7–17.
5. Feb. 3.—Paul's Second Missionary Journey. Acts 15: 35–41 and 16: 1–10.
6. Feb. 10.—The Conversion of Lydia. Acts 16: 11–24.
7. Feb. 17.—The Conversion of the Jailer. Acts 16: 25–40. [14.
8. Feb. 24.—Thessalonians and Bereans. Acts 17: 1–
9. March 2.—Paul at Athens. Acts 17: 22–34.
10. March 9.—Paul at Corinth. Acts 18: 1–17.
11. March 16.—The Coming of the Lord. 1 Thess. 4: 13–18 and 5: 1–8.
12. March 23.—Christian Diligence. 2 Thess. 3: 1–18.
13. March 30.—Review.

Lesson I. THE CONFERENCE AT JERUSALEM. Jan. 6th, 1884.

Acts 15: 1–11. Memorize vs. 8–11.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"We believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they."—Acts 15: 11.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 15: 1–11.....*The Conference.*
T. Acts 15: 12–35....*The Decision.*
W. Gal. 2: 1–10.....*Paul in the Conference.*
Th. Eph. 2: 8–22.....*The Partition-wall Broken Down.*
F. Eph. 3: 1–12.....*Gentiles Fellow-Heirs.*
S. Col. 2: 8–23.....*Legal Ceremonies Ended.*
S. Rom. 10: 1–12....*"No Difference."*

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Jewish View. 2. The Christian View.

Time.—A. D. 50.

Places.—Antioch, Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 52. *What are the reasons annexed to the second commandment?* A. The reasons annexed to the second commandment are, God's sovereignty over us, his propriety in us, and the zeal he hath to his own worship.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

INTRODUCTORY.—Our last lesson in the Acts, six months ago, brought us to the close of chap. 14, and the end of Paul's first missionary journey. We take up the history again at the point where our study of it was broken off. A great controversy arose, one of the most important controversies in the history of the Christian Church. It concerned the relation of the Jewish ritual to Christianity, the specific question being whether Gentiles who would enter the Christian Church must first become Jews. A certain class of Jewish Christians contended that they must, but Paul and others held that the law was not only fulfilled but abrogated by Christ's work of redemption, and that simple faith in Christ was the only condition required in entering the Church. To consider this question the conference at Jerusalem was held.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

1 And certain men which came down from Ju-dæ'a taught the brethren, *and said*, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Mo'ses, ye cannot be saved. [Gal. 2: 12; 5: 2; Phil. 3: 2.]

2 When therefore Paul and Bar'na-bas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Bar'na-bas, and certain other of them, should go up to Je-ru'sa-lem unto the apostles and elders about this question. [Gal. 2: 1, 2.]

3 And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phe-ni'ce and Sa-ma'ri-a, declaring the conversion of the Gen'tiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren. [Acts 14: 27.]

4 And when they were come to Je-ru'sa-lem, they were received of the church, and *of* the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them. [Acts 21: 19.]

5 But there rose up certain of the sect of the Phar'i-sees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command *them* to keep the law of Mo'ses.

6 ¶ And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.

7 And when there had been much disputing, Pe'ter rose up, and said unto them, Men

and **brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gen'tiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.** [Acts 10: 20; 11: 12, 17.]

8 And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as *he did* unto us; [1 Chron. 28: 9; Acts 10: 44.]

9 And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. [Rom. 10: 11; 1 Cor. 1: 2; 1 Pet. 1: 22.]

10 Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? [Matt. 23: 4; Gal. 5: 1.]

11 But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Je'sus Christ we shall be saved, even as they. [Rom. 3: 24; Eph. 2: 8; Tit. 2: 11.]

REVISED VERSION.

1 And certain men came down from Judæa
and taught the brethren, *saying*, Except ye
be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye
2 cannot be saved. And when Paul and Bar-
nabas had no small dissension and question-
ing with them, *the brethren* appointed that
Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of
them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the
apostles and elders about this question.
3 They therefore, being brought on their way
by the church, passed through both Phœnicia
and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the
Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all
4 the brethren. And when they were come to
Jerusalem, they were received of the church
and the apostles and the elders, and they
rehearsed all things that God had done with
5 them. But there rose up certain of the sect
of the Pharisees who believed, saying, It is
needful to circumcise them, and to charge
them to keep the law of Moses.
6 And the apostles and the elders were
gathered together to consider of this matter.
7 And when there had been much questioning,
Peter rose up, and said unto them,
Brethren, ye know how that a good while
ago God made choice among you, that by
my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word
8 of the gospel, and believe. And God, which
knoweth the heart, bare them witness, giving
them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto
9 us; and he made no distinction between us
and them, cleansing their hearts by faith.
10 Now therefore why tempt ye God, that ye
should put a yoke upon the neck of the dis-
ciples, which neither our fathers nor we were
11 able to bear? But we believe that we shall
be saved through the grace of the Lord
Jesus, in like manner as they.

1 *Certain men . . . from Judea.* These were men who had accepted Christ as the Messiah, and were members of the church at Jerusalem. In Gal. 2: 4 Paul speaks of these men as "false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage." *Except ye be circumcised . . . ye cannot be saved.* Circumcision was the divinely ordained seal of the Abrahamic covenant. Gen. 17: 10–14. To be uncircumcised was to be an alien and a stranger, with no part in the divine inheritance. These Jewish Christians claimed that this was still the only way to enter the heavenly kingdom, that it was even *essential to salvation.* It is to be remembered that Paul and Barnabas had been receiving Gentile converts into the Church without performing the rite of circumcision, and that it was against their action these Judean Christians protested.

2 *No small dissension and disputation.* The latter word is literally *questioning*, implying debate. The words indicate that Paul and Barnabas opposed these Judaizers vigorously and determinedly. *They determined.* That is, the church at Antioch. However, from Gal. 2: 2 it appears that Paul went "by revelation," implying that he received from the Holy Spirit direct instruction as to the course to be followed. It is probable that the divine voice instructed Paul to propose the visit to Jerusalem, where the apostles resided, for the purpose of a conference with them regarding the question that was causing agitation, and that Paul proposed it to the church. *Certain other of them.* In Gal. 2: 1 the name of Titus is also given, as one that accompanied Paul and Barnabas. When it is remembered that he was a Gentile and uncircumcised, it is evident that in sending him the church at Antioch sympathized with Paul. *Unto the apostles and elders.* Not to Peter alone, as would have been the case if he had been the infallible guide of the Church, nor even to the apostles alone, but to the apostles and *elders.* The facts seem to be that these Judaizers claimed to represent the church at Jerusalem, and these men were sent to confer with the church there concerning the matter, to present the truth about their work among the Gentiles, that the apostles and elders might understand just what they had done. See Gal. 2: 5–9, for Paul's own statement.

3 *Being brought on their way.* Accompanied for some distance by delegates from the church at Antioch, as a mark of respect and confidence. This also shows that the sympathy of this church was not with the Judaizers. *Declaring the conversion of the Gentiles.* During the missionary tour from which they had just returned. They stopped at the various churches along their way through Phœnicia and Samaria, and gave an account of the results of their preaching. *They caused great joy.* Showing that the sentiment of these churches was not with the Judaizing faction.

4 *To Jerusalem.* This was Paul's third visit

to Jerusalem since his conversion. See chaps. 9: 26; 11: 30. *Received of the church.* Received *cordially*, welcomed. In Gal. 2: 2 Paul says that he held a private communication with the prominent leaders of the church, but whether this was before or after the public conference cannot be determined. *Declared all things.* This was in the meeting apparently called for the reception or welcoming of these missionaries.

5 *There rose up certain.* At this time in the meeting, after hearing the report of Paul and Barnabas. *Which believed.* These Pharisees had accepted Jesus as the Messiah, and united with the Christian Church; but their belief was that Christianity was only a new development of the Jewish Church, and that Gentile converts must first become Jews before they could become Christians.

6 *The apostles and elders.* V. 12 indicates that besides these the members of the church in general were present, and v. 22 that they also voted upon the question. It was therefore a conference of the mother Church at Jerusalem, including the apostles. It was the first council of this kind of which we have any account in the Christian Church.

7 *Much disputing.* Revised Version, *Questioning.* Both parties evidently had warm advocates, and the discussion was exciting and prolonged. *Peter rose up.* We do not know who had spoken before. Peter is now mentioned for the last time in the history. There is no evidence here of his "primacy," as he did not even preside at the conference. His words on this subject had weight, on account of his prominence in the Church, and because that he himself had had experience in preaching to the Gentiles. See chap. 11: 2. *A good while ago.* Referring to the time of the conversion of Cornelius, which was probably fourteen years before this time (one scheme of chronology makes it ten). Peter would remind the Judaizing party that this question really had been settled a long while before by divine revelation.

8, 9 *God, which knoweth the hearts.* And therefore could not be deceived by any external profession, and would not give the Holy Ghost to any who were not truly converted. *Bare them witness.* These Gentiles, Cornelius and his party, had not been circumcised, and yet God had borne witness to the genuineness, completeness and satisfactoriness of their repentance and faith by giving them the Holy Ghost. Chap. 11: 15. *Put no difference.* God had made no distinction between Gentile and Jew, giving the same seal in the case of both. See chap. 10: 15. Peter himself had to be taught this lesson from heaven, but he had never forgotten it. *Purifying their hearts by faith.* The Jewish doctrine was that the Gentiles were unclean until they were circumcised. The true doctrine, however, was that their uncleanness was not external, but of the heart, that all men, Jew and Gentile, were alike unclean, and that faith, not circumcision, was the real means of cleansing.

10 *Why tempt ye God?* By requiring circumcision now, long after God had given clear and explicit evidence that *he* did not require it. *To put a yoke.* As they would if they required circumcision and the rites of the Mosaic law of the Gentile believers. See Matt. 23: 4, where Jesus charges the Pharisees with binding heavy burdens upon the people. See also Rom. 7: 9–24. On the other hand, Christ offers an easy yoke. Matt. 11: 29, 30. *Neither our fathers nor we.* The Jews had borne the yoke of obedience to the law of Moses, but the reference here is to the whole law, as distinguished from the gospel, as a way of salvation.

11 *We believe.* The meaning of Peter's words here is, that there was salvation for the Jews as well as Gentiles only through the grace of the Lord Jesus. *As they.* The Gentile converts. Even to the Jewish Christians circumcision was of no avail, and they could be saved in no other way than could the Gentiles—through grace.

After Peter had spoken, Barnabas and Paul gave an account of their missionary tour, and of the works the Lord had wrought among the Gentiles by them. James then closed the discussion with an address contained in vs. 14–21. The result was, that the conference approved the course of Paul and Barnabas, and sent a letter to Antioch by the hands of two commissioners, disavowing the disturbers who had made the trouble at Antioch, and giving directions that the only things required of Gentile believers should be, that they abstain from pollutions of idols and from fornication, and from things strangled and from blood. See vs. 23–29.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

I. The Jewish View. vs. 1–5.

Certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren. These men belonged to the Church, but they were Jews more than they were Christians. It is very hard to let go old beliefs, especially when one has been trained in them from childhood. It is hard also to avoid becoming a slave to the *forms* of religion, while

its real spirit is not understood at all. These Jewish Christians had never grasped the spiritual truth that lay under the rite of circumcision, namely, that the heart must be cleansed. A great many persons cling to a ceremony, but utterly fail to know the truth that is enfolded in it. They put great stress on baptism, even on the mode of it, or on the Lord's Supper, or even on the forms of prayer, and yet do not understand what these rites and modes and religious acts imply or involve. Another thing suggested here is, that it is hard to keep one's denominationalism subordinate to one's Christianity. These men were a great deal more Jews than Christians. We are in danger of being more Presbyterians or Methodists or Congregationalists than Christians. But clearly the right thing always is, to be first Christians, intensely, strongly, positively, and after that have our denominational characteristic. There is no harm in our being zealous Presbyterians if we are first thorough and devoted followers of Christ. But an intense denominationalism and a pale Christianity make a poor religion.

Except ye be circumcised . . . ye cannot be saved. There had never been any way for a Gentile to become a Jew but by being circumcised, and these men supposed that God would not open heaven to any one but a Jew. Of course we do not meet this error in precisely this form in modern days, but it is continually appearing in some form. These men said that nobody could be saved without circumcision. There are those who teach that unbaptized children cannot enter heaven, and that none can be saved who do not receive priestly absolution, and that even the souls of the saintly dead cannot get into Paradise without the observance by the Church on the earth of certain rites after they have left this world. But this dependence on forms appears in many less striking ways. Men who have been worldly, perhaps great sinners, all their life, when death threatens will send for a minister to pray by their bedside, and will want to receive baptism and the Lord's Supper, thinking that in some way these rites of the Church will save them. Indeed, we are all exposed to this danger of depending on the forms of worship, of "saying" prayers instead of praying, of attending church instead of worshiping God, of coming to the Lord's table instead of communing with Christ, of "joining the church" instead of being united to Christ, of reading so many chapters in the Bible instead of feeding upon God's word. The danger is very subtle, and we need to guard against it with scrupulous care.

Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and questioning with them. Many people imagine that the primitive Church was a perfect pattern, that only love and peace ruled, and that there were no spots or blemishes. But such records as these show us that this is but a poetic fancy. Here we find troublers coming all the way from Jerusalem to Antioch to stir up strife. Then we find this hot strife going on, with sharp controversy and angry debate. It is well enough to notice the fact, though it may dissipate a pleasant fancy with regard to the primitive Church. Even the apostles had different opinions and sharp controversies regarding doctrines and duties.

They rehearsed all things that God had done with them. That is the true way to look at all success in Christian work. They did not narrate the great things they had themselves done, reporting how many miles they had traveled, how many times they had preached, how many souls they had converted, how many churches they had established. Instead of this they told how the Lord had used them, how he had done such and such things with them. They gave all the glory to Christ, and spoke of themselves only as instruments. This is a lesson which all ought to learn who would work for Christ. There is a very sweet truth here—that the Lord is willing to work with us as instruments, that he will use us to carry the blessings of salvation and of life to lost and dying souls. If we want to be useful in this world, the true thing to do is to put ourselves entirely into the Lord's hands, to do whatever he wants to do with us. He will use any one who will do this. There is a thought here for teachers. You cannot yourselves bless or save your scholars. You cannot change their hearts. God must do the work. Your part is to get yourself into the Lord's hand so that he can use you.

But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees who believed. There are still people in some churches who seem born to find fault. They see flies in every pot of ointment. They find the thorns in every cluster of roses. They discover blemishes in every good work. They believe thoroughly in nothing in which they themselves do not have an active part. They approve no work which is not done in precisely their way. They are particularly doubtful about efforts of others that succeed well. They are excellent thorns, but whether being a thorn is an enviable mission is a question. Perhaps it is well that there are such people. No doubt they cause much discomfort to others; but Paul's "thorn," though it was "a messenger of Satan," sent "to buffet" him, yet served a good purpose by keeping him humble after his great spiritual

exaltation. Possibly these modern thorns are means of grace to others.

II. The Christian View. vs. 6–11.

The apostles and elders were gathered together to consider of the matter. It was a grave and momentous question that was considered and settled at that conference, one that concerned the whole future of the Christian Church. If it had gone the other way all who became Christians would have been compelled first to become Jews and to submit to the rites of the Mosaic law. It will be noticed, too, that while the decision on the question was reached through long and excited discussion, yet it is said (v. 28) that the Holy Ghost approved of the final answer which was embodied in the letter to the churches. We have a hint here of the way in which the Spirit of God guided even the enlightened apostles in their search for the truth. He did not make them mere machines, but led them through the processes of their own judgment to the right conclusions.

He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith. The wall between Jew and Gentile was broken down by Christ's death, and all the world stands now on the same footing. No external rite can save any one. It must be noted here that this *heart-cleansing* is the important thing. No one is saved, whether Jew or Gentile, whose heart is still unclean, unrenewed. A child stood looking up into the sky very intently, when his mother asked him what he was thinking of. He replied that he was thinking how far away heaven was, and how hard it must be to get there. She was a wise mother, and she answered, "Heaven must first come down to you, my child; heaven must come into your heart." Never were truer words spoken. No one can ever enter heaven until the Spirit of heaven is in his heart. Hence the necessity for the new birth, for renewal, and for the work of sanctification. Will external rites effect these changes? No; only the Holy Spirit can do it, and the Spirit can only be received by the faith that receives Christ. This heart cleansing is therefore the test of all means of grace.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Old opinions die hard; religious forms die still harder. v. 1.
2. It is easier to be strong denominationalists than fervent Christians. v. 1.
3. The primitive Church was not perfect, but had its dissensions and controversies. v. 2.
4. Sometimes controversy is necessary in the defence of the truth. v. 2.
5. It always gives joy to true Christian hearts to hear of the salvation of souls. v. 3.
6. The way to think of ourselves and our work is that God does the work through us. v. 4.
7. God's witness to any work ought to stop all doubt and questioning. vs. 7, 8.
8. All stand alike before God, and there are not different ways of saving different people. v. 9.
9. Salvation is effected only by the cleansing and renewing of the heart. v. 9.
10. Hearts cannot be cleansed by any external rite, but only by receiving Christ by faith. v. 9.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

BY JAMES A. WORDEN, D.D.

Begin by gathering up the threads of the story as we dropped them six months ago, at the close of the first missionary journey. Question rapidly to recall the principal places visited in this journey and its important incidents. Call up especially the fact that Gentiles had been received into the churches and the feeling of the strict Jews on this subject.

I. A WORKING PLAN.

THE DISPUTE. vs. 1–5.
DECISION. vs. 6–11.

1. THE DISPUTE
   - Its Origin. v. 1.
   - Its Question. v. 1.
   - Its Parties. vs. 1, 2, 5.
   - Its Reference. vs. 2–4.

2. THE DECISION
   - The Judges. v. 6.
   - The Debate. v. 7.
   - The Decisive Speech. vs. 7–11.

II. QUESTIONS, APPLICATIONS, ETC.

1. THE DISPUTE.—Write out such questions as these: What men began the dispute at Antioch? What did they attempt to teach the brethren? What was the special point in this teaching? (That unless the Gentiles observed the ceremonial law of Moses they *could not be saved.*) What men at Antioch resisted this teaching? What was the danger of yielding to this teaching? What words in v. 2 show that the dispute was sharp and warm? In what circumstances are we to yield rather than have a public dissension? In what circumstances are we not to yield? What kind of a question was this dispute about? Show that it was *one of principle*—one which touched the very nature and conditions of salvation. *Who, in our day, are making a mistake like this of these Judaizing teachers?* Explain that all who think and teach

that no one can be saved unless he belongs to their church or denomination is making the same mistake. Impress on the class that, though many other people may not think just as we do about all things, yet if they love God and obey the Lord Jesus, we should recognize them as Christians. Begin with the young to destroy Pharisaic bigotry and intolerance. Here is a good opportunity to teach the foolishness and sin of all narrow hatred of one denomination against another. What did the church at Antioch do to settle the dispute? Who went up to Jerusalem? If Paul knew he was right why did he go up to Jerusalem to have the dispute settled? Gal. 2: 2. What did Paul and Barnabas do on their way from Antioch to Jerusalem? How were Paul and Barnabas received at Jerusalem? Gal. 2: 2, 9. What reasons can you think of for so cordial a reception by the Jerusalem church? What note of discord was sounded amidst these rejoicings? v. 5. Of what Jewish sect had these brethren been before they became Christians?

2. THE DECISION.—What means were taken to settle the controversy? v. 6. Who composed this conference? What great apostle made a decisive speech? What other great speeches of his are recorded in the book of Acts? Of what special work was Peter the apostolical leader? See Gal. 2: 8. What side in this dispute did Peter take? To what event does he refer in opening his speech? v. 7. What was there remarkable in the baptism of Cornelius? He had been an uncircumcised Gentile. How had God manifested his approval of the reception of Cornelius into the Church? vs. 8, 9. How would this approval show that circumcision was not necessary to salvation? With what question did Peter clinch his argument? What grand truth did he utter in closing? In what sense are we saved by Christ's grace? What is the difference between being saved by works and by grace? *Salvation by Christ's grace* is really the sum of Christianity. This is the key to the solution of this controversy.

Special Questions for Senior Classes.

1. In what ways do church quarrels injure the the cause of Christ? 2. If a quarrel arises in a church what is generally the best way to settle it? 3. What is heresy? 4. How have heresies been overruled by God to bring out truth? 5. What was the final action of the conference? 6. What is the meaning of that letter? 7. What is the true relation of the ceremonial law to us?

Suggestions for Teachers of Younger Classes.

This lesson will prove somewhat difficult to teach to young scholars. But there is much in it for them. You can especially apply to them the lessons on (1) How to decide quarrels. (2) We should love all Christians, though they differ from us. (3) We must all give up to others as much as is right. (4) Forms and ceremonies cannot save us; we should use those which God's word teaches, but not rely on them for salvation. (5) We are not saved by our goodness, but by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Assign in Writing one of these Questions on the Lesson for January 13th to each Scholar:

1. Which James wrote the Epistle of James?
2. To whom was that Epistle written?
3. How are we to study and hear God's word?
4. What are some signs that a man's religion is vain?
5. What are some signs of true religion?

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

BY MRS. G. R. ALDEN—"PANSY."

Dear Teachers: In beginning another year of work together, I want to have a word with you in explanation of what I am trying to do.

It is my aim to suggest methods of teaching, which must be worked out by the individual teacher according to the needs of her class. For the *very* youngest, *part* of the work suggested may be used, *put into very simple language*. For the oldest, the suggestions may often be pressed home more fully than I do it.

A word about hymns. It has constantly been a puzzle to me how to fit a hymn to each lesson, to be sung at its close, and yet not try to teach too many to children in a given time. For the coming year I propose to you the following method: Suppose we, as a rule, take two lines of Miss Havergal's consecration hymn to fit each lesson. The teachings which cannot wisely be followed by one of these verses, are few. For the rest I will try to select certain standard hymns of the Church—giving a verse on the *Westminster Lesson Leaf* each Sabbath—often repeating the same verse, that the children may have the words before them; the aim being to make three hymns, perhaps four, the children's very *own* by the time the year closes. And some of those hymns are to be such as are likely to be often sung in the great congregation. In this way we will not attempt to teach more than four or five *tunes* during the year.

Another aim. Will you join me in it? Let us labor to teach the children to be *students*.

Expect them to know every word on their *Lesson Leaf*. It will take patience and persistence, and many children will not meet our desires, but let us work towards this end.

Yours, in Christ's work, PANSY.

CONSECRATION HYMN.

Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to thee.

Take my moments and my days;
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands, and let them move
At the impulse of thy love.

Take my feet, and let them be
Swift and "beautiful" for thee.

Take my voice, and let me sing
Always, only, for my King.

Take my lips, and let them be
Filled with messages from thee.

Take my silver and my gold;
Not a mite would I withhold.

Take my intellect, and use
Every power as thou shalt choose.

Take my will, and make it thine;
It shall be no longer mine.

Take my heart, it *is* thine own;
It shall be thy royal throne.

Take my love; my Lord, I pour
At thy feet its treasure-store.

Take myself, and I will be
Ever, *only*, ALL for thee.

Teachers, what do you think of turning the very first lesson of the year into a missionary channel? It seems to me that we have a good text for that purpose.

Little children cannot be taught much about the Jerusalem conference, nor about the difference of opinion that led to it; but the great truths to be deduced from it that Christ is sufficient for all the world, and that only Christ can save, may be made plain to them.

Suppose we take four representatives of the race, using photographs, or engravings, or wood cuts, as object-lessons.

For instance, hold up the photograph of a beautiful child. Give a very brief account of her elegant home, dress, etc. Then a picture of a little street beggar, briefly describing the contrasting life. Then a wood cut of a purely African face. What do your children know of the false religion of the heathen in Africa? If they have had lessons which gave them information on this point, recall it; if not, teach certain facts. Then a picture of a Chinaman, with a word about the peculiar beliefs of the Chinese. All these differ wonderfully.

In order not to consume too much time, the teacher must thoroughly prepare brief accounts of these typical classes. After the children have realized the differences in them, call for some things in which they are alike. Make four marks in different colors on the board to represent them, and, by questioning, call from class the fact that they all have *hearts*. Outline a heart to surround the marks. In this method of teaching I have supposed that you have first taught or called from class the main *facts* of the lesson.

Now what did the people who held this conference at Jerusalem decide? The golden text gives one answer. There is an answer in the ninth verse which may be put into two words—

"PURE HEARTS."

Print this in the heart. If your class has been taught the verse, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?" etc., as a question and answer, its recitation would come in appropriately just here. It is the one thing needful.

These four types of humanity, with all the grades between, have two points in which they are alike. They have never dying souls—represented to childhood by the word *heart*—and they are sinners. Having made these two points plain, the simple question is: How shall our hearts be made pure? How shall we be saved from the effects of sin?

The answer is in the golden text. Jesus Christ is the *only* way for all. Your children know him, have heard his invitation. Will they pass the word along, so that they of China and Africa and all the world can hear it.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

BY J. HOWARD SEAL.

[As we begin the study of the lessons selected by the committee for the year 1884, may I be allowed to state that the blackboard hints which will be given in the WESTMINSTER TEACHER, and which it will be my privilege to present, will not be prepared with a view to display ingenuity in design or for artistic effect, but to reach the mind of the scholar through the eye in such simple methods as every one may be able to copy, or as hints which may be improved upon by those who use the blackboard in illustrating the lessons. It has been a great pleasure in the past year to hear from more than one superintendent who has been helped in his work

through the writer's suggestions. Let the board be used only to impress the lessons, not to display ability in drawing or lettering, and may the Lord add his blessing to the work and grant us all a Happy New Year as we study and teach his precious word.—J. H. S.]

SUGGESTIONS.—Contrast the Christian view with the Jewish view; the law which came by Moses with grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ. Here were men attempting to put a yoke upon the neck of the believers, and better men who were endeavoring to show the freedom that was in Christ Jesus. Speak of the conference, and what grew out of it. "To have admitted, as authoritatively binding the conscience of believers, that something additional to faith in Christ crucified was necessary to justification, would have essentially changed the nature of the gospel. It would have been to draw the pen through the glorious words, 'It is finished.'" The erroneous teaching of "certain men" was successfully confuted. Chosen men were sent with Paul and Barnabas to Antioch to deliver the verdict of the council. It may be placed upon the board as follows: (1) That fetters were loosed; (2) Rites not binding; (3) Encouragement to continue in faith; (4) Exemption from the law; (5) Deliverance in Christ; (6) Old things passed away; (7) Moses gives place to Christ. Illustrating these, erase all but the acrostic—Freedom. This freedom is by Christ. (Print as in diagram; draw outline of cross, and have school read Rom. 10: 4; Gal. 5: 1; John 8: 36.) As the last text is read, remove paper covering John 8: 36 and "Salvation not by law but by grace" (which should be placed on board and covered before the school session commences), and make the application. Then read in concert Gal. 5: 6, and let the pastor read Acts 13: 39, and in a few earnest words impress the lessons of this precious truth.

Directions for Coloring.—"John 8: 36," green shaded with yellow; "Salvation not by law but by grace," white shaded with red; the acrostic, Freedom, white, heavy letter; "CH IST," light blue. Cross outline in red shaded with brown.

Lesson II. **HEARING AND DOING.** Jan. 13th, 1884.

James 1: 16–27. Memorize vs. 22–25.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only."—James 1: 22.

HOME STUDIES.

M. James 1: 16–27.....*Hearing and Doing.*
T. Matt. 7: 21–29..*The Wise and the Unwise Hearer.*
W. Matt. 13: 1–9; 18–23.*A Lesson on Hearing.*
Th. Ps. 19: 1–14.....*"Making Wise the Simple."*
F. Rom. 10: 13–21.....*Faith by Hearing.*
S. Ps. 119: 1–16.....*"I Will not Forget thy Word."*
S. Ps. 15: 1–5.....*Practical Piety.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. Right Receiving of the Word. 2. Right Using of the Word. 3. Right Living of the Word.

Time.—A. D. 62.

Place.—Written from Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 53. *Which is the third commandment?* A. The third commandment is, *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.*

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—The fact that James presided at the conference at Jerusalem, of which we studied in our last lesson, is probably the reason why we are carried at this point from the Acts to the Epistle written by this apostle. James is called "the Lord's brother" (Gal. 1: 19), and is said (Gal. 2: 9) to have been "a pillar" in the Church. This Epistle was written from Jerusalem, probably about A. D. 62, and addressed to Jewish Christians scattered abroad, rather than to any particular church, as were Paul's Epistles, and is therefore called "Catholic" or general.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

16 Do not err, my beloved brethren.

17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. [John 3: 27; 1 Cor. 4: 7; Mal. 3: 6.]

18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures. [John 1: 13; 3: 3; 1 Pet. 1: 23.]

19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: [Eccl. 5: 1, 2; Prov. 10: 19.]

20 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. [Col. 3: 8; Rom. 1: 16; 1 Cor. 15: 2.]

22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. [Matt. 7: 21; Rom. 2: 13.]

23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: [Luke 6: 47.]

24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. [2 Cor. 3: 18; John 13: 17.]

26 If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion *is* vain. [Ps. 34: 13; 39: 1; 1 Pet. 3: 10.]

27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, *and* to keep himself unspotted from the world. [Isa. 1: 16, 17; Matt. 25: 36; 1 John 5: 18.]

REVISED VERSION.

16 Be not deceived, my beloved brethren.
17 Every good gift and every perfect boon is
from above, coming down from the Father
of lights, with whom can be no variation,
18 neither shadow that is cast by turning. Of
his own will he brought us forth by the word
of truth, that we should be a kind of first-
fruits of his creatures.
19 Ye know *this*, my beloved brethren. But
let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak,
20 slow to wrath; for the wrath of man worketh
21 not the righteousness of God. Wherefore
putting away all filthiness and overflowing
of wickedness, receive with meekness the im-
planted word, which is able to save your
22 souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not
hearers only, deluding your own selves.
23 For if any one is a hearer of the word, and
not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding
24 his natural face in a mirror: for he beholdeth
himself, and goeth away, and straightway
25 forgetteth what manner of man he was. But
he that looketh into the perfect law, the *law*
of liberty, and *so* continueth, being not a
hearer that forgetteth, but a doer that work-
eth, this man shall be blessed in his doing.
26 If any man thinketh himself to be religious,
while he bridleth not his tongue but deceiveth
27 his heart, this man's religion is vain. Pure
religion and undefiled before our God and
Father is this, to visit the fatherless and
widows in their affliction, *and* to keep him-
self unspotted from the world.

16 *Do not err.* Revised Version, "Be not deceived." The reference appears to be chiefly to the preceding verses, in which the apostle is speaking of temptation, especially of the fact that temptation to evil does not come from God. There is danger of men deceiving themselves on this point, and making God the author of the evil they do. That such can never be the case has just been shown. v. 13. "God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man." Instead of this, men are tempted by their own lusts. v. 14.

17 *Every good gift and every perfect gift.* Instead of being the author of evil in any sense, or of tempting any one to do wrong, every *good* thing comes from him, and he is always bestowing good gifts and blessings upon men. *Perfect* signifies full, complete. It is a stronger word than "good," representing a higher class of gifts. The Revised Version shows a difference also in the first and second words, rendered "gift" in the Authorized Version. The latter is "boon," that is, the thing given, the gift when fully given, while the former word refers to the act of giving, the gift in its incipient stage. *Is from above.* Does not spring from the earth but descends, that is, its source is heaven. See chap. 3: 15, 16. *The Father of lights.* The source or creator of lights. The reference is primarily to the heavenly bodies. Gen. 1: 14, 15. But as light is the emblem of all blessing, the meaning may be extended to include all the influences of grace

and of glory, which likewise spring from God. *No variableness, neither shadow of turning.* Revised Version, *No variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning.* He is not light that changes or fluctuates, as do the lights we see. The apostle is still keeping in mind the thought that God never tempts to evil. See 1 John 1 : 5. Whatever may be the literal reference in the words "shadow of turning," the meaning is clear. There are no changes or variations, no periods of darkness or shadow in God. 2 Cor. 4 : 18; Mal. 3 : 6.

18 *Of his own will begat he us.* The reference is to the new or spiritual birth of Christians, which is purely an act of grace on God's part. The apostle has still in mind the goodness of God; instead of tempting to evil he regenerates us and makes us his own children, without any merit on our part, of his will or good pleasure, for his own name's sake. See 1 Peter 1 : 3, 23. *With the word of truth.* The gospel, which is the means by which regeneration is effected. It brings to the soul the knowledge of Christ, and those who receive him are then born of God. John 1 : 12, 13. Thus the expression, "the word of truth," in its higher sense, refers to Christ himself, who is called the Word (John 1), and by whom we are really born again, the written word only pointing to him. *A kind of first-fruits.* This was a familiar expression among the Jews from the custom of consecrating to God the first-fruits of their harvests as a token that all belonged to him. Christ himself is called (1 Cor. 15 : 20, 23) the first-fruit of the resurrection, since his coming from the grave was a pledge that all his people shall also rise. The Holy Spirit, as given to believers, is also (Rom. 8 : 23) called the first-fruit, that is, the earnest or pledge that the work of redemption and restoration thus begun shall be completed. So the first believers were as first-fruits, an earnest that the whole glorious harvest of redemption will be gathered in. There may be a reference here also in the word "creatures" to the whole restored creation. Compare Rom. 8 : 19–23, which seems to point to the same great redemption, as in a sense embracing animate and inanimate nature. See also 2 Peter 3 : 13 and Rev. 21 : 4.

19, 20 *Wherefore, my beloved brethren.* See Revised Version. *Swift to hear.* That is, to hear God's word; be of a docile and teachable spirit. However, the counsel has a general application, in connection with what follows. *Slow to speak.* As a teacher of others, is one thought; slow also in telling what we hear, and slow in giving expression to angry feelings. "Two ears are given to us, the Rabbis observe, but only one tongue: the ears are open and exposed, whereas the tongue is walled in behind the teeth." The inference is obvious. *Slow to wrath.* Not of hasty temper. See Prov. 16 : 32. *Wrath . . . worketh not.* This is true in whatever sense the words are applied, whether to religious teachers or to personal life. Anger never builds up God's cause, but always mars and hinders.

21 *Lay apart.* Put away, or put off, as one lays aside a filthy garment. See Zech. 3 : 3–5. *Filthiness.* Referring in general to the corruption of the old nature. *Superfluity of naughtiness.* Revised Version, *Overflowing of wickedness.* Wickedness in the heart overflows until it fills all the life and chokes out all the good seed. Hence, it must be put away, at whatever cost. *Receive with meekness.* That is, without wrath or contention, in a docile, childlike spirit. *Engrafted word.* The word of truth *implanted* in you by the Spirit. The figure of grafting or planting in the heart is very striking. The word of God is a seed or a living plant or branch brought from heaven and set into the old nature. *Able to save your souls.* Through the implanting of the divine life. See Acts 20 : 32. By "soul" is meant the true being, embracing all the powers of the life.

22 *Doers of the word.* Acting out in life its every precept. See Matt. 7 : 21–29. *Deceiving your own selves.* By imagining that mere knowledge of the word is enough to save. Rom. 2 : 13.

23, 24 *His natural face.* A man may see his true moral image reflected in the word of God, as one sees his face reflected in a mirror. *Glass.* A mirror of polished steel. *Straightway forgetteth.* While he looks at the mirror he sees his own features, but the moment he turns away he forgets how he seemed. To this the man is compared who hears God's word and does not do it. He sees the image of his soul as it is reflected in the mirror of the Bible, and perhaps makes some good resolution, but a moment after the impression is gone from his mind.

25 *Whoso looketh.* Stooping down and looking closely is implied. The picture is of a close and diligent Bible student. *Perfect law of liberty.* The rule of life as laid down in the word of God is a law of liberty. Those who take Christ's yoke find rest to their souls, and those who receive Christ are set free by him. *Continueth therein.* Both in *looking* into the law and in *doing* its commands, not going away and forgetting. *Blessed in his deed.* Revised Version, *In his doing.* Blessing comes in the very act of doing right. Ps. 19 : 11; Matt. 7 : 24, 25.

26 *Seem to be religious.* Revised Version, *Thinketh himself to be religious.* This is a warning to any who may be deceiving themselves by having a wrong idea of religion. *And bridleth not his tongue.* The curbing of the tongue is an essential part in a true religious life. See Ps. 39: 1. One of the first marks of true religion is gentleness of speech. Matt. 12: 37. The subject is fully discussed in the lesson of a week later.

27 *Pure religion and undefiled.* The first adjective means free from all admixture, as of deceit or hypocrisy; the second denotes the result of being pure. Religion here is religious service; not the whole of religion which begins in the heart in regeneration, but the active or practical side. *Before God and the Father.* All life must be measured in God's presence; we are only what we are in his sight. Notice the second name—Father. *To visit.* Then sentiment is not enough; there must be the kind act. *The fatherless and widows.* Named as types of those who peculiarly need sympathy and help. *And.* This word is not in the original—"so close is the connection between active works of mercy to others, and the maintenance of personal unworldliness of spirit, word and deed." *Unspotted from the world.* A holy life is as essential in religion as deeds of mercy. We are to live in the world, but not become blackened by its evil. See the prayer of Jesus, John 17; also Jude 24.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

I. Right Receiving of the Word. vs. 16–21.

Be not deceived, my beloved brethren. This is one of the red lights the Bible hangs up. It says "*Danger.*" We are in danger of being deceived. There was an accident on the railroad one night, and the reason was that the wrong signal had been given. In former days wreckers used to set up lights near the shore to deceive vessels and lure them on the rocks, that they might gather booty from the wrecks. These are illustrations of what is being done in this world continually to destroy souls. It is Satan's avowed aim to deceive the unwary. He is ever giving wrong signals and hanging up false lights to lure souls to destruction. There are false teachers, and false friends and evil books, and then we are all in danger of being deceived by our own hearts. We need to keep this red light always in sight, with its warning, "Be not deceived." And surely with the Bible in our hand we ought not to be deceived.

Every good gift and every perfect boon is from above, coming down from the Father. Sometimes we forget this, and do not think of our Father as giving to us all the good things we receive. Yet it is true that he does. Our daily bread, our health, our reason, our home and friends, our comforts, our prosperity, all our blessings, come from his hands. If we only thought of this always, how warm with love would it keep our hearts! At Christmas or on a birthday a friend sends us some little present, and what a thrill of pleasure it gives us to receive it, not so much for the value of the gift as for the evidence that the friend thought of us, and provided the gift specially for us, and sent it to us, for ourselves and for no one else! Is it not pleasant to think that up in heaven, amid all the glory that surrounds him, and with millions of worlds outspread before his eye, God sees each of us on the earth, thinks about us with special thought and affection, and sends to us, individually, each good thing we receive? There are many other suggestions in this sentence. *All* "gifts" that come from God are good, and every "boon" is perfect. Nothing evil ever comes from him. This may comfort us when he sends sorrows—there is something good in them. Again, the things we have from God are "gifts," not deserved, but gifts of grace unmerited.

Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak. One of Christ's counsels was, "Take heed how ye hear." The child Samuel was taught to say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." It is a great thing to be able to say that to the Lord honestly. He often speaks and finds no ears to hear what he says. A good man said, "I will hear what God the Lord will speak." We should learn to say that especially every time we enter a church, or sit down in a Sabbath-school class, or open the Bible. We ought to be swift at hearing. "Slow to speak" does not mean to be a slow speaker, but to be very careful what we speak, how we speak, to whom we speak, when and where we speak. The counsel is for religious teachers. We must hear before we speak. We must get a message before we attempt to deliver one. We must learn before we teach. The one who would be a good speaker for God must be a good listener when God speaks. But this double counsel has other applications. Two ears and one mouth indicate that we should hear twice as much as we speak. The tongue shut in behind the double wall of lips and teeth is another hint that it needs guarding, and is to be kept in strict control. The fact that the ears are left uncovered

and unfenced, suggests that we are to listen always and well, although the mouth-gate must often be kept tightly shut on what comes in through the ear-gates.

Slow to wrath. The Bible says that God is slow to anger, that is, he is patient and long-suffering, and punishes only after having done all that he can to turn the heart and life of the sinner away from sin. The Koran says that two angels attend every man from birth to death, and that at the close of each day they fly up to heaven with the record of his acts for the day. The one on his right reports all his good deeds, and the one on his left his evil deeds. But when he has done anything wrong the angel on the right says, "Forbear to record that for seven hours. Peradventure he will wake by that time and repent and cry for forgiveness." This illustrates God's slowness to wrath. Showing the other side of the same quality, it is interesting to notice that the only place in the Bible where God is represented as *running* is in the parable of the Prodigal Son, where the father ran to meet and welcome the returning penitent. We are to be holy *as* God is holy, and we are to be slow to wrath as God is; not easily provoked, meek in enduring wrongs, overcoming evil with good. The Bible says: "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."

Receive with meekness the implanted word. The word of God will not live and grow in a heart of anger or bitterness, nor in a proud and haughty heart. There must be a good soil, a soil soft and mellow, a soil warm and moist. If we would get blessing from the word we must receive it with love, with humility, with a teachable spirit, and with a readiness to obey it. The figure is very beautiful—that of a plant, brought from heaven's garden, and set to grow in your heart, where it will spring up into beauty and fruitfulness in your life. The heart was bare and empty before, or rather full of weeds—"filthiness" and "naughtiness," which you dig out to make room for the heavenly plant. The growing up of this plant is the saving of the soul—it is the springing up of a new and divine life in you.

II. Right Using of the Word. vs. 22–25.

Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only. Most of us know a good deal more of the Bible than we obey. If we all lived as well as we know how to live it would be quite a different world. Some one has said that we have plenty of philosophy but very few philosophers, that is, there are plenty of people who have very wise theories of living, but not many who live out the theories. If everybody went home from church and Sabbath-school to "do" all that he has "heard," the millenium would soon come. Now that is just what we ought to do. "Be ye doers and not hearers only." The truth is, we "receive" just as much of the word of God as we use, and not one whit more. People wrangle over creeds, what men ought to believe; let us begin to *live* our creeds. The best way to prove them is to work them out in our own lives.

III. Right Living of the Word. vs. 26, 27.

If any man . . . bridleth not his tongue . . . this man's religion is vain. That is rather a severe test. If only those are truly religious who keep their tongues under bit and rein, the number is not large. The doctor looks at your tongue when you are sick to learn what is wrong, and here it seems that the moral state is also to be judged by the tongue. Jesus said the same: "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." In our next lesson we shall learn something more about the tongue, but just here it is well to note that an unbridled tongue is not a good mark, does not speak well for the heart.

Pure religion . . . is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. Works of mercy and a clean heart and life make up the practical religion that is accepted in God's sight. So we see that a good creed is not all. There must be works as well as faith. Religion is not merely reading so many chapters a day, and saying prayers at stated hours. A religious life must be holy and it must be helpful; it must *be* good and *do* good. This world is full of evil, but the true Christian is to be in the world and pass through it and yet keep clean. A beautiful illustration is the lily that floats in the foul bog and yet remains pure and undefiled. Jesus himself is the only perfect example; he met all manner of temptation but sinned not; he lived among wicked people, but there was no blemish on him. He is our example, too, of the other element of religion. He "went about doing good."

LESSON POINTS.

1. We are all in danger of being deceived by false teachings, and a mistake here may wreck our souls. v. 16.

2. All our blessings come from God; all that comes from him is *good* and *perfect;* and all the blessings we receive from him are *gifts*—unmerited. v. 17.

3. We have no hope of heaven until we are born again. v. 18.

4. We should be ready listeners but very careful talkers, and very slow in getting angry. v. 19.

5. Anger never does any good, never advances God's kingdom, which is built up only by love. v. 20.

6. We cannot receive the word of God while our hearts are full of filthiness and naughtiness; "a garden full of weeds cannot receive flower-seeds until the weeds are removed." v. 21.

7. God wants to plant in our hearts the holy seeds of eternal life which will save our souls from the power of sin. v. 21.

8. It is not the word of God that we *hear*, but that which we *do* that builds us up and saves us. vs. 22–25.

9. One of the tests of true religion is a well-controlled tongue. v. 26.

10. Another test is a life of good deeds among the poor and the suffering. v. 27.

11. A third test is a clean and unspotted life. v. 27.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

In this lesson we pass to a new and in some respects a difficult book. This Epistle of James is full of the interest which encircles all questions of duty and of practical every-day religion. Our success, therefore, in kindling an enthusiasm for the study of these lessons in James will depend on our seizing the practical points and bringing them into living contact with the opinions, words, feelings and doings of your scholars.

Lines of Approach.

Call for a report on the question assigned last Sabbath. Which James wrote the Epistle of James? If no report is made, or if a mistake is made in the report, make clear to the class your own opinion on that question. What do you know of James' life and character? In what conference did James appear? Acts 15. How does Paul speak of him? Gal. 2: 9. Call for the report on, To whom was this Epistle written? Then have class read.

A Lesson Plan.

Hearing and Doing { Their Source. Their Spirit.

Questions and Applications.

I. *God—the only source of true hearing and doing.*

No habit is more blessed than that of referring all good to God. Therefore labor to impress this truth. Refer to the error alluded to in v. 13, thus, What mistake had James corrected in v. 13? That any man should say, I am tempted of God. Why ought we never to say or think that God tempts any man to sin? What does tempt mean? vs. 14, 15. What does come from God? v. 17. Why is he called "the Father of lights?" (See Dr. Miller's Notes.) Why is God said to be without variableness or shadow of turning? What good gifts do you receive from the Father of lights? Give the scholars time to mention the blessings they have received? What is "the unspeakable gift" of God? What gift is mentioned in v. 18? Our new birth. What is this? By what means is this wrought in us? Impress the fact that our new life from God comes through the word of God. How can any man say he wants to be saved who neglects reading and hearing God's word?

II. *Hearing and Doing—their Spirit.*

1. What kind of a spirit is described by the words, "Swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath?" A peaceful, kind spirit. What is it to be "swift to hear?" Matt. 13: 26. Why should we be eager to hear God's word? What is it to be "slow to speak?" What kind of talking is here condemned? Illustrate by telling the story of Talkative in "Pilgrim's Progress." Show that talkativeness about religion is a very different thing from religion. "Slow to anger." What kind of anger is here condemned? Why do you think that all kinds of anger are not condemned? Why ought we to avoid unholy anger? v. 20. By what means can a high-tempered person overcome such anger? By "looking unto," imitating Jesus. Why cannot the wrath of man work the righteousness of God? God is love, and wrath which is hate cannot lead men to God's love.

2. What is God's word called in v. 21? Why is it called *engrafted?* Because it is grafted or planted in our souls by the Holy Spirit in our new birth. How are we to receive this engrafted word? What is meekness? Being willing to be taught, gentle to those who differ from us. What has this word power to do? How are we then to treat the Bible? (*a*) Have. (*b*) Read daily with prayer. (*c*) Think it over. See next question.

3. What is the important thing to do with God's word? To do, to obey it. Matt. 7: 21–27; Luke 11: 28; John 13: 17. What is a mere hearer of God's word like? In what particulars is God's word like a mirror? What must we do in order to see in the Bible the reflection of our souls?

4. What is said of a man who bridleth not his tongue? Why do horses need bridles? Why does the tongue need a bridle? Illustrate by

the tendency of one scholar to *boast*, of another to *criticise*, of another to *complain*, of another to *exaggerate*.

5. What is true religion? Truly doing good for the glory of God. v. 27. What are you doing to console and help the distressed? What is your Sabbath-school doing for them? You may show the class, at the close, this outline:

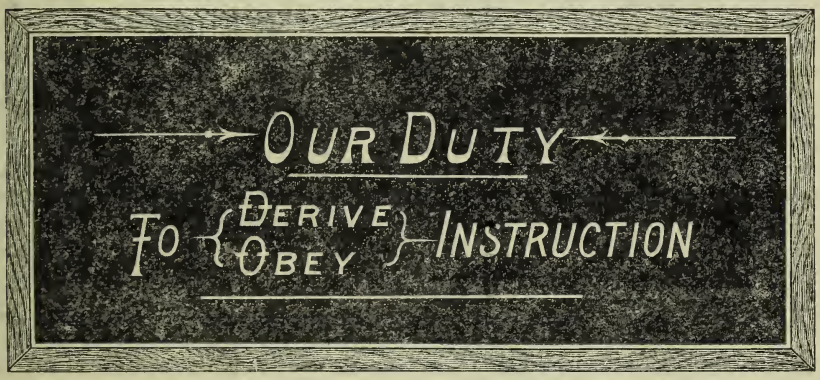
THE TRUE AND THE FALSE.

THE TRUE CHRISTIAN.	THE FALSE CHRISTIAN.
Thinks God gives all good.	*Thinks evil comes from God.*
Is ready to learn God's word.	*Talks, talks.*
Humbly receives God's word.	*Has angry zeal.*
Obeys God's word.	*Forgets God's word.*
Does good to the poor.	*Talks, talks.*
Keeps his heart unspotted.	*Deceives his own heart.*
This man is blessed.	This man's religion is vain.

Questions on the lesson of Jan. 20th to be distributed in writing in the class:

1. What is the power of the tongue?
2. What are some of the sins of the tongue?
3. Illustrate the untamableness of the tongue?
4. How can we overcome the sins of the tongue?
5. What is the wisdom which is from above?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



SUGGESTIONS.—The above diagram may be neatly placed upon one side of the board, to be used as the closing lesson from the desk, and not exposed to view until needed. The way to know the truth is to hear it, and to magnify the truth is to obey it. Our duty then is "To Do," not to hear only. Erase all but "Our duty, to do," and impress the lesson. It is not the faithful hearer, but the faithful helper that God blesses. Not the *talker*, but the *toiler*. "This man shall be blessed in his DEED," not in his hearing. A much-needed lesson in the age of Sunday-school exhibitions, where talking and hearing are so greatly magnified. Where knowledge is possessed, service is required.

"IF YE KNOW THESE THINGS
HAPPY ARE YE IF DO THEM."

Place this truth upon the board, and have school read v. 27 in concert, and while reading erase all but "THESE THINGS DO," making the application.

Directions for Coloring.—"Our duty," white shaded with green; "To," white shaded with red; "D" in divine, and "O" in obey, green shaded with yellow, the rest of the words in orange; "Instruction," light blue shaded with pink.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The Teacher in Class.—What is this picture (or word) on the board? Have an outline of an ear, or, failing in this, print the word. How many of these boys and girls have ears? How many have each of you? What are they for? (Encourage thought on the subject.) What word am I writing? Print the word "TONGUE." Ask similar questions in regard to its use; especially lead class to realize that each person has but one. Now watch what words I print

over the pictures of the ear and tongue. Print thus—

"SWIFT" "SLOW"
EAR. TONGUE.

Listen while I read you the Bible words about this: "Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak."

You have thus introduced a central thought in the lesson. What you now need is to enlarge upon it, until each child shall understand what "swift" hearing and "slow" speaking means.

A story illustration will help you. Katie listened carefully to mother's words; tried to remember them. When mamma said: "Katie, come into the house at once," she was "*swift*" to hear. But this same Katie, when she heard a playmate tell of another who she thought was "real mean," did not hasten her tongue to repeat this, but was careful to think whether it would not do harm instead of good to repeat it at all.

A simple little object-lesson, introduced at this point, may help to impress truth. Let a child come to the platform and bring you something, a book or card. Let class tell whether she heard your direction. How do they know? By her obedience. What organs did she use? First *ears*, then *feet*, then *hands*. (Print these last words.) Call for golden text. "Be ye *doers* of the word, and not *hearers* only."

So God's commands call for *doing* as well as hearing. Our tongues, our feet, our hands, must show that we have heard.

Suppose the child, hearing the teacher's call to the platform, had sat still, she would then have been only a *hearer*. Suppose she had come forward, but had not brought the book for which the teacher called, she would then have been only *half* a doer. God calls for careful hearing and exact doing.

Personal Application.—Outline a heart on the board, and print in it God's command to each:

How many have heard? How many have obeyed? Who that has not, will do so to-day?

Lesson III. **THE POWER OF THE TONGUE.** **Jan. 20th, 1884.**

James 3: 1-18. Memorize vs. 2-5.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."—Matt. 12: 37.

HOME STUDIES.

M. James 3: 1-18.. *The Power of the Tongue.*
T. Matt. 12: 31-37. *Justified or Condemned by Word.*
W. Rom. 3: 10-20.. *"The Poison of Asps."*
Th. 2 Pet. 2: 9-22 .. *Great and Swelling Words.*
F. Prov. 18: 1-24.. *Death and Life in its Power.*
S. Ps. 34: 11-22... *Keep thy Tongue from Evil.*
S. Prov. 10: 11-32. *The Lips of the Righteous.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Tongue Hard to Control. 2. The Evil the Tongue can Do. 3. What the Tongue Ought to Do.

Time.—A. D. 62.

Place.—Written from Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 54. *What is required in the third commandment?* A. The third commandment requireth the holy and reverent use of God's names, titles, attributes, ordinances, words, and works.

Q. 55. *What is forbidden in the third commandment?* A. The third commandment forbiddeth all profaning or abusing of any thing whereby God maketh himself known.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—This third chapter is a complete division of the Epistle devoted to a consideration of the sins of the tongue. The subject is always and everywhere an important one, since all people talk, and not all talk wisely or sweetly at all times. We learn in the lesson how hard it is to tame the tongue or bring it under the control of the spirit of love, and yet what a great sin it is and how destructive and injurious, to have a tongue that is not tamed; then it tells us how we may learn to speak only pure, peaceable and gentle words by receiving the wisdom that is from above.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

1 My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. [Matt. 23: 8, 14; 1 Pet. 5: 3.]

2 For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same *is* a perfect man, *and* able also to bridle the whole body. [Prov. 20: 9; 1 John 1: 8; Prov. 13: 3.]

3 Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. [Ps. 32: 9.]

4 Behold also the ships, which though *they* be so great, and *are* driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth.

5 Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! [Prov. 12: 18; Ps. 12: 3.]

6 And the tongue *is* a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. [Prov. 16: 27; Matt. 15: 11–20.]

7 For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind:

8 But the tongue can no man tame; *it is* an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. [Ps. 140: 3; Rom. 3: 13.]

9 Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.

10 Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

11 Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet *water* and bitter?

12 Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so *can* no fountain both yield salt water and fresh. [Matt. 7: 16.]

13 Who *is* a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. [Ps. 107: 43; Phil. 1: 27.]

14 But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.

15 This wisdom descendeth not from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, devilish. [1 Cor. 3: 3.]

16 For where envying and strife *is*, there *is* confusion and every evil work.

17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, *and* easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. [1 Cor. 2: 6, 7; Phil. 4: 8; Heb. 12: 14; Gal. 5: 22.]

18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace. [Heb. 12: 11.

REVISED VERSION.

1 Be not many teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment.
2 For in many things we all stumble. If any stumbleth not in word, the same is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also.
3 Now if we put the horses' bridles into their mouths, that they may obey us, we turn
4 about their whole body also. Behold, the ships also, though they are so great, and are driven by rough winds, are yet turned about by a very small rudder, whither the impulse
5 of the steersman willeth. So the tongue also is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how much wood is kindled
6 by how small a fire! And the tongue is a fire: the world of iniquity among our members is the tongue, which defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the wheel of nature,
7 and is set on fire by hell. For every kind of beasts and birds, of creeping things and things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been
8 tamed by mankind: but the tongue can no man tame; *it is* a restless evil, *it is* full of
9 deadly poison. Therewith bless we the Lord and Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the likeness of
10 God: out of the same mouth cometh forth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these
11 things ought not so to be. Doth the fountain send forth from the same opening sweet
12 *water* and bitter? can a fig tree, my brethren, yield olives, or a vine figs? neither *can* salt water yield sweet.
13 Who is wise and understanding among you? let him shew by his good life his works
14 in meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter jealousy and faction in your heart, glory
15 not and lie not against the truth. This wisdom is not *a wisdom* that cometh down from
16 above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where jealousy and faction are, there is con-
17 fusion and every vile deed. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without variance,
18 without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for them that make peace.

1 *Be not many masters.* *Teachers*, in Revised Version. There seem to have been many among the Jewish converts who desired to be recognized as religious teachers, who put themselves forward as such without being qualified or called. The warning is against such rushing into the teacher's office. *The greater condemnation*, or, *The heavier judgment.* That is, those who are teachers of others, and who assume to instruct and guide them, will come under a more severe and searching judgment than those who are only hearers. This is not meant to deter those from teaching others whom God calls to this high office, but to warn those who are unfit and uncalled, by reminding them of the great responsibility in assuming to be teachers of others in spiritual things.

2 *We offend all.* The sense is correctly given in the Revised Version. None are free from mistakes and sins; all stumble in many things. The apostle embraces himself in the "we." *If any man offend not in word.* The emphasis is on *any* and *in word.* He had been speaking of

teachers, and now he says, "*Any* man who stumbleth not *in word*, is perfect. To stumble is to trip, or fall over something, and the idea is that if any one can so control his speech as to speak no wrong or evil word, to make no mistake with his tongue, he must have perfect self-mastery, and be able to control all the other powers of his body; that is, the tongue is the hardest of all the members of the body to control, and if one is able to rule it he will be able easily to keep all the other members in subjection.

3 *We put bits.* Mark the reading of the Revised Version. Two illustrations of the power of the tongue are here presented, the bridle in the horse's mouth and the rudder on the ship. The bit put in the mouth of the horse controls all his movements; so the bridle of control on the human tongue rules and directs the whole body.

4 *Behold also the ships.* Another illustration of the same control by means of a small organ. The *great* ship is ruled by the *little* rudder. *Fierce winds.* Representing the gusts of passion and feeling which like wild winds oppose the guiding power of the helm. *Are yet turned.* The control is perfect in spite of the opposing elements of wind and wave. *Very small helm.* One of the smallest parts of the ship, as the tongue is one of the smallest members of the body. *Whithersoever the governor listeth.* Revised Version, *Whither the impulse of the steersman willeth.* The words are intended to represent the great ease with which the pilot directs the movement of the ship.

5 *Even so the tongue is a little member.* Like the rudder. *Boasteth great things.* Though so small the tongue has great power. In v. 2 the apostle had shown that the control of the tongue involves that of the whole body, as the bit guides the horse and the rudder the ship. Here his mind is turning to the evil or mischievous power of the tongue, as the use of the word "boasteth" indicates. *How great a matter.* Revised Version, *How much wood is kindled by how small a fire.* In the writer's mind there was the picture of a great conflagration, like a whole forest in flames, kindled by the falling of a little spark.

6 *The tongue is a fire.* In its own nature it is fiery, easy kindled by passionate feelings and impulses. But the principal thought here is that suggested by the foregoing illustration of the spark and conflagration; though small it may kindle a great fire. *A world of iniquity.* See the reading of the Revised Version: *The world of iniquity among our members is the tongue.* The apostle's thought seems to be the great prominence of the tongue among the members, a prominence of evil, since the tongue is itself a very world of unrighteousness. *It defileth the whole body.* "It is even like an intestine volcano; and sends forth a dark stream of lava and a murky shower of ashes and smoke, and is thus a source of pollution, sullying and staining as with foul blots the beauty of all around it; and also like a volcano it emits a flood of fire." *The course of nature.* Revised Version, *The wheel of nature*, that is, of human life or society. The meaning apparently is, that the tongue inflames and kindles all about it. Any one who thinks of the influence of an impure or hot-tempered tongue will understand the figure. *Set on fire by hell.* Gehenna, as in Matt. 5: 22, the Jewish name for the place of torment. The devil is the source of the evil of the tongue. See also Ps. 52: 4; 120: 3, 4; Prov. 16: 27.

7, 8 *Every kind of beasts.* Man has been able to subdue and tame all kinds of lower animals. See Gen. 1: 26, 28; Ps. 8: 7, 9. *The tongue can no man tame.* It is harder to subdue than any savage beast or fierce dragon. *An unruly* [restless] *evil.* Therefore incapable of restraint. *Full of deadly poison.* Probably James was thinking of the tongues of deadly serpents. See Ps. 58: 4; 140: 3.

9, 10 *Therewith bless we God.* Revised Version, *The Lord and Father.* A striking illustration of the oneness of God. The Father is here called by the Son's title, as in Isa. 9: 6 the Messiah is called the Father. *Curse we men.* The same tongue that praises God in his worship is used also to curse men, including all the evil things spoken by the tongue against men. *After the similitude of God.* Revised Version, *Likeness.* Gen. 1: 26. Remnants of the divine image still remain even in the most abandoned sinners, and we ought to reverence human life even in its most debased form, not only because of what it was at first, but also of what it may again become through restoring grace. *Ought not.* These things are contrary to God's revealed will, and are therefore sinful.

11, 12 *Doth a fountain.* Nature never does such a thing. The heart is the fountain, and the mouth the "place" or "opening," through which the stream flows. The inference is obvious. *A fig tree.* See Matt. 7: 16. No tree can bring forth fruit except of its own nature; can a good man then speak evil words? *So can no fountain.* See the amended reading in the Revised Version. "If the mouth emit cursing, thereby making itself a brackish spring, it cannot

to any purpose also emit the sweet stream of praise and good words; if it appear to do so, all must be hypocrisy and mere seeming."

13 *Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge.* Wisdom is the divine gift, and knowledge is intelligence acquired. *Let him show.* The only wisdom we really have is that which we show in our life. *A good conversation.* Not referring to speech but to life. Revised Version, *A good life. With meekness of wisdom.* The meekness that belongs inseparably to true wisdom.

14 *If ye have bitter envying and strife.* [Jealousy and faction.] This described the condition of things among those addressed. Jealousy and party strife made sad work among them. *Glory not.* They boasted of the very zeal here condemned. *Lie not against the truth.* Such conduct as James was reproving was a lie against the truth, that is, the gospel itself, which they boasted of protecting.

15 *This wisdom.* The kind of wisdom of which they gloried. *Descendeth not.* Its origin is not in heaven; it does not come from God. *But is earthly, etc.* It springs from the earth instead of heaven, is sensual or animal-like and not spiritual, and is devilish, born of the devil and not of God.

16 *Envying and strife.* Jealousy and faction. See v. 14. *There is confusion.* A seditious spirit, anarchy. *Every evil work.* Revised Version, *Vile deed.* This party strife leads to all manner of vile acts.

17 *The wisdom that is from above.* In delightful contrast with that described in v. 15, this wisdom is from above, that is, from God, and as to its characteristics, is *first pure, then peaceable*, etc. Compare with this the Beatitudes (Matt. 5), and Paul's description of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5: 22, 23), and of Christian love. 1 Cor. 13. See also Job 28: 14–19; Prov. 3: 13–18.

18 *The fruit of righteousness.* This righteousness is that just described as descending from above. The "fruit" is the outcome of such life. *In peace.* Not in party-strife and rancor, but in the peaceful spirit of love. *Of them that make peace.* Revised Version, *For them.* Those whose lives and words produce peace, in contrast with the bitter, contentious spirit condemned in the foregoing words.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

I. The Tongue Hard to Control. vs. 1–5.

Be not many teachers . . . knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment. There are many people who are always ready to give advice to others. No subject is so difficult that they have not an opinion upon it which they are quick to express. No question of duty (in other people's lives) is so delicate that they cannot settle it at once. Where wise, thoughtful men are silent, they speak out with boldest self-assurance. They are always obtruding advice unsought upon others. They understand your business a great deal better than you do. They know what you ought to do in every experience, and when you are in deep perplexity about some way of duty, it is all perfectly clear to them, and they are ready, without a moment's thought, to point out to you with mathematical precision the course you ought to take. They are as much at home in spiritual matters as in local gossip, and can tell a distressed soul what to do as glibly as they can give advice about farming or sheep-raising. Perhaps James did not have this sort of "teachers" in mind, but it would be a blessing to the world if some of them would take his reproof to themselves. There are few people that are fit to give advice to others. Especially are there few who are fit to guide others in spiritual matters. It does not matter much when it is only the cut of a coat or the color of a dress, but when it is the eternal interest of a soul, only one who is taught of God ought to dare to give advice. A wrong word to an inquirer may wreck a destiny.

If any stumbleth not in word, the same is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also. That is, if we can control our tongue there is no doubt that we can control all our other members and faculties. The tongue is the wildest, most wayward thing about us. People who in every other way live almost faultless lives are continually stumbling in their speech, speaking words they ought never to utter. It is a wise rule in all self-culture and discipline to give most attention to those things in which we are most lacking, to strengthen the weak parts, to curb the wayward elements, to put the restraint where there is the most tendency to defy control. Every tongue, therefore, needs strict attention. This is the weakest and the strongest point in all—the weakest in its control and the strongest in its wild waywardness. According to this verse our tongue-mastery is the test and the measure of our self-mastery.

The tongue also is a little member and boasteth great things. The bit of a bridle is a small thing, but it turns the horse at the rider's will. The rudder of a ship is almost its smallest part, yet by it the steersman compels the great vessel

to obey his impulse in the roughest sea and amid the wildest winds. What the bit is to the horse, what the rudder is to the ship, that the tongue is to the body, if it is under control. But the trouble is, that most people are like riderless horses, bridled but with no hand on the reins; or like a ship on a wild sea, with rudder complete but no master at the wheel. What we want to do is to get our tongues "well in hand;" to get a rider on the horse who shall guide the fiery animal; to get a pilot on the ship whose hand on the wheel shall be instantly recognized and implicitly yielded to in the fiercest gale. The tongue is capable of great things if it can only be made servant and not master.

II. The Evil the Tongue Can Do. vs. 6–10.

The tongue is a fire. The old hunter lights his pipe and throws down the match among the leaves and passes on. In a few hours the whole forest is in flames. A lamp is overturned in a stable and a great part of a city is overrun by a conflagration, involving tremendous loss. A spark from a passing locomotive flies into the dry grass, and a broad prairie is swept over by the flames. There is many a tongue that is like a locomotive, rushing along at fifty miles an hour and pouring out its rain of sparks with every breath. There are many people like the old hunter, throwing burning matches among dry leaves, in almost every conversation. There are men and women who are continually upsetting lamps among the hay and starting conflagrations. "The tongue is a fire," and words are the sparks. Who has not heard words spoken that kindled destructive flames? Sometimes they burned into some tender heart, almost extinguishing its life. Sometimes they started a fire which left some fair name blackened. Sometimes they kindled a blaze of hot passion in a breast which left a soul in ruins.

The tongue can no man tame. Lions and bears and tigers and serpents can be tamed (one of the moral uses of a menagerie or zoological garden is to illustrate this lesson), but the tongue is harder to tame than any wild beast. There is a story told of an illiterate man who was converted and desired to learn something of the Bible. Not being able to read he went to a minister and asked him to teach him some Scripture texts. The minister taught him the first verse of the thirty-ninth psalm, and then told him to come again to be taught other verses. Weeks passed and the man did not return. One day the minister met him and asked him why he had not come for another lesson. He answered that he had not got the first lesson learned yet. Many more of us might find lesson enough in that same verse to keep us practicing a good many weeks. But the difficulty in taming the tongue should not keep us from trying to tame it. None of us would be allowed to keep a savage dog, or an untamed lion or bear, running loose in the streets; have we any more right to keep an untamed tongue?

These things ought not so to be. If we are Christians at all we ought to have Christian tongues. If we speak words of prayer and praise to God we ought never to say an unkind word of another person, nor speak a false word, or any word that will do harm. When an artist had fashioned a figure of Christ in marble he refused thereafter to make any statues of heathen deities, though offered large sums. He said the hands that had made the figure of the Christ were consecrated hands, and must never do any but holy work. The tongue that speaks to God in prayer and words of devotion should never utter any but pure words, words of love, words of blessing.

III. The Good the Tongue Ought to Do. vs. 11–18.

Doth the fountain send forth from the same opening sweet water and bitter? That is, a Christian tongue ought to send forth only sweet things. It ought to speak only words that will be blessings to others. Only think what good a fountain can do which sends forth its sweet, fresh water in a desert spot, or by a dusty wayside. How many are refreshed by its streams! How the flowers and the trees spring up about it! No one can ever estimate the blessings that a consecrated tongue scatters in this world. It can tell the story of salvation which will save a soul. It can cheer the discouraged, or help the tempted, or give hope to the despairing, or by its words of sympathy can comfort the sorsorrowing.

Who is wise? . . . let him show by his good life his works in meekness of wisdom. No one really has any more wisdom than he gets into his life. A man may take the honors of his class in college, and be a walking encyclopædia of knowledge, and yet have no wisdom for even the ordinary affairs of life. His knowledge does him no good. So one may *know* all the precepts of the gospel concerning love, gentleness and patience, and yet if he does not show meekness in his daily life the knowledge goes for nothing. The kind of speech that proves one truly wise is that which is filled with the Spirit of Christ. The soft answer that turneth away wrath has this spirit. So has the tongue that prays for enemies, that blesses when others curse, that revileth not when others revile.

The wisdom that is from above is first pure.

In the early spring days you may see a bare, dead-looking, briery rod in the garden, very unsightly and unpromising. But the sunshine and the rain fall upon it, and the warm soil ministers to it, and in a few weeks it stands covered with blooming, fragrant roses. So the life on which the divine grace is poured, through the Bible, prayer and the ordinances, should so receive the heavenly blessings as to become clothed and adorned with all the beautiful qualities of wisdom here named. Since our lesson is chiefly about the tongue, it may be said that all these qualities should appear in the speech. It should be *pure*, first of all, then peaceable, then gentle. Of course the qualities must first be in the heart, for the heart gives tone and color to the speech.

LESSON POINTS.

1. We should be sure that we have something to teach before we set ourselves up for teachers. v. 1.

2. The tongue is the hardest to control of all the members of the body. v. 2.

3. If we can learn to control our tongue, our self-mastery in other things will be easy. vs. 2–5.

4. The tongue, though so small, has vast power for evil as well as good. vs. 5, 6.

5. Nothing else in the world is so hard to tame as the tongue. vs. 7, 8.

6. An evil tongue has fearful influence for harm. v. 8.

7. The tongue that is used in God's praise should never utter any bitter or injurious word against any one. v. 9.

8. A Christian's tongue should be like a perpetual fountain of blessing or a fruitful tree. vs. 11, 12.

9. We have really just as much wisdom as we get into our living. v. 13.

10. One who has bitter envying and strife need not claim to be a Christian. vs. 14, 15.

11. The wisdom that God gives is well marked, and need never be misunderstood. v. 17.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

Introduce this lesson by a conversation on the sins of the tongue. How do men sin by their words? The class may reply, by swearing, by lying, etc. Turn to 2 Cor. 12: 20, and read it; Rom. 1: 30; 1 Tim. 6: 4; Lev. 19: 16; Eccles. 10: 11; Jer. 20: 10; 1 Cor. 4: 13; ninth commandment; James 4: 11, 13; Ex. 23: 1; Prov. 17: 9. Search out these passages, and bring their meaning to bear on the easily besetting sins of your scholars. These faithfully applied will cut deeply, but if you are tender, "considering thyself lest thou also be tempted," you may do them a life-long benefit.

Outline the power of the tongue in some way like this—

RULES,
RUINS,
REBELS,
RULED.

QUESTION AND CLOSELY APPLY.

I. THE TONGUE RULES. vs. 1–5.

What does the word "masters" here mean? Why ought not unfit persons to set themselves up for teachers? Prove that all, even Christians, do sin. Peter says so (Acts 15: 11), Paul (Phil. 3: 12), John (1 John 1: 8). In overcoming sin, where is the best place to begin? With the tongue. Why? In what respects is a bad tongue like an unruly horse? What is the danger? Why is a controlled tongue like a gentle horse? If man keeps his mouth, what else does he keep? In what respects is the tongue like the rudder of a ship? The rudder guides the ship, turns it at a moment's notice; so the tongue turns us. Illustrate by a high-tempered man, unable to govern his temper directly. But he governs his words, and after a while he will be able to control his temper. What did Jesus say of our "words?" Matt. 12: 36, 37. These words confirm the teaching that the tongue rules, *i. e.*, it determines our character.

II. THE TONGUE RUINS. vs. 5, 6.

Describe the fire in Chicago, October, 1871; burned over 2,100 acres of the city; destroyed 17,450 houses; rendered homeless 98,500 people; killed about 200; caused a loss of $190,000,000. All this came from the upsetting of a kerosene lamp in a small wooden barn. "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth." In what particulars is the tongue like that lamp? "It setteth on fire the course of nature." What sets an evil tongue on fire? What harm does an evil tongue do to its owner? What is done with men who set houses on fire? What will God at last do with those who destroy men's reputation and happiness?

III. THE TONGUE REBELS. vs. 7–12.

1. *It is an unconquerable rebel.* What wild beasts have you seen tamed? What serpents have you seen tamed? Have you ever seen a liar, or a slanderer, or a tale-bearer, or a gossip tamed? What is the difficulty in curing such offenders? Their heart is bad, and out of the abundance of their bad hearts their mouths speak. What kind of poison is under an evil tongue? Rom. 3: 13. The bite of an asp causes sharp pain, then deathly sickness. The victim soon loses consciousness, goes into convulsions.

In a few minutes he dies. There is no certain cure for this poison when once it has entered the blood.

2. *It is an unnatural rebel.* vs. 9–12. In what image was man created? Gen. 1: 26, 27; 1 Cor. 11: 7. If we curse man or misuse man in any way with our words, what do we against God? What are men like who bless God and curse men?

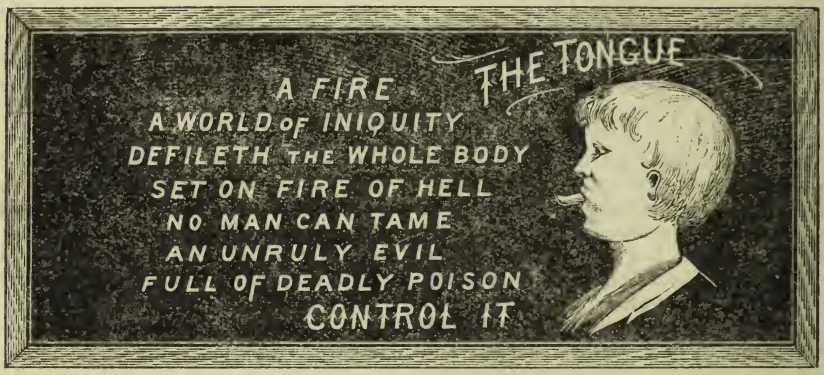
IV. THE TONGUE RULED. vs. 13–18.

What is the only cure for an evil tongue? The meekness of true wisdom. With what is this contrasted in v. 14? What says Solomon of envy? Prov. 14: 30. Whence comes the true wisdom? v. 17 and James 1: 5. What are some rules for the control of our tongue? 1. Watch your words. Ps. 39: 1; Matt. 12: 36, 37; Eph. 4: 29. 2. Put away wrong feelings towards others. 3. Listen not to a backbiting tongue. 4. Pray for divine help. Ps. 141: 3. 5. If you cannot speak good of any person, speak nothing unless duty requires.

Assignments on Lesson for January 27th:

1. By what means can we draw nigh to God?
2. By what means can we cleanse our hearts?
3. Why is pride hateful to God and man?
4. For what reasons ought we not to judge others?
5. What is the true meaning of v. 15.
6. What are sins of omission? Give illustrations.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD



SUGGESTIONS.—To illustrate how comparatively small the tongue is, draw outline of head as in diagram. The words, "The Tongue," and "Control it," to be placed on the board previous to the opening of the school (in connection with the head). In the desk lesson, place on the board what is said about the tongue, illustrating each point, and then impress the importance of controlling the tongue, and have school read v. 13.

"The tongue," says a wise writer, "is the best part of man, and also his worst; with good government none is more useful, and without it, none more mischievous." "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" and the tongue is a fire. "A few rash words will set a family, and even a nation, at enmity; half the lawsuits and half the wars have been brought about by the tongue; husband and wife have separated for ever; children have forsaken their homes; bosom friends have become bitter foes—all on account of fiery arrows shot by this powerful little member." "In the temple at Smyrna there were looking-glasses which represented the best face as crooked and ugly; so is every false tongue." "The tongue was intended for an organ of divine praise; but the devil often plays upon it, and then it sounds like the screech-owl." Though untamable, grace can restrain it. Let us endeavor to live according to the rule set down in v. 13. "Unite meekness with wisdom. Wisdom is mighty, meekness is mighty, but the meekness of wisdom is almighty."

Directions for Coloring.—The outline of the head, white; "The Tongue," red shaded with brown; "Control it," green shaded with white; the rest in red.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Two thoughts may be impressed through this lesson: 1. The importance of *words*. 2. The impossibility of bringing (habitually) impure words from a pure heart.

The primary teacher need not be at a loss for illustrations. The Bible text furnishes them. A picture of a fine horse might be pinned to the blackboard. Encourage free conversation about

the strength of this animal. Let the children give illustrations. Tell them briefly about the Arab horses, wild and free. Let them tell how horses obey the bit and bridle. Then read the Bible verse: "Behold we put bits," etc.

Your class will be interested to see that what they have been talking about is actually in the Bible lesson. Dwell on the great docility of the powerful animal.

Now you have a surprising fact to announce: Each child in your class has something that is much harder to control than a horse. The Bible says: "No man can tame it."

Some of the scholars will be ready to give you the name—"TONGUE," which print in large letters.

A brief practical lesson on the power of the tongue will now be in order. Harry was so angry with his playmate Ben, that he made up a story about Ben's having stolen a silver dollar from a visitor. This so grieved and frightened poor little Ben that he mourned and cried day and night; was finally taken sick with fever, was delirious, and died, crying out: "I *never stealed!*"

The prayer given on *Westminster Lesson Leaf* may be used in this connection.

Show a box of figs. Let class tell what they are, on what they grew, etc. Suppose you should tell them that they grew on a grape vine. Show an apple. On what did it grow? Suppose you should say that it grew on a thorn bush. It would be impossible for the children to believe these statements. Why? Because they know that every fruit tree "yieldeth fruit after his kind."

Explain that the lesson uses such pictures to prove to us something else equally impossible; namely, that a good tongue shall habitually speak bad words, or a bad tongue speak good words. Having established this point, lead the children to think whether, after all, the difference is *really* in the tongue.

If your scholars are restless, and you desire to illustrate this point by object-teaching, having prepared beforehand, it is very easy to do so. Have a pitcher or bottle of dirty, muddy water, and two differently shaped glasses. Pour some into one glass. Call attention to its impurity. Take another glass. The water is still impure. The fault is not in the glass.

The teacher will readily see how she can apply this thought. Outline a heart around the printed word. This is the fountain from which the words flow. If the child habitually speaks angry, untrue, impure words, the heart is wrong. What will make it right? Give it to Jesus, and with it goes the unruly member—the tongue.

Lesson IV. **LIVING AS IN GOD'S SIGHT.** Jan. 27th, 1884.

James 4: 7-17. Memorize vs. 13-15.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up."—James 4: 10.

HOME STUDIES.

M. James 4: 7-17..*Living as in God's Sight.*
T. Eph. 6: 10-20..*The Wiles of the Devil.*
W. Ps. 51: 1-19....*A Prayer for Pardon and Purity.*
Th. Matt. 5: 1-16...*Blessedness of the Pure.*
F. Col. 3: 1-15....*Living in Holiness.*
S. Eph. 4: 17-32..*Living in Love.*
S. 2 Cor. 5: 1-10..*Living in Faith.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. Living in Holiness. 2. Living in Love. 3. Living in Faith.

Time.—A. D. 62.

Place.—Written from Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 56. *What is the reason annexed to the third commandment?* A. The reason annexed to the third commandment is, that however the breakers of this commandment may escape punishment from men, yet the Lord our God will not suffer them to escape his righteous judgment.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—This fourth chapter contains rebukes on account of various sins, lust (1-4); pride (5-10); evil speaking (11, 12); worldliness (13-17). The title of this lesson suggests a general thought that runs through the passage. We live all our life in God's sight, and we should therefore try in everything we do to please him.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. [Eph. 4: 27; 6: 11; 1 Pet. 5: 9.]

8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *ye* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, ye double-minded. [2 Chron. 15: 2; Isa. 1: 16; Ps. 51: 10.]

9 Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and *your* joy to heaviness. [Matt. 5: 4.]

10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up. [Matt. 23: 12.]

11 Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of *his* brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. [Eph. 4: 31; 1 Pet. 2: 1.]

12 There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another? [Matt. 10: 28.]

13 Go to now, ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: [Prov. 27: 1; Luke 12: 18.]

14 Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. [Job 7: 7; Ps. 102: 3; 1 Pet. 1: 24.]

15 For that ye *ought* to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. [Acts 18: 21; 1 Cor. 4: 19.]

16 But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil. [1 Cor. 5: 6.]

17 Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth *it* not, to him it is sin. [Luke 12: 47; Rom. 1: 20, 21, 32.]

REVISED VERSION.

7 Be subject therefore unto God; but resist
8 the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify
9 your hearts, ye doubleminded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heavi-
10 ness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall exalt you.
11 Speak not one against another, brethren. He that speaketh against a brother, or judgeth his brother, speaketh against the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judgest the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but
12 a judge. One *only* is the lawgiver and judge, *even* he who is able to save and to destroy: but who art thou that judgest thy neighbor?
13 Go to now, ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into this city, and spend a year there, and trade, and get gain:
14 whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. What is your life? For ye are a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and
15 then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall both live, and
16 do this or that. But now ye glory in your
17 vauntings: all such glorying is evil. To him therefore that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

7 *Submit yourselves therefore to God.* The "therefore" points back to v. 6. The humble are those who submit themselves to God. "Be subject," the Revised Version has it. The word implies not merely submission to afflictions, but also honor and obedience as loyal subjects. *Resist the devil.* The reverse of submission. The devil is the enemy of God, at the head of the kingdom of evil, and all who would be God's subjects must be the devil's decided and unyielding opposers. This text implies the personality of the devil. *He will flee.* "The devil can fight, but he cannot conquer; if, therefore, thou dost withstand him, he will flee from thee, beaten and ashamed." Thus Satan fled from Christ when he had resisted him.

8 *Draw nigh to God.* Note the antithesis in this and the previous counsel. "Resist the devil, and he will flee." "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." This drawing nigh must be in heart, in spirit, in love. *Cleanse your hands . . . purify your hearts.* External and internal cleansing. See Ps. 24: 3, 4; Isa. 1: 15, 16. It is in this way only that we can draw nigh to God.

9 *Be afflicted and mourn.* That is, because of your sins. No one is ready to draw nigh to God who is not sorry for his sin. See 2 Cor. 7: 10. When Jesus looked upon Peter after his denial, he went out and wept bitterly. *Your laughter.* This word describes their state at this time; although they were sinners who ought to be mourning over their sins, they were without anxiety, moving on with careless glee as if there was nothing wrong. The apostle calls them to awake and think of their sins, and to humble themselves in penitence. See Eccles. 7: 6; Matt. 5: 4. It was no time for laughter and gayety when God's wrath was hanging over them.

10 *Humble yourselves.* In the ways just mentioned. *In the sight of the Lord.* Not before men merely, but before God, and therefore truly. *He shall lift you up.* See v. 6; Isa. 57: 15; 1 Pet. 5: 6. Christ's humiliation was followed by exaltation. Phil. 2: 6–9.

11 *Speak not evil.* Embracing all evil-speaking of others, all backbiting, slander, and whatever is bitter in speech. Humbling ourselves before God makes us also tender and gentle toward men. The word "brethren" gives reason enough for this exhortation. *He that . . . judgeth his brother.* That is, speaks of him in a condemnatory manner. This does not mean that we are never to pass judgment on the sinful acts of others, that we are not to have any opinion of the conduct of others when it is evil, but that we are not to set ourselves up as judges and condemners. Our Lord taught the same lesson in Matt. 7: 1. *Judgeth the law.* The law of God. There are several senses in which these words may be taken. Those who sit in judgment upon others, judge the law of Chris-

tian love which enjoins charity and toleration. If the criticisms and condemnings to which James referred were the judgments of Judaists upon the "liberty" claimed by other Christians, then they judged the law of Christian liberty. (See first lesson of this month.) Or, again, those who assume to be the judges of others put themselves in place of God, who is the one Judge before whom all must stand. *If thou judge the law.* If thou condemnest the law, that is, the Christian law of liberty, in particular. *Not a doer . . . but a judge.* One who sets up his opinion against what God has declared to be the law, not only does not himself obey the law, but assumes to be a judge.

12 *One lawgiver.* Compare Revised Version, in which the words "and judge" are added. The fact that there is one who gave the law, and who also is the Judge and the only Judge, implies that for any man to assume to judge another is to usurp the divine prerogative. See Rom. 14: 4. *Able to save and to destroy.* Our judging amounts to nothing, for we cannot carry out our own sentences; but God, who is both lawgiver and judge, is able to save and to destroy. *Who art thou?* The question is intended to bring out man's utter impotence, and to show the senseless folly of assuming to be "judge of others." *Another.* Rather, *Thy neighbor.*

13, 14 *Go to now.* "Come now," a call to attention. *Ye that say.* The apostle here turns to another subject, and pronounces a rebuke upon those who are worldly and gain-loving. *To-day or to-morrow we will go.* Leaving God out of their life and their plans. The language is that of false confidence, which makes no provision for any break in the plan. *Buy and sell and get gain.* This was all they thought of in this world. *Ye know not.* One thought is, that they were ignorant of the future, and could not therefore with any definiteness mark out their plans. Another thought is, the uncertainty of the future; they were not sure that they should have any to-morrow, for perhaps death would cut off and end all their schemes. *It is even a vapor.* Revised Version, "Ye are a vapor," not merely your life, but ye yourselves. Vapor is here a symbol of transitoriness, as the following words show. The thought is the folly of man, with no more substantiality than a cloud of vapor, making great plans for the future, as if he could do anything he might desire to do.

15 *Ye ought to say.* Referring to v. 13. Instead of saying what you do ye ought to say: *If the Lord will.* Recognizing God's sovereignty and that he has a plan, something marked out for each one, and that without his permission and help nothing which we have planned to do can be carried out, that our very life for to-morrow depends upon him. Both our living and our doing the particular things we intend to do depend upon God. See 1 Cor. 4: 19.

16 *Ye rejoice* [glory] *in your boastings* [vauntings]. Instead of this humble spirit of dependence upon God you really glory in your self-confidence and arrogant presumption.

17 *Knoweth . . . and doeth it not.* A general principle with a particular application. The apostle had now given his solemn rebukes; those to whom he wrote knew therefore what their duty was, and if they failed to do it there would be no excuse for their omission. *Knowledge* of the way of duty is not enough; our knowledge must become life. Besides, knowing one's duty adds very greatly to one's sin and guilt in case of neglect to obey. See Matt. 11: 20–24.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

I. Living in Holiness. vs. 7–10.

Be subject therefore unto God. A moment's thought will show us how reasonable a requirement this is. God is our creator, and also our provider, our protector, our keeper, our caretaker. Then he is our rightful sovereign and king, to whom we owe allegiance. Still further, he is our redeemer, for when we were lost he gave his son to ransom us. Can we dispute his right to our honor, obedience and service? It is a comfort to us to know that God is not a stern ruler, despotic and tyrannical, but is our Father and our Saviour. There is no fear that in submitting ourselves to him we shall ever be the loser, or that anything he may require of us shall be an injustice or an injury. Even when it may seem to us to be against our interests we may be sure that in reality it is for our best and highest good. Hence our subjection to God should be absolute and unquestioning, and at the same time confident and joyful. Notice, too, that it is not merely *submission* that is enjoined, but *subjection.* Some people think of "Thy will be done" as meaning only quiet resignation when trouble comes, but it means far more than that. It embraces active obedience to whatever God's will may require, as well as passive submission under adversity. The subjection here is of the same broad scope. We must *do* God's will in all things, obeying his commandments and taking up every duty he gives. In a word, we are to bring all our life, our powers, our affections, our will, our thoughts, completely and fully into subjection to God.

Resist the devil and he will flee from you. There *is* a devil, and he is cunning, strong and malignant. He is a terrible foe, and he *is* a foe to every one who tries to live right. None of us would seem to be a match for him, or to be able to stand a moment before him. Yet the weakest of Christ's friends can put the devil to flight. He is already a conquered foe. Christ met him and vanquished him, and his power is broken. We have only to resist him to get the victory over him. He can fight, but he cannot compel us to yield to him. It is our own fault when he overcomes us. We cannot keep the birds from flying about our heads, but we can keep them from building their nests in our hair. So we cannot keep Satan from coming to us and tempting us, but we can keep him from getting into our hearts. If we simply stand firm, in Christ's name, when the devil assails us, not fearing, or doubting, but resisting, he will soon flee away. It is said that fierce lions can be kept at bay by a calm, steady human eye fixed upon them, and that they will turn and flee away. In like manner the devil can be made to flee by the eye of faith and courage. The secret is worth knowing, for the devil will come to all of us very often before we get out of this world, and unless we know how to meet him he will be sure to harm us. We are to stand like a rock, doing our simple duty, and when the devil finds that we will not yield, he will flee. But the trouble with so many of us is, that we *do not* resist the devil, but yield to him, and of course he does not then flee, but stays and works his ruin in our souls.

Draw nigh to God and he will draw nigh to you. We see then how to have God close to us; it is by getting ourselves close to him. If we stay far off from him he will recede from us. If we get near to him we will find him coming nearer to us. When the prodigal came toward home his father saw him and ran to meet him. A little child near death began to plead, "Lift me higher! Lift me higher!" Her father took her from the bed into his arms. Still she begged, "Lift me higher!" He raised her up and held her as high as he could reach, but she was not satisfied, and continued to repeat the words, until in a little while her spirit went away to God. She was then, indeed, lifted higher, from the earthly father's into the heavenly Father's bosom. The aspiration of every follower of Christ should ever be to be lifted higher, nearer to God, until at last he is lifted into heaven itself.

Cleanse your hands . . . purify your hearts. Here we learn how we can draw nigh to God. It is not merely by coming to him in forms of prayer and worship. The Pharisee in the temple was a good deal nearer to the Holy place than the publican, who "stood afar off," yet the latter was far closer to God than the former. One may sit at the Lord's table and yet be millions of miles away from Christ, while his neighbor close at his side may have his head laid on Christ's bosom. It is not in space that we are to draw nigh to God. It must be in heart, in life, in spirit. He that hath clean hands and a pure heart shall stand in God's holy hill. The pure in heart shall see God. Without holiness no one shall see the Lord. We draw nigh to God just in the degree in which we become like God in character. If we would live near to him we must put away our sins as fast as we discover them, and learn to do his will.

Be afflicted and mourn and weep. This does not mean that we are to get whips and beat ourselves, or that we are to cause ourselves to suffer tortures, as the old monks used to do, thinking thus to get near to God. Nor does it mean that we are to be sad all the time and go about mourning and weeping. It does not mean that it is a sin to laugh and be happy. The lesson is, that the only way for the sinner to get nigh to God is by the path of sorrow and contrition. One whose sins cause him no sorrow will never know what the joy of forgiveness is. "Blessed are they that mourn," said the Master, "for they shall be comforted." It is a blessed thing to mourn over sin, for "Godly sorrow worketh repentance," and repentance brings pardon and peace.

Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall exalt you. It is good to have *God* lift one up. There is, indeed, no other kind of lifting up that is real. One may climb up on the golden stairs of riches, or the giddy steps of worldly power, or the slippery path of fame, and yet not be truly and permanently exalted. But when God exalts one his elevation is real and enduring. It is worthy of notice that it is not by the ordinary methods of ambition and effort that God exalts men. He lifts up the lowly, those who forget themselves, those who honor him and submit themselves to his will, those who serve him in humility. The paths of divine promotion lead downward and not upward, as the world estimates elevation.

II. Living in Love. vs. 11, 12.

Speak not one against another. If we always followed this rule how much happiness we would make for ourselves and others! We would then never speak an unkind or a bitter word of another. We would not then be always

finding fault with each other, but would find pleasant words to speak instead, beautiful things in each other to commend and praise. This rule followed out would stop about nine-tenths of the conversation that goes on, but the world would not be greatly the loser, though it might be a little quieter. There are anti-slang societies in some places, whose members pledge themselves not to use any slang words, any one who does so paying a fine. Suppose that all our classes would form themselves into societies whose members shall never speak a word against any other person. Who will try it?

One only is the lawgiver and judge . . . Who art thou that judgest thy neighbor? What right have you to judge him? Who made you his judge? What qualification have you for judging him? Are you any better than he is? The Saviour said that we should get the beam out of our own eye before trying to take the mote out of our brother's eye. Have you done this? Are you sure that the fault you condemn in another is not in yourself also, or if not the same, that another and worse fault is not in you? Had you not better make sure of this before you set yourself up as judge?

III. Living in Faith. vs. 13–17.

Go to now, ye that say, To-day or to-morrow . . . whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. There are a great many people who go rushing on through life in just this way, making their plans without any provision for contingencies. They never think of God as having anything to do with their lives or their plans. They never ask him what *he* would have them do, what *his* plans for them are. They are practically without God in the world. They never think of being dependent upon him for anything. Then they ignore also the fact of death, that is inevitable somewhere in their future, and possible at any step. They make no provision for this dread contingency. They live on just as if they were to live here for ever. Such a way of living is not only sinful, but it is fearfully reckless and perilous. It is treating God with utter contempt; then it is endangering all the hopes and possibilities of life.

Ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall both live and do this or that. We ought to recognize God at every step in our life. He has a plan for us. There is some particular thing for which he made us and which he wants us to do. It should be our highest concern always to find out what this is, and then to do *that*, and not something of our own planning. We should also recognize our dependence upon God at every point. Our plans will come to nothing without his blessing. We should not only make sure that we do what God wants us to do, but that we seek his benediction on each act. Then, death may come before our plans are half carried out. Perhaps the coffin is made in which you, dear reader of these words, may lie to take your long last sleep. All the future is uncertain, and we can make no plans with certainty of carrying them out. How should we live in view of this fact? We should say, "If the Lord will I shall live and do this or that." Not that we need always use these words when we are making our plans for the morrow, but that we should always reverently recognize the fact of our dependence upon God both for life itself and for power to do what we intend to do. This will lead us always to humility and faith, and to all fidelity in duty.

To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin. None of us who are studying our Bible every week can claim not to know what our duty is. We cannot get behind any such excuse as this for shelter when we have been sinning. We all know what we ought to do. If our living was up to our knowing how to live, we would be excellent people. But the trouble with too many of us is, that it is not. We admire the way, but do not walk in it. We read our Bible and say, "How beautiful," and then do the very things it forbids, and leave undone the things it bids us to do. Let us not forget that it is far greater sin for us to do wrong than for the heathen and the ignorant, who do not know their duty.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Full, loyal and cheerful subjection to God is the first great duty of life. v. 7.
2. If we stand firm in Christ's name and resist without wavering, the devil will flee. v. 7.
3. The way to have God near to us is to get near to him ourselves. v. 8.
4. We can get nigh to God only by being holy in heart and life. v. 8.
5. The way to God is the way of penitence, sorrow for sin and true repentance. v. 9.
6. It is good to have God lift us up, and he will if we are lowly in heart. v. 10.
7. The true Christian rule is, never to speak a word against another. v. 11.
8. No man has a right to judge another, since God is the one only Judge. v. 12.
9. It is both sinful and perilous to rush on in life with no reference to God. v. 13.
10. We should recognize God at every step, for our life and our times are in his hand. v. 15.
11. The omission of known duties is a sin, as well as positive acts of evil. v. 17.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

Begin by asking what particular sins were pointed out in our last lesson. Teachings of such practical importance should be recalled and re-impressed so that they shall never be forgotten.

Ask for the title of this lesson, and question a little on its meaning. What is it to live in God's sight? *Who* live in God's sight? Where is God now? Impress very strongly the fact that we are always in God's sight, that every one is, that he is looking at us all the time and sees everything we do. Show how a boy would not do certain evil things if he knew that his mother was looking at him. Does he forget that God is looking at him?

An atheist prepared a sentence for his little child to spell out. He wrote, "*God is no-where.*" The child went over the letters, naming each one, and then pronounced the words in this way: "*God is now here.*" The atheist was startled at the misreading, and was so overcome by the thought of God's presence that he was soon crying for mercy.

An old heathen artist was working with great care upon the back of a statue that was to stand in a niche of an idol temple. A friend asked why he should take such pains with the back of the figure, since when it was in its place against the wall no one would see the work he was doing there. "The gods will see it," was the reply. We are sometimes tempted to do carelessly certain things with the thought that no one will ever see our work there. Let us remember that *God will see it*, and do all our work for his eye. Is his praise or blame nothing?

These or similar illustrations will prepare the way for the lesson.

I. *Living in Holiness.* vs. 7–10. Have a little talk about holiness, what it is, and what living in holiness means. There are in these verses six things named as elements of this holy living: 1. Subjection to God. v. 7. What is it to submit to God? Illustrate by the duty of a child to submit to a parent, and of a citizen to submit to rulers. *Why* should we submit to God? He is both our Father and King. 2. Resistance to the devil. Who is the devil? What is his business in this world? Why should we resist him? What will he do if we resist? Teach here with great clearness that not to resist the devil, to yield to him, is to let him rule over us and drag us down to hell; and that if we stand firm in Christ's name and resist he cannot harm us and will flee. 3. Nearness to God. v. 8. Show what it is to be near to God. In one sense all are always near to him. This is a moral nearness. 4. Putting away sin. No one is holy who is living in sin. What is it to cleanse the hands and purify the heart? How can it be done? 5. Penitence. God is nigh to the broken in heart. Ps. 34: 18; 51: 17. 6. Humility. Most people want to be lifted up. There are different ways of "getting up." It is good to have *God* lift us up.

II. *Living in Love.* vs. 11, 12. There are two things that we are *not* to do if we would live in love. 1. We must not speak evil of others. 2. We are not to judge others. Bring out the law of love which Christ laid down for all his followers. We are all very apt to say sharp and severe things of others, and also to set ourselves up as judges of others, criticising and condemning what they do. We ought not to do the first, because we all are brethren; nor the second, because God himself is the one and only Judge.

III. *Living in Faith.* vs. 13–17. What kind of living is described in v. 13? What does it lack? Why should we not go on in this way? v. 14. How should we make all our plans? v. 15. How should we live each day? We should be ready at the close of each day to die; that is, we should leave all things in such condition each night that if we never return to our work nothing shall be unfinished or in confusion.

In these ways should we live since we are living always in God's sight—in holiness; in love; in faith.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Have you noticed that the outline of a heart comes naturally into each of these lessons for the month? Here we have it again: Hands and hearts. "Cleanse your hands."

A simple and effective way of introducing the lesson would be to call on the children to raise their hands in unison and recite the verse, "Who shall ascend?" letting the children respond with, "He that hath clean hands," etc.

Now, a little talk about hands. Are they ever guilty of doing that which they would not want mamma or teacher to see? Who sees? Listen to what he says. Open the Bible and read, "Cleanse your hands;" then print it. Who tells the hands what to do? Lead class to see that the *heart* is the source of action. Outline a heart around the sentence written, and print around it, "*Purify the Heart.*"

You have here enough to occupy the thoughts of your children most profitably. The hands are

always in God's sight. They are taught by the mind or "heart" what to do. If the heart is not pure it cannot tell the hands to do right things. Also, the heart is always in God's sight. It is not pure. It is stained all over with sin. What shall be done? "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin."

Some may desire to develop the lesson from an entirely different standpoint. Let me suggest the following simple method: Draw several straight lines of different lengths on the board, fitting a little story of "plans" to each one. "Fanny is going to do thus and so to-morrow; Charley has another plan, and Clara still another." Print on the lines a very large "IF;" then read from the Bible v. 15: "Ye ought to say, If the Lord will," etc.

Explain that his plans for these children may be very different. He sees sorrow and danger which would come from following their ways. He means to turn them aside, because he loves them.

Try to teach this thought in such a manner that the scholars may be filled with the desire to put this humble "IF" into all their little plans. Do not place the applications *above* their understandings."

If the rainy day interferes with their pleasures, lead them to feel that this is one of God's "if's," and he is always wise and kind.

If it seem wise to the teacher one of her stories may be about death. One child may have a long line of life reaching through years, just as little children often plan. "When I am a man," etc. Over all this comes God's "IF." The child's line of life is cut short. (Erase part of it.) God calls him. Mark with yellow crayon a line leading upward from his short one. If he is God's little child he has gone up to live with him for ever. The line is not cut off, after all; its direction is changed, because God saw that the best thing for his child was heaven.

Dear teachers, you see the possibilities of this lesson. I have only given you hints as to how it may be managed.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

THE EYE OF GOD

—IS—

UPON THE EVIL. *UPON THE GOOD.*

SUGGESTIONS.—Let the board be prepared as in diagram, previous to the opening of the school. To "the evil" the thought should bring alarm, for God is the Judge; to "the good" it is a cheering and comforting thought, for God keeps his own, and under his eye they are safe. Ps. 121. A very impressive lesson can be made from this.

The lesson is, "Living as in God's Sight." What does it mean? How few really think of it; most live as though there was no eye beholding *all* they do. Divide the following texts among the classes, or individuals, and have them read before the entire school, impressing each text's solemn lesson as read: Ps. 139: 7; 2 Chron. 16: 9; Prov. 5: 21; 15: 3; Rev. 1: 14; Job 34: 21, 22. Another thought grows out of this, viz., to impress especially the lesson of the golden text. It may be done as follows:

IN THE SIGHT OF GOD.

OUR PART.	GOD'S PART.
TO HUMBLE OURSELVES.	TO LIFT US UP.
Phil. 2: 8.	Phil. 2: 9.

The cross to be drawn after the lesson proper, showing how to humble ourselves. School read Luke 9: 23. This may suggest other and better thoughts, the superintendent pursuing his own method. "It is in vain to gather virtues without humility, for the Spirit of God delighteth to dwell in the hearts of the humble." The proud man misses many of God's best things.

ABOUT NEW BOOKS.

..THE LIFE OF MARTIN LUTHER. By Julius Köstlin, Professor at Halle. Translated from the German. Edited by John G. Morris, D.D., LL.D. Coincident with the four hundredth anniversary of Luther's birth this book comes from the press in its American edition. Of this great work the historian Froude spoke in the highest terms, saying, "At last we have a Life of Luther which deserves the name . . . For such a biography Europe has waited till the eve of the four hundredth anniversary of his birth." The editor says: "This book differs from all other popular biographies of Luther, in developing the inner life of the man, and in presenting briefly his ideas on all the great subjects on which he wrote." It is a full and complete life-picture of Luther in his greatness and power, and will be enjoyed by all thoughtful students who wish to study the great Reformer in the midst of his work. It is unfortunate that the English of the translation is in some places faulty, and that the proof-reading has not been more carefully done. Such a great work as this should not be marred either by bad English or typographical errors. Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society. Illustrated; pp. 496. Price, $3.50.

..Of the Presbyterian Board's new book, AMONG THE ALASKANS, by Julia McNair Wright, the *Earnest Worker* has this to say: "The recently acquired possessions of the United States in the extreme Northwest have attracted great interest in view of their commercial and mining possibilities, from their first transfer by the Russian government to our own. This book, however, while giving much information in regard to the resources of Alaska, is designed to give us the story of missionary effort there. The Presbyterian Church entered the field very soon after it was opened, in 1877, and now has a flourishing and most promising mission. The story of this strange land, almost unknown twenty years ago, its acquisition by the United States, and its mission, are admirably told, and the book is a most valuable addition to the Board's list." Illustrated. Price, $1.25.

..A new venture in the literary line is THE ENGLISH ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE, the first number of which appeared in October. It is published by Macmillan & Co., London. Its early promise is good. The pages are clean and bright, the cuts are attractive, the matter is interesting. In size it does not compete with our great magazines, but its price is less, $2.00 a year, 20 cents a single number. Macmillan & Co., N. Y.

..LITTLE GLORY'S MISSION, with "Found at Last," are charming little temperance stories intended to show that only by dependence on the help of God can the great evil of intemperance be successfully overcome. We commend the book for little people, who cannot too soon receive impressions on this subject. American Tract Society, Philadelphia.

..The aim of THE JOURNAL OF CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY is to bring all the light of science, philosophy, archæology and exploration to bear upon Christian evidences and Christian faith; "in short, directly to build the foundations and strengthen the defences of the kingdom of God." Its able and accomplished editor, Prof. John A. Paine, is aided by a large corps of the most eminent Christian scholars of this country. The papers published are all strong, and bear directly upon some of the questions that are so full of vital interest in our own times. It is an excellent quarterly. Address, Prof. J. A. Paine, 30 Bible House, N. Y. Price, $2.50 a year; 75 cents a number.

..VARA; or, The Child of Adoption. Vara was a missionary's daughter, We meet her first in her parents' home in one of the Pacific Islands, just when it has been decided to send her to this country to be adopted in a Christian family and brought up as a member of the household. The story runs on through varied scenes, until the parents return to be welcomed by their daughter. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. 16mo, illustrated, pp. 316.

..ALDERSYDE. A Border Story of Seventy Years Ago. By Annie S. Swan. A striking story of the devotion of a daughter and sister to the interests of her home and family. By her faithful and self-sacrificing exertions she redeems the home from debt and restores it to her family. The book is well written, and the reading of such a story cannot fail to inspire devotion and self-sacrifice in others. Robert Carter & Brothers. 12mo, illustrated, pp. 318. Price, $1.50.

..MISS PRUDENCE. By Mrs. Nathaniel Conklin (Jennie M. Drinkwater). Miss Prudence is the victim of misplaced confidence, the man whom she loved having proved most unworthy. He had defrauded others, and she with her high sense of honor devotes her life and fortune for the benefit of those who had suffered losses through his evil acts. The story is well told, and its lessons are inspiring. Robert Carter & Brothers. 12mo, illustrated, pp. 463. Price, $1.50.

..STEPHEN, M. D. By the author of "The Wide, Wide World." Stephen starts as a poor but worthy boy, with godly parents, and a good share of energy and courage combined with true principle. We have here the story of his struggles, perhaps unnecessarily drawn out at some points, yet, on the whole, graphically told. At length we find him rewarded as he gains a position of honor and influence. The author assures her readers that the story is entirely true in all its leading events. Robert Carter & Brothers. 12mo, illustrated, pp. 644. Price, $1.75.

..THE NEAR AND THE HEAVENLY HORIZONS. By Madame De Gasparin. Those who are familiar with the works of this writer know how much there is that is pleasant, tender, and suggestive in her sketches. The first part of this little volume consists of a number of little chapters concerning earthly things; the second part leads on to themes heavenly. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. Price, $1.50.

..JOCK HALLIDAY. A Grassmarket Hero; or, Sketches of Life and Character in an Old City Parish. By Robina F Hardy. The story gives another illustration of the fact that many of earth's heroes are to be found in the lowly walks of life. Robert Carter & Brothers. 16mo, illustrated, pp. 192. Price, $1.00.

..THE EMIGRANTS: A tale of the last century. From the German of Franz Hoffman. Translated and Revised by Mrs. H D. Conrad. This is a story of a German Protestant family, exiled from their country for conscience' sake, coming to this country to find religious freedom. The book is full of interest, and is also instructive. Philadelphia: American Sunday School Union. Illustrated, pp. 156. Price, 75 cents.

..THE GROUNDS OF THEISTIC AND CHRISTIAN BELIEF. By George P. Fisher, D.D., LL.D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History In Yale College. In this volume the evidences of both natural and revealed re-

THE WESTMINSTER TEACHER.

VOL. XII. FEBRUARY, 1884. NO. 2.

—The opening pages of this number are filled with articles bearing very closely upon the work of teachers, especially suggesting encouragements to those whose hearts sometimes grow faint in the apparent non-success of their faithful efforts.

—Is there a boy or young man in your class, with gifts fitting him to be a preacher of the gospel, who by a word from your lips might have his heart and thought turned toward the Christian ministry? Many good men are deploring the fewness of those who are now consecrating themselves to this holy office. Teachers may do much to increase the number.

—The fact that fuss is not work you may see illustrated almost anywhere. As you go along the street, you see two horses harnessed together before a car. One of them makes a great fuss, as if he had all the world behind him and was in eager haste to get it just where he wants it to be. He dances and prances, jumps up and down, and springs into the collar with all his might, and then falls back from it because all does not give way to him. The other makes no fuss at all. He stops and starts at the signal, wastes no strength in violence, but puts his whole weight into the collar just when it is needed. The one makes the fuss, the other does the work.

BRING THEM TO CHURCH.—One of the sins of parents that will be visited on the children to the third and fourth generations is the license given them to slight the services of the sanctuary. Unless our children are brought to the house of God, they will not be likely to resort to it as they advance in years, and, losing the advantages of early impressions from the gospel, it will not be strange if, later in life, they become inaccessible to its appeals.

PATIENCE.—"It takes a great deal of patience to keep on teaching year after year, and to find your class so unmoved," said Mr. S. to his superintendent. Yes, it does, and you should not be content to see them unmoved. Yet, you should consider that you are holding them back from evil, when you may not see that you have drawn them to Christ. The downward road for the young is an easy one. The step from the Sabbath-school to the street-school is a short and, too often, a fatal one. Hold on to your class; keep them back from the paths of sin; put the brake upon the wheels that so readily slide down hill; point them to the upward path, and look for a blessing upon your labors and your prayers.

A WORD TO THE SCHOLARS' MOTHERS.—We would not lay any further burden upon you than many of you bear already, and yet it is in our heart to make this personal appeal to you on behalf of the home-teaching of your children. It may be that you have entered into our oft-suggested plans for the home study of the Bible lessons, and are now helping your children each week. If so, you are on the way to great blessing both for yourself and for them. But if you have not taken up this work, may we not earnestly entreat you to begin at once? All that is necessary is, that you give a few minutes each day to the studying of the next Sabbath's lesson with the young people of your family. Begin on Monday, or better still, on Sabbath evening. Teach them the golden text, memory verses, hymn and Catechism. Read with them the home readings, and each day study one or two verses of the lesson. It is for their sake that we present this request so earnestly. Without home interest and help they will not be likely to prepare the lesson at all; but with your aid they will always be thoroughly prepared. You know well the importance of filling every young heart with Bible truth.

QUALITY OF FOOD.—Agriculturists tell us that the kind and quality of food given to fowls must necessarily exercise an influence upon the quality of their eggs and flesh. A gentleman who kept a large poultry yard found, occasionally, that the eggs of his hens had an unpleasant rancid taste, and on inquiry ascertained that this was always the case when the food consisted of hemp or flaxseed. And will not the quality of the conversation of the father and mother, taken in by eager young ears, tell upon the characters of children? Why do boys grow up money-lovers, and girls lovers of dress? Has the conversation of the parents nothing to do with it? And how is it that some young people show in their lives that they believe the spread of the gospel to be the main

thing? Perhaps the daily talk and walk of their parents have something to do with it. How is it in your home?

Hiding the Word.

AS workers in the Sabbath-school we study the word of God, but do we hide it in our hearts? "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee," says the psalmist. Ps. 119: 11. Do we thus hide it? We may have the "word" in our pockets, on our library tables, in our heads, without having it in the heart.

During the war, on the eve of battle, our soldiers would throw away their packs of playing cards and thrust their New Testaments into their breast pockets; but it availed little to have the written Bible in the pocket, whilst in the heart were profanity, dissoluteness and ungodliness. A pack of cards would serve as well to arrest a bullet as a Testament. The pocket is a good place for the Bible, but to have the Bible in the pocket is not enough. The Bible lies upon the table of many a man unopened. The table is a fitting place for the Bible, but the Bible unread on the table brings no man nearer to God; and so it is, that a man may give his life to the merely intellectual study of the word of God, studying it as he would Homer, Hesiod or Tacitus, without receiving its teachings into his soul. It is true of men at the present day that they actually do this, and it may be that Judas Iscariot read the Scriptures just as much as did Simon Peter or John. We have no reason to believe that Saul of Tarsus was more learned in the Scriptures than Caiaphas the high priest; but Caiaphas' knowledge of the Scriptures did not keep him from condemning to death the Lord of life and glory.

What we want is the hiding of God's word in the heart—not like the wedge of gold hidden by Achan under his tent, an inert, lifeless thing buried in the earth, but rather as the planting of a living seed, having within it a living germ, in the mellow earth. The heavens shower down their rains, the sun sends forth his warming beams, the winds fan it, and it grows and bears rich fruit. So if we have within our hearts God's word, the living germ of a holy life, pervading our being and supplying the motive of our emotions and actions, the dews of God's grace water it, the sun of righteousness shines upon it, the Spirit's influences nurture it. Thus our lives become beautiful with the rich graces of Christian living, goodness, holiness, usefulness.

As teachers in the Sabbath-school we are compelled to study the word of God. While studying it we should make it our aim, our constant earnest endeavor, that the very life of that word may be hidden within our souls, that we ourselves may be enriched by it, and so may be enabled to enrich others. The teacher whose soul is not informed by the vital truths of the gospel can impart little to the scholar; but he who feeds upon God's word, who meditates in it and lives by it, has that to bestow which learning in all the languages, living and dead, cannot confer. Let us then so hide the blessed truths of God's revealed word in our very heart of hearts that from us shall flow "rivers of living water."

Her Reward.

BY ERNEST GILMORE.

THE superintendent felt very anxious to find a teacher willing and able to manage six rough, ignorant boys, whom he had picked up here and there about the town. He announced his desire before the school, but found no response; each teacher seemed to have his hands already full, and no scholar in the advanced classes appeared to feel equal to the undertaking. At last he requested the minister to ask from the pulpit if there was any one in the congregation who would venture to lead some black sheep into the fold. If there should be one such, he would like that one to report after the dismissal of the congregation.

There was one in the church who listened to what the minister said, in whose mind a train of thought ran speedily. This person was a little woman dressed in mourning. Not much of her face was visible, because of the crape veil folded about it, but the glimpse one could get revealed a face sweet and earnest, but heavily marked with grief. And no wonder. She was not only a widow, but her only child—a bright and winsome son—had gone astray; at the present time, she did not even know his whereabouts.

The minister's eyes grew moist as Mrs. L—— touched his arm after service, and said firmly: "*I* will try to lead the black sheep if you think I'm capable, but, you know, of course, that I have a black sheep of my very own, wandering off somewhere." With a voice husky with deep feeling, the minister said: "Yes, yes, I know, and I hope and pray that his feet may soon turn toward the fold. As for you, God bless you, that you are willing to lead these others while your heart is heavy and bleeding." The following Sabbath, Mrs. L—— was introduced

to her class, surely a decidedly unprepossessing one, and rather formidable, too. In ages the boys ranged from twelve to sixteen. The twelve-year-old boy was both awkward and ignorant; he seemed too stupid to learn anything except mischief. Then there were three boys about fourteen, regular street Arabs, their eyes gleaming with an intelligence of an undesirable kind. The remaining two were not repulsive, although they were not encouraging scholars. They were twin brothers, bright but rude, and deplorably ignorant concerning the Saviour who had died for them. They paid very little attention to what Mrs. L—— said, and they were constantly whispering, while their eyes wandered off on a tour around the pretty room. Most teachers would have been discouraged with such a class—and justly so—even Mrs. L—— felt somewhat dismayed, but she reasoned wisely: "Faint heart never won a battle yet; it seems to be my duty to lift up these poor boys. If I shirk my duty, I ought not to expect that any one else could take it."

It did not take long for Mrs. L—— to find out that the stupid boy had been beaten upon the head by a drunken father, until it was no wonder he was stupid. Her heart went out to him there. She visited him in his wretched home, and comforted him, and after awhile had the satisfaction of seeing him reach out his hands to clasp the Saviour's. As for the Arabs—two of them did not come after the second Sabbath; they had gone off on a ship; so she never knew whether the little seed she had sown in their hearts had taken root. The remaining Arab reached the "green pastures" and the "still waters" before the close of a year, and after that he moved steadily upward, leading some of his associates with him.

At the end of two years you would not have recognized the twin boys. They were eighteen now; great, noble-looking fellows, with a purpose in life, and faithfully pursuing it. Through Mrs. L——'s influence, they had attended a night school, and had progressed rapidly.

* * * * * * *

Five years have gone. It is New Year's eve; the snow is beating drearily against the windows of Mrs. L——'s home. She feels strangely desolate to-night. For two years she has been an invalid, and it is four years since she has heard from her only child. Just a little after dusk, the minister who had asked God to bless Mrs. L——, entered her home, and saw the servant, doing her mistress' bidding, packing a basket for some poor neighbor.

"Don't send all the chickens off; you'll need some here," he warned, and then he entered the invalid's room, where she sat sick and sad. "I've a little story to tell," he said; "please promise not to interrupt. I will make it short, but it will be eloquent in fruitful suggestion: Some years ago a heart-broken Christian woman undertook to lead some wanderers home. Her task was no light one, but she did not shirk it. Sweetly, but firmly, she picked up the golden opportunities, and made a gleaming crown that will shine upon her forehead in the glorious hereafter. But," and a strangely tender quiver came into his voice, "she'll have some reward for her labor even here. Two of the lads—twins—young men now, found in a great wicked city, two years ago, a widow's only child. When they learned whose child he was they labored untiringly to lift him from the depths of degradation, where they had found him. It was wearying work, but they never slackened their love or their zeal. '*It is her boy*,' they said, 'he must be saved.' And a year ago he was saved from the gulf of intemperance. He *longed* then to return to his mother, but he would not until he felt sure that he could stand firm. Now his feet are upon the Rock."

Mrs. L—— put out her hands besecchingly. All the pain had faded from her face, and in its place there shone only joy unutterable.

"Where is my boy?" she asked.

"Coming."

The jingle of bells was heard at the door, then quick steps through the hall, and three young men entered—the rescuers and the rescued.

The happy mother felt that her reward had come.

From Two Stand-points.

BY KATE CALLA.

"OH, LAURA! Mr. Dale tells me you have taken a class in our mission-school. I am very glad. We need so many more teachers than are willing to come. I had great difficulty even in getting a substitute for the last five Sundays while I was away."

"Yes, I've taken a class, but it seems a very discouraging project to me."

"Discouraging! Why?"

"Because one must work so many years before there is any hope of seeing results."

"I am more in the dark than ever. We can't expect the children to become marvellous saints at once, but neither do we wait years for the fruits of our work."

"Oh, well! I suppose the little Arabs are rather better than they would be if they didn't come there; but I was thinking of their being

converted. It is unreasonable to expect it. Take my boys, for instance. Not one of them is over nine. They have never been taught anything good in all their lives, except what they learn in Sunday-school. They know that it is wrong to lie and steal and swear, but it is certainly hopeless to look for any fixed purpose in them, any persistent effort to do right, or any clear idea of Christ's atonement. It wouldn't be natural. It might be easy enough to your brother or mine, brought up amid totally different circumstances. With these mission-school scholars it seems to me simply impossible."

"'With God all things are possible.' I don't agree with you that it is *natural* for any one to be a Christian. It seems so sometimes, because, among our friends, the change, to our eyes, is often so gradual that we never really contrast the end and the beginning. If we did, it would sometimes seem just as strange as with these neglected scholars of ours. The very word 'conversion' means a complete turning around, that can be effected only by God's power, and I suppose it will always be 'marvellous in our eyes.' It ought not to be. It wouldn't be if we had more faith. My boys are no older than yours, and yet I am sure one of them is a Christian. He is very ignorant, but he knows that he is a sinner, that Jesus died to save him, that he will help him to be good, and will forgive him when he fails, if he asks it. What more is necessary? He is very quick-tempered, and I have often seen his little fist clench and his eyes flash at some slight provocation; but since he began to love Jesus, a word or glance of reminder will cause the fingers to relax, the fire to die out, and in a moment he is good again. He shows the change in many such ways. Can you call the work discouraging now?"

"No, indeed! My faith is strengthened, and I will work with double energy."

Hints to Bible-Class Teachers.

BY JULIA E. PECK.

REMEMBER that you can teach only what God has taught you.

Above all things, do not worry about your great responsibility and carry a load of anxiety. Christ will bear this burden for you, as he bears all your other burdens.

Careful preparation does not mean gathering in a certain amount of historical facts and illustrations for the purpose of pouring them out upon the class. Give the historical facts in advance, and by your carefully prepared questions draw from them the truths of the lesson.

Teach these truths in all simplicity; teach from the heart, Christ and him crucified. Carry the message, and if a soul is saved, or a soul helped or strengthened or guided, remember that the result of the work, as well as the responsibility of the work, is not yours.

Go to the work believing that you are complete in him who is the head of all principality and power, and that you can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth you.

After Many Days.

BY THE REV. J. A. DAVIS.

IN a country Sabbath-school, nameless here, because this story is true, taught an humble teacher. Hers was a class of wild, frolicsome, but not really bad boys; careless and full of fun, they seemed to lose each lesson of their teacher before the session closed.

She was not a gifted woman; indeed, was a teacher of very ordinary ability, and it is more than probable that the superintendent would gladly have dispensed with her services could another teacher have been persuaded to take her class. Conscious of her lack of ability, yet compelled by a sense of duty, the humble teacher came Sabbath after Sabbath to her class, and to what she often regarded as a hopeless task.

Years passed by; the boys grew to manhood, and one by one they left the school, and some left their native place. While members of the school they were not remarkable for regularity in attendance, though they were usually present; and to the last they remained anything but remarkable for attention. As soon as they regarded themselves men, they left the school, because it seemed to them unmanly to be in a Sabbath-school class, especially to be taught by a woman. Of course it was supposed then that the Sabbath-school had done all it could do for them, and had failed. So thought their teacher at least.

But those boys have not "turned out bad." They have proved to be good, fair, honorable men; a hidden influence seems to restrain them from evil and guide and prompt them to right. Perhaps that influence has little relation to the efforts of their Sabbath-school teacher, yet they surely owe it to her teachings, by the blessing of God, that they are as fair and upright men as they are. Her influence on them has not ceased.

Some time ago one of these men, when away from Christian association and influence, felt a deep and growing anxiety to become a Christian. Unable to go to professing Christians for

advice, without church opportunities or even the aid of religious books or papers, the sorrowing inquirer was left alone in that awful solitude of a lost soul seeking an unseen Saviour. Now came to his mind the teachings of his Sabbath-school teacher. Truths that seemed long ago forgotten; texts of Scripture that he had learned only to forget; explanations that for years had never come to his mind, came creeping back one by one. Slowly, through the instructions of years gone by, his soul groped its way to the light and to the Saviour. When he returned to Christian society he came back a changed man, an humble but earnest child of God. Through the influence of the Holy Spirit that humble Sabbath-school teacher had led him to Christ. One thus led to the Saviour, who can tell what that teacher may yet do for the rest of her class?

Truth, when uttered, does not die. Truth, as he who is the Truth, is immortal. From the very grave into which, with sad hearts, we lay it, it may suddenly rise to a glorious resurrection.

My Old Letter-Box.

A Word to Teachers from a Sabbath-school Scholar.

SITTING in my room alone to-day, looking over some old letters, I came across one time-stained, tear-stained, pencilled letter, written thirty years ago by my now sainted Sabbath-school teacher. It has been carefully treasured, and grows ever more precious as a memento of her who wrote and handed it in person to me—my teacher, who sixteen years ago entered in "through the gates into the city." Her watchful care over me is expressed by an extract from this old letter:

"It would be needless for me to attempt to express the deep interest I feel in you. I parted with you yesterday, as usual, for the week, but I cannot let another day pass without once more entreating you to pause and think of your situation.

"You are not numbered with the people of God, and should you be called suddenly away you would entertain the sad reflection that you had never taken a decided stand on the Lord's side.

"Yesterday, at the communion, you were in another part of the church, separated from your mother, your dear companions, and pastor. Oh! why was this? I cannot look upon one whom I love so tenderly as I do you, and cherish the thought that there may be a final separation—a time when I can plead with you no longer."

What a teacher! She has gone to reap a rich reward, for "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." The ties which bound us death can never sunder, for "The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance."

She had the pleasure of seeing the members of her class pledge their affection by remembering their "Creator in the days of their youth," and no influence bore upon me more directly than these pencilled lines, which I felt were written alone to me in a spirit of love and tenderness.

Let this encourage teachers to write to their scholars, trusting it may have the same lasting influence, and may prove a bond, an eternal union, between teacher and scholar, even as this one over which my grateful tears have been shed.

Good Fruits of Toil.

OUR teachers may note with profit the following facts, given by the *Christian Union:* "More than a quarter of a century ago two boys were in a Sunday-school class in this city; they became greatly attached to their teacher, whose simplicity, fidelity and earnestness exerted a valuable and efficient influence upon both of them. In the course of events the teacher moved his residence and the boys lost sight of him. Years passed by; the boys grew to manhood; became able business men, and are now members of one of the leading banking houses in this city, possessors of large wealth, and both filling important social and mercantile positions with credit and ability. The teacher, on the other hand, met with continued reverses and misfortunes; his property was swept away from him until nothing remained except the house in which he lived, and this was so heavily mortgaged that it was only nominally his. Not many months ago the mortgage became due, and the old man, utterly unable to furnish the amount, was in despair. When the foreclosure proceedings had almost reached a sale, two gentlemen called upon the owner of the mortgaged premises, asked to see the house, were shown through it, made a thorough examination, and took careful note of what repairs were necessary to put it in good condition. They went away without any revelation of their purpose, satisfied the mortgage, ordered the house put in perfect repair, and gave the old man a lease for life without rent for the premises. The two gentlemen had accidentally heard of their old teacher's misfortune, and had come to his rescue in this way as a partial return for services rendered them, which they feel can never be adequately repaid. Since these events occurred the teacher has been in constant receipt of all manner of pleasant gifts from his former pupils.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FIRST QUARTER.

1. Jan. 6.—The Conference at Jerusalem. Acts 15: 1–11.
2. Jan. 13.—Hearing and Doing. James 1: 16–27.
3. Jan. 20.—The Power of the Tongue. James 3: 1–18.
4. Jan. 27.—Living as in God's Sight. James 4: 7–17.
5. Feb. 3.—**Paul's Second Missionary Journey.** Acts 15: 35–41 and 16: 1–10.
6. Feb. 10.—**The Conversion of Lydia.** Acts 16: 11–24.
7. Feb. 17.—**The Conversion of the Jailer.** Acts 16: 25–40.
8. Feb. 24.—**Thessalonians and Bereans.** Acts 17: 1–14.
9. March 2.—Paul at Athens. Acts 17: 22–34.
10. March 9.—Paul at Corinth. Acts 18: 1–17.
11. March 16.—The Coming of the Lord. 1 Thess. 4: 13–18 and 5: 1–8.
12. March 23.—Christian Diligence. 2 Thess. 3: 1–18.
13. March 30.—Review.

Lesson V. PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY. Feb. 3d, 1884.

Acts 15: 35–16: 10. Memorize vs. 9, 10.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Come over into Macedonia, and help us."—Acts 16: 9.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Matt. 10: 1–20 .... *The Apostles Sent to the Jews.*
T. Acts 8: 26–40 ..... *Philip Sent to the Ethiopian.*
W. Acts 10: 9–27 ..... *Peter Sent to Cornelius.*
Th. Acts 15: 35–16: 10. *Paul Sent to Macedonia.*
F. 2 Tim. 1 1–7; 2: 14–17. *Timothy in Childhood.*
S. 1 Cor. 9: 19–27.... *Unto the Jews as a Jew.*
S. Gal. 6: 1–18..... *Neither Circumcision nor Uncircumcision.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Separation from Barnabas. 2. The Choosing of Timothy. 3. The Call to Macedonia.

Time.—A. D. 51.

Place.—From Antioch to Troas.

Catechism.—Q. 57. *Which is the fourth commandment?* A. The fourth commandment is, *Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.*

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

INTRODUCTORY.—We return again to the Acts, taking up the history where we left it at the close of the first lesson of last month. After the conference at Jerusalem to settle the trouble about the Gentiles, Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch and preached as before. But they had not forgotten the little churches they had started on their missionary journey, and they had a strong desire to visit them again to see how they were getting on. So they resolved to make a second journey, going over the same course. A serious trouble arose, however, about Mark, who had left them during the former journey, just when they needed him most. Mark was probably ashamed of his conduct, and wanted a chance to go again to redeem his character. Barnabas wanted to take him, for he was the young man's relative, but Paul would not consent. These two good men quarreled about the matter, and the result was that they separated, Barnabas taking Mark, and Paul taking Silas. Only Paul's journey is described.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

35 Paul also and Bar'na-bas continued in An'ti-och, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also. [Acts 13: 1.]

36 And some days after, Paul said unto Bar'na-bas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, *and see* how they do. [Acts 13: 4, 13, 14, 51; 14: 1, 6, 24, 25.]

37 And Bar'na-bas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark. [Acts 12: 12, 25.]

38 But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pam-phyl'ia, and went not with them to the work. [Acts 13: 13.]

39 And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Bar'na-bas took Mark, and sailed unto Cy'prus;

40 And Paul chose Si'las, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God. [Acts 14: 26.]

41 And he went through Syr'ia and Ci-li'cia, confirming the churches.

Ch. 16: 1. Then came he to Der'be and Lys'tra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Tim-o'the-us, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jew'ess, and believed; but his father *was* a Greek: [Acts 14: 6; 19: 22; 2 Tim. 1: 5.]

2 Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lys'tra and I-co'ni-um. [Acts 6: 3.]

3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek. [1 Cor. 9: 20; Gal. 2: 3; 5: 2.]

4 And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Je-ru'sa-lem. [Acts 15: 28, 29.]

5 And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily. [Acts 15: 41.]

6 Now when they had gone throughout Phryg'i-a and the region of Gal-a'ti-a, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in A'sia,

7 After they were come to My'sia, they assayed to go into Bi-thyn'ia: but the Spirit suffered them not.

8 And they passing by My'sia came down to Tro'as. [2 Cor. 2: 12; 2 Tim. 4: 13.]

9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Mac-e-do'ni-a, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Mac-e-do'ni-a, and help us. [Acts 10: 30.]

10 And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavored to go into Mac-e-do'ni-a, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them. [2 Cor. 2: 13.]

REVISED VERSION.

35 But Paul and Barnabas tarried in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.
36 And after some days Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us return now and visit the brethren in every city wherein we proclaimed the word of the Lord, *and see* how they
37 fare. And Barnabas was minded to take with them John also, who was called Mark.
38 But Paul thought not good to take with them him who withdrew from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work.
39 And there arose a sharp contention, so that they parted asunder one from the other, and Barnabas took Mark with him, and sailed
40 away unto Cyprus; but Paul chose Silas, and went forth, being commended by the
41 brethren to the grace of the Lord. And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.
1 And he came also to Derbe and to Lystra: and behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewess which
2 believed; but his father was a Greek. The same was well reported of by the brethren
3 that were at Lystra and Iconium. Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and he took and circumcised him because of the Jews that were in those parts: for they all
4 knew that his father was a Greek. And as they went on their way through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, which had been ordained of the apostles and
5 elders that were at Jerusalem. So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.
6 And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden of the Holy Ghost to speak the word in
7 Asia; and when they were come over against Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia; and
8 the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not; and passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas.
9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There was a man of Macedonia standing, beseeching him, and saying, Come over into
10 Macedonia, and help us. And when he had seen the vision, straightway we sought to go forth into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

35 *Paul and Barnabas continued in Antioch.* After their return from Jerusalem. v. 30. It was during this time that the difference between Paul and Peter occurred, an account of which we have in Gal. 2: 11–16. It seems that Peter visited Antioch, and while there refused to eat with Gentile Christians, thus practically contradicting his own declarations in the Jerusalem conference. Acts 15: 7–11. For this inconsistency Paul openly rebuked him. Whether any alienation occurred as the result of this rebuke we do not know; but in 2 Peter 3: 15 we find evidence that if Peter ever had any unkind feeling toward Paul it was entirely forgotten.

36 *Some days after.* The time spent at Antioch was evidently brief. Paul's proposal was to revisit the churches which they had established in their first journey, to see how the believers there were faring and to confirm and strengthen them.

37, 38 *Barnabas determined to take Mark.* Mark had accompanied them on their former journey until perils and hardships thickened, when he deserted them and returned home. Barnabas desired now to take him again. It is probable that Mark himself was ashamed of his former faint-heartedness, and had sought an opportunity to redeem his character. Barnabas and Mark were relatives (Col. 4: 10), and this may have influenced Barnabas. *But Paul thought not good to take him.* In Acts 13: 13 we have the account of Mark's withdrawal. No reason is there given for his returning home, but Paul's strong objection to taking him again implies that there was no sufficient cause, such

as illness or feeble health. It seems clear that Mark lacked the courage and energy to brave the hardships and perils of the journey and the work. He turned back, too, at the time when he was most needed, and when his sudden withdrawal must have caused much embarrassment and trouble. Barnabas, however, was willing to overlook his faint-heartedness and try him again, but Paul would not consent to this.

39 *The contention was so sharp.* It is painful to read this statement, yet it shows that even the best men are only human and imperfect, and illustrates also the unsparing faithfulness of holy Scripture. The word "contention" implies bitterness on both sides in the controversy. It may not be possible to decide with our limited knowledge of the facts which party was the more blameworthy. It certainly seems to me, however, that Paul was too severe and unrelenting, and that Barnabas came the more nearly to the spirit of Christ in his desire to give to Mark another chance. *Barnabas took Mark.* This is the last mention of Barnabas in the Acts. As for Mark, it is pleasant to know that he lived to burn out the shame of his early cowardice, and also to regain the confidence and affection of Paul. See Col. 4: 11; 2 Tim. 4: 11. If tradition may be accepted, he became the secretary of Peter, and subsequently the pastor of the church at Alexandria, where he endured martyrdom. The journey of Barnabas is not traced in this history.

40, 41 *Paul chose Silas.* [Mentioned also as Silvanus in several epistles. 2 Cor. 1: 19; 1 Thess. 1: 1; 1 Peter 4: 12.] The fact that Silas was selected by the conference at Jerusalem (v. 22) as one of the bearers of the letter to the churches, shows that he stood high in the opinion of the apostles and elders. *Being recommended.* From this fact it may fairly be inferred that the sympathy of the church at Antioch was with Paul, as there is no mention of any such commendation of Barnabas. *Syria and Cilicia.* See v. 23. The churches in Syria may have been established by the missionary zeal of the believers in Antioch, and it is probable that the churches in Cilicia grew out of Paul's earlier ministry in Tarsus. Chap. 9: 30.

Chap. 16: 1, 2 *Derbe and Lystra.* See chap. 14: 20, 21. Here the apostle revisits the churches he had established in his former journey. *A certain disciple . . . Timotheus.* He must have been converted during Paul's first visit to Lystra. The apostle speaks of him as converted through him. 1 Tim. 1: 2. From 2 Tim. 1: 4; 3: 15 we learn something of his home training. *Well reported of.* Evidently he had been active in the church at Lystra, since Paul's former visit, and had won the confidence of his fellow-Christians. He became one of Paul's most earnest helpers and most faithful companions. See 1 Cor. 16: 10; Phil. 2: 18, 19; 1 Tim. 1: 3; 2 Tim. 4: 9.

3 *Him would Paul have to go forth with him.* In place of Mark, Silas filling the place of Barnabas. *Circumcised him, because of the Jews.* Knowing that in preaching in the synagogues and among Jews the fact of his having with him an uncircumcised Jew (Timothy was a Jew by his mother's side) would excite prejudice and hinder his work. His act was not therefore inconsistent with the decision of the conference, but illustrates his own rule, as enunciated in 1 Cor. 9: 20. We know that he refused on another occasion to circumcise Titus (Gal. 2: 3), and that he regarded circumcision as in itself of no value. Gal. 5: 6.

4, 5 *They delivered them the decrees.* Of the conference. 15: 23–29. Written copies were probably left with the several churches. *So were the churches established in the faith.* This decree settled the vexed question that had threatened their peace.

6 *Phrygia.* A territory in Asia Minor, the chief cities of which were Colosse, Laodicea and Hierapolis. *Galatia.* A large district in the midland of Asia Minor, east of Phrygia, inhabited by descendants of the Gauls. It was

during this visit that the Galatian churches were established. Paul was sick in Galatia. Gal. 4: 3–14. *Forbidden of the Holy Ghost.* Evidently he desired to preach in this region, but in some way, either by a special providence or by direct revelation, he was forbidden. *Asia* here is not Asia Minor, but a Roman province bordering the Ægean Sea. The reason he was not allowed to preach there was because God wanted him to press on to Europe.

7, 8 Again the Spirit interfered with his desire to linger or turn aside, that he might keep

straight on toward Europe. *Troas.* The ancient Troy, rendered famous by Homer's Iliad.

9 *A vision appeared.* In addition to the two divine interferences already mentioned, this special vision was necessary to draw Paul's eye to Europe. Other doors had been shut to him, and now this new door was opened. *A man of Macedonia.* Something perhaps in his attire or appearance, or the words of his call, may have indicated his nationality. It will be understood, however, that this was a vision, not a real appearance. *Come over . . . and help us.* This was the cry of heathendom for the gospel. It will be remembered that the gospel had not yet been carried to Europe, and that this was a call to pass to a new continent. As Dr. Schaff says: "On this momentous vision hung the Christianization of Europe and all the blessings of modern civilization."

10 *We endeavored to go.* In this verse the writer first uses "we," and the supposition is, that Luke joined the apostolic party at Troas. Possibly, since Luke was a physician, Paul's ill health, referred to above, may have been the cause of Luke's coming to accompany him for some time. *Assuredly gathering.* They were now fully satisfied that the Lord wished them to go over to Macedonia.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

I. The Separation from Barnabas. vs. 35–41.

1. **The occasion** of the separation. *Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us return now and visit the brethren . . . and see how they fare.* It was in a very Christlike plan that this sad difference occurred. There were those Christian converts scattered in little circles over a wide country, in the midst of heathen influences, and they needed looking after. Perhaps some of them were in danger of going back. At least they required encouragement. It is not enough to get people *started* in the Christian life. The old habits still have power over them. The world's influence is still felt. They have not yet grown strong enough to stand alone. Paul's solicitude is very suggestive to teachers. We ought to carry our scholars in our hearts, and think about them during the week when they are exposed to dangers. We ought to be deeply interested in their spiritual welfare, and should visit them often to see how they do, and to encourage and strengthen them. Paul's thoughtfulness was very commendable, and it is sad that it was in such a worthy work these two noble men quarreled. But it only proves that nothing is, in this world, too sacred to be marred by human sin. It was at the last supper, right in the presence of the sorrowful Jesus, and in the very shadow of his cross, that the disciples disputed about which of them ought to wash the others' feet. Many times since have unseemly strifes arisen on most holy occasions, and in places where it would seem that a note of discord never should have been heard.

2. **The cause** of the separation. *Barnabas was minded to take . . . Mark. But Paul thought not good to take . . . him.* Poor Mark was the cause of all this sad trouble, or, rather, one single thing that Mark had done a good while before was the cause. We see here how far our acts may throw their influence, and what harm we may do by our unfaithfulness. A workman did his work carelessly in the foundry and there was a flaw in the great iron beam. He had forgotten it, but years afterward a bridge fell one night with a train upon it, and hundreds of lives were lost. It was that flaw that did it. The bricklayer did careless work in running up the flue. He never thought about it again, but when the great building had been burnt, involving vast loss and burying many persons in its embers, it was learned that that "defect" in the flue was the cause. Life is full of such results of unfaithfulness. One careless word spoken, one small mistake, one little sin, may produce tremendous consequences of harm. . . . There is room for difference of opinion as to which of these men, Paul or Barnabas, was right in his treatment of Mark. Barnabas wanted to overlook his unfaithfulness and give him a chance to redeem his character. Paul considered that the young man had forfeited all right to confidence, and was not worthy to be entrusted again with the interests and responsibilities of so important a position. We must mark here, this, at least, that it is very hard to get back one's character when it has been lost. A single act of but a moment may lose to us irretrievably the confidence of good men, and may mar our whole future usefulness.

3. **The separation itself.** *There arose a sharp contention, so that they parted asunder.* We are disposed to think of such men as Paul and Barnabas as far beyond us in their holy living, so far that we can never reach the high plane on which they moved. Here we see that they were very much like modern saints. At least they were not perfect. They not only differed in opinion, but their difference became a bitter quarrel, in which neither would yield, and which ended in the separation for life of

two men who up to this time had been devoted friends. We learn that even the best men are still but men, with many faults and sins, that no human life is perfect, that "It is only Christ's copy that is without a blot." It must be noticed, too, that the Bible never covers up good people's faults. Abraham was "the friend of God," yet the blemishes in his life are not hidden. David was "the man after God's own heart," yet the record of his sins is not suppressed in the narrative. Peter was one of Christ's bosom friends, but no effort is made to conceal his great sin and his many defects. This is different from most human biographies. It shows us that God sees us as we are. Then it teaches us that though sinful and faulty we may yet be God's favored friends. It reminds us also that we are saved, not by our own perfect lives, but by God's mercy and grace.

4. **The results** of the separation. *Barnabas took Mark . . . Paul chose Silas, and went forth.* We cannot tell what would have become of Mark if Barnabas had yielded to Paul and cast him off. As it was, we know that Mark lived to wipe out the stain of his youthful unfaithfulness, and to become a most useful man. He even lived to win from Paul a hearty, though perhaps tardy, commendation. The lesson is, that we should never despair of a disciple, though he make great mistakes at first. David sinned, yet became a glorious man. Peter fell, but was lifted up by his Lord, and became a mighty apostle. Mark turned coward and ran away from hard and dangerous duty, but lived to be a brave and noble helper, and to write one of the gospels. . . . Let us not forget the part of Barnabas in saving Mark. But for his devoted friendship the young man might never have risen from the consequences of his early failure. We cannot do nobler work in this world than in helping up again those who have fallen. There are times in most lives when nothing but loving sympathy and patient, loyal friendship will save them. . . . One other result of this separation must not be overlooked. God brought good out of evil. · There were two missionary journeys undertaken instead of one. So God overrules men's quarrels. Unseemly and deplorable as church divisions are, ofttimes the result is two great centres of blessing instead of one.

II. The Choosing of Timothy. Chap. 16: 1–5.

1. **His home training.** *A certain disciple . . . Timothy, the son of a Jewess which believed.* From Paul's letters to this young man afterward we learn how he had been brought up. Both his mother and his grandmother were pious and godly women, with unfeigned faith. Thus he had their excellent example exerting its hallowing influence upon his life from his tender infancy. But he had more than good example. We learn also that from a child he was faithfully instructed in the holy Scriptures. Thus the seeds were sown in his heart in youth which produced afterwards such a harvest of blessing. The influence of a good home and holy teachings is incalculable.

2. **His good name.** *The same was well reported of.* It is a great thing when a young man lives so as to have a good reputation in his own neighborhood, among those who see his every-day life. This young man had been converted some three or four years before, and had won a good report in the church. He must have been not only a consistent, but an active Christian.

3. **Chosen for higher work.** *Him would Paul have to go forth with him.* Faithfulness in humble service and in common walks prepares for service in wider fields. Young men sometimes think that they are not noticed enough by older workers; but if they are only faithful, and do not think about being noticed, they will in due time be discovered. . . . Paul did a great thing for the Church when he found Timothy and took him under his care. Older Christians should always watch for promising young Christians and encourage and help them.

III. The Call to Macedonia. vs. 6–10.

1. **Other doors shut.** *Forbidden of the Holy Ghost to speak the word in Asia. . . . They assayed to go into Bithynia; and the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not.* We are not to do whatever work we may find for ourselves. There are many things which we might do that God does not want us to do. Opportunities are not always doors of duty. There are needy places to which *we* are not to go; some other one must go to these while we press on to farther fields. From this it appears that we must look always to the Holy Spirit for guidance, and must ask him at each step, "Where shall I go next? What shall I do now?"

2. **A new door opened.** *A man of Macedonia standing, beseeching . . . Come over . . . and help us.* The gospel had never yet crossed over into Europe, and now God wanted Paul to carry it there. That was why he had hindered him from entering the other fields. Thus to all of us one door is shut and another opened. No vision may come to us to guide us to our work, but there will always be some kind of guidance if we are ready to go wherever God wants us to go.

3. **The call obeyed.** *Straightway we sought*

to go forth into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us. We should always promptly and cheerfully go wherever God calls us. We never can know what will come out of our doing just what he wants us to do, though it be not what we would choose. Who can ever tell the results of Paul's crossing over into Europe? He took Christianity, and it became a mighty power for blessing to all the Western world. Are there no calls for us? There are yet whole nations without the gospel. Does there break on no ear in any class to-day the cry, "Come and help us"? There are certainly human needs somewhere that appeal to us. What shall our answer be?

LESSON POINTS.

1. We should not forget the souls we have led to Christ. v. 35.

2. One unfaithful act may cause great loss and trouble afterward. vs. 37, 38.

3. It is hard to get back a good name when once lost. v. 38.

4. It is hard to be restored to the confidence even of good men after forfeiting our place.

5. Even good men have their faults and do very wrong things. v. 39.

6. We must not judge people by single acts; the best may err at times. v. 39.

7. We should never despair of a Christian; after a bad failure see what Mark became.

8. It is a great thing for some one to stand by one who has failed and help him to rise again.

9. God brings good even out of human strifes and quarrels. vs. 40, 41.

10. The influence of home training is well nigh omnipotent. v. 1, with 2 Tim. 1: 5; 3: 15.

11. It is great praise to be well spoken of in one's own neighborhood. v. 2.

12. God shuts doors and opens doors for his servants. vs. 6, 7, 9.

13. The cries of the heathen come to the ears of all Christians to-day.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

BY JAMES A. WORDEN, D.D.

INTRODUCTION.

1. Of course you will attend to the details of caring for the physical comfort of the scholars by seeing to the ventilation, the heating, the seating, etc. Always arrange your scholars at the very beginning of the lesson that you can all the time see each one, and that they shall look directly at you. See to it that, as far as possible, no persons or objects outside the class shall distract their attention.

2. Also, of course you will, before the lesson, attend to the details of collections, reports, etc.

3. Hear, in review, the Catechism question of last Sabbath and the advance question for to-day.

4. Have the map of Paul's journey ready for use at the right time.

5. Ask one of the scholars to trace on the map very briefly the route of the first journey.

QUESTIONS AND APPLICATIONS.

I. *The Separation from Barnabas.* In what city does the opening of this lesson find Paul and Barnabas? Narrate the history of the intimate companionship of Paul and Barnabas. Who first proposed the second missionary journey? Precisely what did he propose? For what reasons would Paul want to visit his converts? Why is it not enough to bring souls to Christ and into his Church? What else must be done? What kind of a man was Barnabas? Acts 11: 24. Whom did Barnabas desire to take with them on the second journey? What do you know of Mark? Acts 12: 12, 25; 13: 5; 15: 37, 39; Col. 4: 10. Why did Paul object to Mark? What arose from this difference of opinion and desire? What is the inspired rule afterward laid down through Paul for Christians in relation to contentions? Why do you think both Paul and Barnabas broke this rule? What are some of the evil consequences of even temporary quarrels and alienations among Christians? In what way did God overrule this contention for good? To what place did Barnabas and Mark sail? How would God overrule this contention to make a more faithful worker out of Mark? Who became Paul's traveling companion? Where else is he mentioned in Scripture? Acts 15: 22, 27, 32, 34; 16: 19, 25, 29; 17: 4, 10, 14, 15; 18: 5. He is probably same as Sylvanus. 2 Cor. 1: 19; 1 Thess. 1: 1; 2 Thess. 1: 1; 1 Peter 5: 12.

II. *Choice of Timothy.* Name Timothy's mother and grandmother. 2 Tim. 1: 5. What was his father? How early had he been taught the Scriptures? 2 Tim. 3: 15. By whom was Timothy led to Jesus? 1 Tim. 1: 2; 1 Cor. 4: 17. How was Timothy regarded by Christians in Lystra and Iconium? Why is a good reputation inside and outside the church necessary to a minister? 1 Tim. 3: 7. What does Timothy's history prove as to a mother's influence? What had the conference at Jerusalem decided as to Gentiles being circumcised? Why, then, did Paul circumcise Timothy? What did Timothy's prompt departure with Paul show? How can we now prove our readiness to work for Christ?

What decrees are referred to in v. 4? What were the results of their labors?

III. *The Guidance of the Spirit.* What regions did Paul, Silas and Timothy go through? How do you know that churches were formed in Galatia? Gal. 1: 2. That they loved Paul intensely? Gal. 4: 14, 15.

Use the map freely here. Show the locations of places named. Bring out forcibly the supernatural guidance of the Spirit which brought Paul and his companions to Troas. Show how all Paul's own plans were thwarted? Then ask, How does God often thwart our plans of working? A boy or girl, or a man or woman, thinks this or that work for Christ would be best. But God sends failure. Why? What promise have we? Ps. 32: 8. What must we be in order that God may guide us? Ps. 25: 9. To what place does the Spirit at length bring Paul? What do you know of Troas? After bringing out the vision at Troas, and the pertinent verse, 2 Cor. 2: 12, make out of the golden text of this lesson a strong appeal for foreign missions. Show the class that the whole heathen world is calling to *them*, "*Come over and help us.*" What can you do to help them?

Questions on Lesson for February 10th to be assigned:

1. Describe Macedonia, Neapolis and Philippi.
2. What was a colony, and what were the rights of Roman citizens?
3. What were the important facts in Lydia's conversion and baptism?
4. What was a spirit of divination?
5. Why would not Jesus and his apostles allow evil spirits to testify to Christ?
6. Describe the arrest and imprisonment of Paul and Silas at Philippi.
7. For what reasons could we call this lesson (Acts 16: 11–24) PAUL'S FIRST LABORS IN EUROPE?

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

BY MRS. G. R. ALDEN—"PANSY."

The Lesson Introduced.—"What do you think I have wrapped in this package?" (Encourage discussion as to its probable value, etc., leading the thought of the child by your questioning toward the right answer, then presently show that the package contains a loaf of bread.)

"Here is another package, looking much like the first. What do you think is here?" (Let the package, in shape and size, closely resemble the other.) Some of the class will think that it also is bread. Accept this as a correct answer. Then show that it is a Bible. One name for it is, "Bread of Life." As bread keeps the *body* from starving, so the Bible if read and obeyed will keep the *soul* from starving. Neither bread nor Bible will be of use if neglected.

"Here is an outline of a country named Macedonia. To this country the missionary Paul was asked to go and help the people. Who can tell the story of how he was asked? What do you think the people wanted?" (Develop the thought that they wanted the Bread of Life, and that Paul's special work was to carry this Bread.)

If your class is largely composed of scholars who have been with you for some time, and who are old enough to follow you, the lesson might be first introduced by an outline map containing the stations which Paul visited; but if they are very little children, I should teach about one country only, and that Macedonia.

Print the date of the cry for help—A. D. 53. Very little children should be taught the meaning of "A. D."

Practical Application.—People crying for help to-day, A. D. 1884.

Who are they? What do they want? These two questions open a wide field. Encourage scholars to tell who are calling. Help them to understand that a ragged, or hungry, or tearful, or sorrowful child calls on them for whatever help they can give. Sometimes they need kind words, sometimes bread, sometimes to be told about Jesus. Lead class to understand that, according to God's rule, not only the people whom we see, but those of whom we hear, are calling to us for help. All the children in heathen lands praying to idols, are really stretching out their hands to us.

"There are so many to help! What can a little child do?" A simple object illustration will help you to answer this question which more or less troubles all thoughtful children. Take a handful of wheat kernels into class. What a tiny thing one kernel of wheat is. Suppose it should say: "I am too little to do any good, I am not going to try to help?" Suppose each kernel should say that, what would become of all the bread?

Many people who need help are too far away to reach with bread or Bibles. What can we do? Take a silver dollar, wrap it closely. Tell the scholars that you hold in your hand something that will do instead of bread or Bibles, because it can be turned into both. Some of the quicker minds will think of "money." Then show it. But they may not have a dollar in the world. Show a little heap of pennies,

one hundred of them. These make a dollar. Has not every child as much as one penny?

Final Thought.—If Paul had not been acquainted with Jesus, would he have cared to help others to know him? How many of your scholars are really acquainted with him?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

BY J. HOWARD SEAL.

SUGGESTIONS.—The door to Gentile Europe opened. Europe stretching out her hand to God. The heathen world's need, "Help" to find peace in Christ. God's command, "Go ye into all the world." Man's deepest need, spiritual help.

GO / DO WHERE / HAT GOD DIRECTS.

God opens the way for his faithful servants, and goes before them to prepare the way for their faithful service.

The following may be used if preferred:

COME . . . . HEAR / ENCOURAGE / LABOR AMONGST / PREACH TO US

Cover the word "Come" with a piece of paper, to be removed after the acrostic has been worked out and illustrated. The call and the purpose of it—"Come," "Help us." The same call comes to the Church from heathen lands to-day. Do we respond as readily as the apostle did? Do we not fail to enter open doors of opportunity because of the self-denial which it costs? If we cannot *go*, can we not *give* of our substance to support those who can and are willing to go? Are we doing *anything* to help the cause of Christ? Is it *all* we can do?

There are calls for help near home as well as far away. Wherever there is a soul unsaved there is an unseen hand stretched out, and a still small cry of need.

Lesson VI. **THE CONVERSION OF LYDIA.** **Feb. 10th, 1884.**

Acts 16: 11-24. Memorize vs. 13-15

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.—Acts 16: 14.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 16: 11-24... *Conversion of Lydia.*
T. 2 Cor. 2: 1-18.... *A Door Opened.*
W. Luke 24: 36-47.. *The Gospel Among all Nations.*
Th. Luke 4: 33-44... *Demons Silenced.*
F. 2 Cor. 11: 21-33.. *In Stripes and in Prisons.*
S. 1 Pet. 4: 12-19... *Suffering for Christ.*
S. Phil. 4: 1-23..... *Paul to the Philippians.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. Lydia's Heart Opened. 2. The Soothsayer Healed. 3. The Opposers Enraged.

Time.—A. D. 51.

Place.—Philippi.

Catechism.—Q. 58. *What is required in the fourth commandment?* A. The fourth commandment requireth the keeping holy to God such set times as he hath appointed in his word; expressly one whole day in seven, to be a holy Sabbath to himself.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—When Paul was at Troas he had the vision of which we learned in our last lesson. A man of Macedonia stood before him and begged him to come over to his country and help him and his people. Paul knew that God had sent the vision, and that it was a divine call to him to carry the gospel beyond the sea to Europe. At once he left Troas and hastened over to Macedonia. At the city of Philippi he found a good woman, who opened her house to receive the missionaries, and then God opened her heart to receive the gospel. Lydia was thus the first convert in Europe. Paul spoiled the business of some men in the town by casting out an evil spirit, and the result was that the apostle and his friend Silas were cast into prison.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

11 Therefore loosing from Tro'as, we came with a straight course to Sa-mo-thra'cia, and the next *day* to Ne-ap'o-lis;

12 And from thence to Phi-lip'pi, which is the chief city of that part of Mac-e-do'ni-a, *and* a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days. [Phil. 1 : 1.]

13 And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river-side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted *thither*.

14 ¶ And a certain woman named Lyd'i-a, a seller of purple, of the city of Thy-a-ti'ra, which worshiped God, heard *us:* whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. [Luke 24 : 45; Prov. 21 : 1.]

15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought *us*, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide *there*. And she constrained us. [Luke 24 : 29; Heb. 13 : 2.]

16 ¶ And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying.

17 The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation. [1 Sam. 28 : 7; Luke 4 : 41.]

18 And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Je'sus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour. [Mark 1 : 25, 34; 16 : 17.]

19 ¶ And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Si'las, and drew *them* into the market-place unto the rulers, [Acts 19 : 25, 26; 2 Cor. 6 : 5; Matt. 10 : 18.]

20 And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, [1 Kings 18 : 17; Acts 17 : 6.]

21 And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans.

22 And the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat *them*. [2 Cor. 6 : 5; 11 : 23–25; 1 Thess. 2 : 2.]

23 And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast *them* into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely: [Deut. 25 : 3.]

24 Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. [Jer. 20 : 2, 3.]

REVISED VERSION.

11 Setting sail therefore from Troas, we made
a straight course to Samothrace, and the day
12 following to Neapolis; and from thence to
Philippi, which is a city of Macedonia, the
first of the district, a *Roman* colony: and
we were in this city tarrying certain days.
13 And on the sabbath day we went forth with-
out the gate by a river side, where we sup-
posed there was a place of prayer; and we
sat down, and spake unto the women which
14 were come together. And a certain woman
named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city
of Thyatira, one that worshiped God, heard
us: whose heart the Lord opened, to give
heed unto the things which were spoken by
15 Paul. And when she was baptized, and her
household, she besought us, saying, If ye
have judged me to be faithful to the Lord,
come into my house, and abide *there*. And
she constrained us.
16 And it came to pass, as we were going to
the place of prayer, that a certain maid
having a spirit of divination met us, which
brought her masters much gain by sooth-
17 saying. The same following after Paul and
us cried out, saying, these men are servants
of the Most High God, which proclaim unto
18 you the way of salvation. And this she did
for many days. But Paul, being sore troub-
led, turned and said to the spirit, I charge
thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out
of her. And it came out that very hour.
19 But when her masters saw that the hope of
their gain was gone, they laid hold on Paul
and Silas, and dragged them into the market-
20 place before the rulers, and when they had
brought them unto the magistrates, they said,
These men, being Jews, do exceedingly
21 trouble our city, and set forth customs which
it is not lawful for us to receive, or to observe,
22 being Romans. And the multitude rose up
together against them: and the magistrates
rent their garments off them, and com-
23 manded to beat them with rods. And when
they had laid many stripes upon them, they
cast them into prison, charging the jailer to
24 keep them safely: who, having received
such a charge, cast them into the inner
prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

11, 12 *Loosing from Troas.* Revised Version, *Setting sail. With a straight course.* The wind was favorable. *Samothracia.* An island in the

Ægean Sea, about midway between Troas and Neapolis. They probably stopped over night at the island, and next day proceeded to Neapolis. *Thence to Philippi.* A distance of ten miles. Philippi was built by Philip, father of Alexander the Great, and named after its founder. In profane history it is celebrated as the scene of the decisive battle in which Augustus and Antony defeated Brutus and Cassius (42 B. C.). In New Testament history its distinction is, that it was the first place in Europe in which the gospel was preached. *The chief city.* See Revised Version. The thought probably is, that it was the first city of Macedonia to which Paul came after landing in the country. *A colony.* Rome gave to certain cities peculiar privileges. They were in a sense independent, having their own senate and magistrates. They were miniatures of Rome, their members having all the rights of Roman citizens. These privileged cities were called colonies.

13 *By a river side.* The Gangas, a small stream that flows close to the city. It was the custom among the Jews to hold their religious services near water whenever practicable, because of the ablutions that belonged to their worship. *Where prayer was wont to be made.* See Revised Version. There was no synagogue at Philippi, the number of Jews there evidently being small, and this *proseucha* or place of prayer was the substitute for a synagogue. The *proseucha* was generally a building, slight in structure, but sometimes it was merely an enclosure without a roof. Here it may have been only *a place* in the open air where the Jews were wont to meet on the Sabbath. There seem to have been only women in the company that day.

14 *Lydia.* The phrase *which worshiped God* indicates that she was a proselyte to the Jewish faith, and not a Jewess. *Of Thyatira.* See Rev. 2: 18. Thyatira was celebrated in ancient times for its purple dyes and fabrics. An inscription has been discovered among the ruins of the city relating to the guild of dyers, thus incidentally verifying this narrative in one of its details. *A seller of purple.* Either the fabrics or the dye-stuffs. Lydia dwelt now at Philippi, and carried on her business there. *Whose heart the Lord opened.* To receive the truth. "The heart is of itself closed; it is for God to open it."

15 *When she was baptized and her household.* Whether her children are meant, or her servants, or the persons employed by her in her work or business, cannot be determined. Nor can it be decided whether they were adults or infants who were here baptized. Other cases of household baptism are mentioned in Acts 16: 32; 1 Cor. 1: 16. Bengel asks, "Who can believe that in so many families there was no infant?" [See note on v. 33 of next lesson.] *If ye have judged me to be faithful.* Both an earnest and a humble request. She desired to show her gratitude by her hospitality. Compare 2 Kings 4: 8–10. *She constrained us.* Evidently Paul was at first reluctant to accept the favor, but to Lydia's urgency he yielded.

16 *As we went to prayer.* Revised Version, *The place of prayer.* The same place mentioned in v. 13. *A spirit of divination.* Literally, *With a spirit, a Python.* This name indicates that she was supposed to be supernaturally endowed with wisdom and the spirit of prophecy, as Python was a mythological spirit said to guard the Delphic oracle. In reality this girl was either possessed of an evil spirit, or was simply a lunatic whose maniacal utterances were believed by the credulous and superstitious to be inspired prophecies. The former is the more probable. She was a slave, owned by certain men, who used her for purposes of gain.

17, 18 *The same . . . cried, saying.* In our Lord's time demoniacs several times recognized him, and were silenced by him. Matt. 8: 29; Mark 3: 12; Luke 4: 34, 35; 8: 28. This would seem to indicate that this girl was likewise a demoniac, and that this case was analogous to the cases referred to in the Gospels. Another view is, that this was not an instance of recognition of divine power by the girl, but a mocking taunt; that she followed the missionaries, uttering her cry in ridicule and derision. For many days Paul did not interfere. Perhaps he wished to avoid a collision with the people. *Being grieved.* Rather, *Sore troubled*, indignant and sorrowful. He could endure her outcry no longer, and turning to the maiden commanded the spirit, in the name of Jesus Christ, to come out of her. The language seems clearly to point to demoniacal possession.

19 *The hope of their gains was gone.* The maid was no longer possessed of the evil spirit, and could not be used by her masters as before. They did not think of the poor girl as saved from the power of the demon, but of themselves as losers by her restoration to sanity. Compare Matt. 8: 28–34. *They caught Paul and Silas.* The motive was revenge. The words indicate that violence was used. Luke and Timothy seem not to have been seized; perhaps they were not present, or they were regarded only as subordinates. *The market-place.* The forum, or public square, where the prætors held their court.

20, 21 *Being Jews.* An appeal to prejudice, as the Jews were hated by the Romans. *Do exceedingly trouble our city.* By curing a poor demoniac slave and spoiling the business of her owners. *Teach customs.* The Roman government forbade the introduction of innovations in religion, especially into such cities as Philippi. The Jewish religion was specially obnoxious to the Romans, on account of its rites, particularly the rite of circumcision. Hence it was easy to arouse intense feeling against these Jewish missionaries. Notice the effective way in which the appeal is framed: "These men being *Jews*, trouble us, etc., being *Romans.*"

22 *The multitude.* There was a general uprising of the population. *The magistrates rent off their clothes.* The clothes of Paul and Silas. *Commanded to beat them.* There was no inquiry into the case. The magistrates seem to have acted under constraint of the mob.

23 *Many stripes.* The beating or scourging was done by the lictors, who used a number of elm or birch rods bound together with thongs. The beating here was no doubt very severe, being inflicted on the naked body. Paul refers to this in 2 Cor. 11: 25, "Thrice was I beaten with rods;" the other two cases not being further recorded.

24 *The inner prison.* There were usually three different parts in a Roman prison. In the first the prisoners had light and fresh air. In the second they were shut off by strong gates of iron with bolts and bars. The third was a dark underground dungeon, which was used only for execution, or for prisoners condemned to die. It was probably the second of these into which Paul and Silas were thrust. *Their feet fast in the stocks.* An instrument designed both for torture and for security. It consisted of a piece of wood with holes, in which the feet were placed in such a way as to cause great pain.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

I. Lydia's Heart Opened. vs. 11–15.

1. **She was in the right place.** *On the Sabbath day we went forth . . . where . . . was a place of prayer . . . and spake unto the women which were come together.* In that great heathen city there were a few people who believed in God and found time to worship him. One day in seven they dropped all their business and came together for prayer in this quiet place. It is a very interesting fact that right here in this little group of worshipers Christianity began its work in Europe. Paul's first preaching in that new country was to a handful of godly women. It seemed a small beginning, but it was like the little spring among the mountains which is the source of a mighty river. No one can ever estimate the extent or the value of the influences which took their rise in that women's prayer-meeting. Lydia was in the right place that day. She was in the way of blessing. It surely paid her well to shut up her shop and keep that Sabbath. Had she been absent for any reason from that service she would have missed a great deal which might never have come to her again. If we would make sure of receiving all the blessings God wants to give us we must always be at the place of duty. It is never safe to stay away even once from the Sabbath-school or the church, for that may be the time some special blessing will be there for us.

2. **She yielded to the Holy Spirit.** *Lydia . . . heard us; whose heart the Lord opened to give heed.* First, she *listened* when the preacher spoke. Then she *believed* the things that he said. Then she let the Spirit *into her heart*, and accepted Jesus Christ as her personal Saviour. The Lord opened her heart, and yet in a certain sense she opened it herself. She never would have been saved if there had been no divine hand on the door; yet neither would she have been saved if she had not of her own free will risen and opened the door. Jesus said, "No man can come unto me except the Father . . . draw him;" but he said also, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." In these two words both the divine part and the human are shown. "Behold I stand at the door and knock," said the Master again; "if any man open unto me, I will come in unto him and sup with him and he with me." He knocks, and holds in his hands the blessings we need, but *we* must open or he will never come in. He will not force his way in. We can keep the blessed and omnipotent Christ outside for ever if we will, simply by refusing to open to him when he knocks. Lydia yielded her heart, her will, her affections, and bade Christ come in—that was her part. Then he opened the door and entered, and all the saving work within was his. When the Lord strives we must yield to him; then all will be well.

3. **As soon as she believed she confessed Christ.** *She was baptized.* She did not wait a while to see if she could hold out. She did not try to be a Christian quietly, without any public declaration of her decision. She made her confession at once, and was the first person in all Europe to become a Christian and be baptized. She did the right thing. There should not be an hour's delay when one has

decided to be a Christian. There is no place provided in the gospel for secret discipleship, and dallying is always perilous.

4. **She showed her faith by her works.** *When she was baptized and her household, she besought us . . . Come into my house and abide there.* For one thing, she was not willing to leave her household behind when she entered the kingdom of heaven. If they were adults, she led them also to accept Christ and confess him with her. If they were little children, she brought them into the covenant with her and consecrated them to God. Every one who is saved ought to try to bring his family and friends also to Jesus. Every parent who receives Christ should bring his children with him. . . . Another immediate fruit of her conversion was her hospitality to the missionaries who had brought to her the words of life. Believing on Jesus warms our hearts toward all his friends. Love for Christ makes us love all who are his disciples. For his sake we want to show kindness to others.

II. The Soothsayer Healed. vs. 16–18.

1. **A glimpse of heathenism.** *A certain maid having a spirit of divination . . . which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying.* First, we see the inhumanity of these heathen men. Here is an unfortunate girl, either a demoniac or a lunatic, and her base owners are using her affliction as a source of profit. Then we see further the kind of religion these heathen people had. This poor girl was believed to be a prophetess, and her insane ravings were accepted as inspired teachings. The deluded people came to her masters and sought counsel of her as a priestess of heaven. This was what the missionaries found in that land—inhumanity, superstition, degradation. Our missionaries find the same yet in heathen lands.

2. **What the gospel did.** *Paul . . . turned and said to the spirit, I charge thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And it came out that very hour.* That was what Christianity did for one poor victim in heathendom. It has done the same for thousands since. The casting out of this evil spirit illustrates what the gospel does for all who receive it. It drives Satan out of their hearts and leaves them in their right mind.

III. The Opposers Enraged. vs. 19–24.

1. **The cause of their rage.** *Her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone.* There was the poor girl standing before them healed of her terrible affliction, but that gave them no pleasure, because in healing her the apostle had destroyed their source of income. The same diabolical spirit yet rules in many breasts. Liquor dealers and saloon keepers are enraged at every effort made to save men from intemperance, because it hurts their nefarious business. When a drunkard is saved, and becomes a sober, industrious man, they do not care for the rescuing of the man's soul, but are angry because they lose part of their gain.

2. **The way their rage was vented.** *They laid hold on Paul and Silas, and dragged them . . . before the rulers.* Wherever it goes the gospel interferes with sin, and hurts all sorts of wicked business; and when men's pockets are touched they will not bear it quietly. It will be noted that these Philippian people made no disturbance when Lydia was converted; her conversion did not touch their pockets. But whenever this poor slave girl was cured their fury was roused. Rum-sellers do not care how much a church does among quiet, good people, but the moment it begins to work among drinking men, to try to rescue them, they grow furious. It is the same with all great evils. So long as the church will look after the poor and the sick and preach against the sins of the antediluvians and Pharisees, they make no objection; but when it assails the sins and vices of to-day it stirs up hatred and persecution.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Christ's servants should obey instantly and take "a straight course" to each new duty. v. 11.

2. How small the beginning of Christianity in Europe—as if a bird carried one seed of some plant and dropped it in the midst of a continent.

3. Christ's servants must not wait for great opportunities, but seize the smallest. v. 13.

4. We never know what blessing we may receive at a religious meeting. (Lydia going to prayer that Sabbath.) v. 14.

5. How the gospel immortalizes those who receive it! Lydia's is the only name preserved of all in that proud "Roman colony."

6. It is only when the Spirit touches a heart that it opens to divine things. v. 14.

7. We must give heed to the words of God before they can bless us. v. 14.

8. As soon as we accept Christ we should confess him. v. 15.

9. Conversion should show itself at once in the life, in efforts to save others, and in love for the brethren. v. 15.

10. In Lydia and the demoniac girl see the different kinds of good work the gospel does.

11. When the gospel touches men's "gains" it arouses their rage. v. 19.

12. Those who live faithfully, witnessing against sin, must expect to suffer. vs. 23, 24.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

The Lines of Approach.

The best introduction is a review of the last lesson.

1. Geographical review. Present the map, and request one of the scholars to trace the course of the journey thus far—from Antioch, across the mountains, through Syria and Cilicia to Derbe, etc.

2. Review of persons. Recall Paul and Barnabas, Paul and Mark, Silas, Timothy, Lois, "the man of Macedonia."

3. The practical review. Briefly recall the moral lessons of last Sabbath.

4. You may pause at Troas to ask, How had God prepared Macedonia and Europe for the gospel. The dispersion of the Jews had taught Europe some idea of the true God. Wars and conquests had broken down the barriers between nations. Roman law prevailed even for the protection of the herald of the gospel. Philosophy and heathen religion had failed to bring men peace. It was a time of political peace. The Church had been prepared for the extension of Christianity among the Gentiles by the conference at Jerusalem.

5. Here also explain the introduction of "we" into the history. Point out the "we" in Acts 16: 10–15; 20: 5–15; 21: 1–18; 27: 1–28. Show that Luke joins Paul at Troas.

Lesson Outline.

Paul's First { *Convert* / *Miracle* / *Persecution* } in Europe.

Questions and Applications.

I. *Paul's First Convert in Europe.* Describe four men in Oriental dress down by the wharf at Troas asking for a ship going to Neapolis over in Macedonia. The vessel runs between the island Tenedos and the mainland, past the Dardanelles, close to the east shore of Melros. They take shelter under the shore of Samothracia all night. Next morning they reach Neapolis after an eight-hour sail. Call for reports on Macedonia, Neapolis and Philippi. Also on a "colony" and "Roman citizenship." Where did they go upon the Sabbath? What was a prayer-place? Why was there no synagogue at Philippi? Who attended this prayer-meeting? In what respects was this a very humble meeting? In what respects was it a most important meeting? The first preaching by Paul in Europe. The starting of the Church at Philippi. What are we taught by this labor of Paul at the prayer-place? Not to despise little meetings. That a small meeting may be the beginning of the greatest work. Who was Paul's first convert in Europe? In what words is her conversion described? Golden text. What are some of the lessons from this text? How did she show her sympathy with Paul and his companions? What are we commanded? Rom. 12: 13. Who was baptized with Lydia? Why is it probable that her children were also baptized as well as those of the jailer? Acts 16: 33.

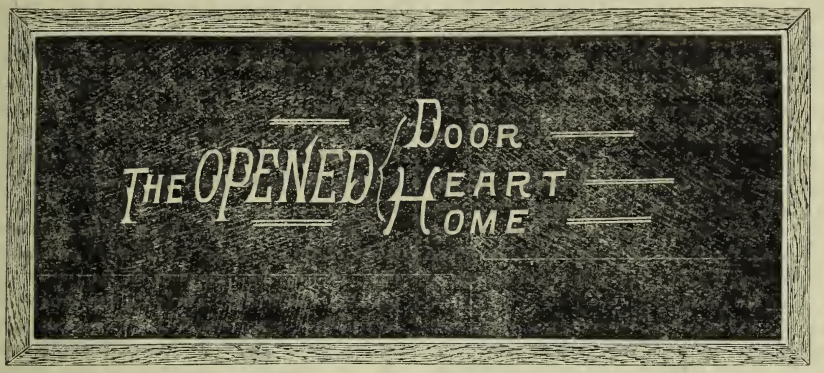
II. *Paul's First Miracle in Europe.* What are some instances recorded of Jesus casting out demons? For what reasons do you think that a real demon possessed this damsel? How did the superstitious people regard such a demoniac? What did the poor unfortunate girl bring to her owners? How did she annoy Paul? Why did not Christ allow the demons to testify for him? Mark 1: 34. Why would not Paul allow a demon to testify for the gospel? In what name did Paul cast out the demon? In whose strength can we always vanquish Satan? Rev. 12: 11.

III. *Paul's First Persecution in Europe.* What effect upon the owners of the slave had Paul's driving out of the demon? Why were they so filled with rage? From what arises much of the opposition to Christ's gospel? The avarice of men. What did they do with Paul and Silas? What charges did the men make against them? What was true in these charges? That they taught a new religion, and that it was unlawful to bring into Roman communities a new religion. This was the first *heathen* persecution of Paul. All others, so far, had been waged by Jews. What was false in the charges? That Paul and Silas had made a tumult in the city. How would the mention that the foreign troublers were Jews stir up prejudice? What shows the excitement of the people? Of the magistrates? What do you know concerning the Roman scourging? What further suffering was inflicted on Paul and Silas? What did the Saviour say of the persecuted? Matt. 5: 10, 11.

Questions for Sabbath, February 17th, to be assigned:

1. Reasons for Paul and Silas' midnight songs in prison.
2. Describe ancient prisons and dungeons.
3. What did the midnight earthquake show as to God's care for his servants?
4. What caused the soul-anxiety of the jailer?
5. What is the meaning of Paul's answer? v. 31.
6. Why did Paul and Silas refuse to go out of prison secretly or privately?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



SUGGESTIONS.—Review briefly the last lesson, the incidents of which closely precede this. Print on the board, "The Opened Door." God opened the door to Gentile Europe, and directed the ministers of his gospel to Philippi, outside of which city, by a river side, a prayer-meeting of devout women was statedly held. Here was a woman (Lydia) whose soul the grace of God was preparing for a blessing. The impediment in the way of Lydia's conversion is seen in the statement, "Whose heart the Lord opened." Till then it was shut; it did not admit the truth which pressed from without. The heart is the seat of all real religion; it is naturally closed against God and his truth. He alone can open it. His methods of doing it are various and wonderful. When he opens it the truth will be revealed, and Christ will enter in. Speak of Lydia's conversion. The consequences of this opening of her heart were: (1) An earnest attention to the word; (2) a public profession of religion, and the baptism of herself and household. Print "Heart" under the word "door," as in diagram. Her conversion was evidenced by her obedience and love. She manifested her love in grateful acts of kindness to God's ministers. She opened her home to supply their needs in a strange place. Notice, "God opens the door" of opportunity, and the "Heart" of the attentive and devout seeker after the truth, and the convert, as a thank offering, opens her "home" to God's servants. Here we have "The opened door," "the opened heart," and "the opened home." When the Lord opens our hearts to receive his Christ, we will open our homes to befriend his servants and his cause.

The lesson may be presented as follows if preferred:

LONGING HEART,
YEARNING FOR CHRIST,
DEVOUT,
INSTRUCTED,
APPRECIATIVE.

Impressing these, erase all but the acrostic, and print, "Whose Heart the Lord Opened."

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Lesson Plan.—Secure the facts of the lesson from class. Teach your scholars to expect that all the questions on their pink papers will be asked during the hour. Draw out the incidental truths by questions. The missionaries on the Sabbath are found at the place of prayer. It is there they find those whom they can help. The woman Lydia was trying to get help; doing the best that she could, so God helped her.

Illustrate the different classes of people represented in the lesson. Two hearts cut from paper will aid you in this. Cut a little door in each heart. Let one heart represent Lydia's, the other the enemies who arrested Paul and Silas. At the proper time in the lesson open the little door of Lydia's heart. The lesson says, God opened it. What you need to explain to your class is, that Lydia was willing to have it done; she did not hold the door. A simple, practical illustration will make this plainer to your children. Imagine a little boy at your class-room door, saying: "Please let me in;" but at the same time he holds the door with all his might. Can we think he really wants to get in?

That is the way some children pray. They ask God to open their hearts, so that Jesus can come in and help them all day, but they think to themselves: "I don't believe I can keep from being naughty; I don't believe God will help such a little child as I am." It is the same as holding the doors of their hearts.

Lydia let God open her heart, and he showed her what Paul's teaching meant, and she gave herself to Christ.

Touch lightly on the story of the woman who had an evil spirit. Don't let the children lose themselves in wonderment as to how she acted, or just what was the trouble. It is sufficient for them to understand that Satan had her in his power.

When you reach the angry masters, show the other heart, and explain that though God was willing to save them, and Jesus was calling them to open the doors of their hearts to him, they held them tightly closed, therefore he could do nothing for them.

Mark the difference in the actions of these two hearts. Lydia at once tried to do something for God's people; the others tried to injure them. Notice that these angry men were led into speaking falsely of the missionaries. One sin leads to another. If we will not open our hearts to God, Satan will get more and more control over us.

Personal Application.—What kind of hearts have we? Have we opened the door to Jesus, or are we still holding it shut? The child who says, "I am too little to be a Christian; when I get older, I will give my heart to Jesus," is holding the door shut, for Jesus says that *now* is the time.

Those teachers who have older scholars in their classes may be asked the question why God allowed his servants to be thrown into prison. Such will do well to use the question to awaken an interest in the next week's lesson. Tell them that it will give an answer to their questions. Encourage them to try to find it.

Lesson VII. THE CONVERSION OF THE JAILER. Feb. 17th, 1884.

Acts 16: 25-40. Memorize vs. 29-34.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."—Acts 16: 31.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 16: 25-40....*Paul and Silas Delivered.*
T. Dan. 3: 8-30.....*The Three Hebrews Delivered.*
W. Dan. 6: 1-28.....*Daniel Delivered.*
Th. Acts 12: 1-19.....*Peter Delivered.*
F. Tit. 3: 1-15.....*Not by Works of Righteousness.*
S. Rom. 3: 19-31....*Justified by Grace.*
S. John 3: 14-21, 36..*Faith and Eternal Life.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Peace of the Believers. 2. The Terror of the Sinner. 3. The Way of Salvation. 4. The Deliverance of the Prisoners.

Time.—A. D. 51.

Place.—Philippi.

Catechism.—Q. 59. *Which day of the seven hath God appointed to be the weekly Sabbath?* A. From the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, God appointed the seventh day of the week to be the weekly Sabbath; and the first day of the week, ever since, to continue to the end of the world, which is the Christian Sabbath.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—In our last lesson we learned of the imprisonment of Paul and Silas at Philippi, and the cause which led to it. Here we have the sequel. They had been terribly beaten, and were then cast into the inner prison, and their feet made fast in the stocks. Their condition was one of great torture. But this lesson tells us how little they were affected by it. At midnight, instead of groans from their dungeon, the other prisoners heard songs ringing out. It was a strange place and a strange time for a praise meeting. Most people are put entirely out of the humor of singing even by very slight troubles or sufferings. But the more these men were wronged and caused to suffer, the more they seemed to rejoice, and the more were they inclined to sing praise to God. Then there was also a quaking of the earth, while the singing went on—nature accompanying the singers—which shook the prison and flung open its doors, and broke all the prisoners' chains. The keeper, aroused from sleep, awed by the midnight terror, first was about to kill himself, then, kept from this, cried out to know how he could be saved, and a soul was born again in that dungeon that night.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

25 ¶ And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. [1 Thess. 2: 2; Job 35: 10; Ps. 42: 8.]

26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. [Acts 4: 31; 5: 19; 12: 10.]

27 And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. [Acts 12: 19; 27: 42.]

28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we all are here.

29 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Si'las,

30 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? [Luke 3: 10; Acts 2: 37; 9: 6.]

31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Je'sus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. [John 3: 16, 36.]

32 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.

33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their* stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

34 And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house. [Luke 5: 29; 19: 6; Acts 8: 39; Rom. 5: 11.]

35 And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go.

36 And the keeper of the prison told this saying to Paul, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore depart, and go in peace.

37 But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast *us* into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out. [Acts 22: 25.]

38 And the serjeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans.

39 And they came and besought them, and brought *them* out, and desired *them* to depart out of the city. [Matt. 8: 34.]

40 And they went out of the prison, and entered into *the house of* Lyd'i-a: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed. [v. 14.]

REVISED VERSION.

25 But about midnight Paul and Silas were
praying and singing hymns unto God, and
26 the prisoners were listening to them; and
suddenly there was a great earthquake, so
that the foundations of the prison-house
were shaken: and immediately all the doors
were opened; and every one's bands were
27 loosed. And the jailer being roused out of
sleep, and seeing the prison doors open,
drew his sword, and was about to kill him-
self, supposing that the prisoners had es-
28 caped. But Paul cried with a loud voice,
saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all
29 here. And he called for lights, and sprang
in, and, trembling for fear, fell down before
30 Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and
said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?
31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus,
and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house.
32 And they spake the word of the Lord unto
33 him, with all that were in his house. And
he took them the same hour of the night,
and washed their stripes; and was baptized,
34 he and all his, immediately. And he brought
them up into his house, and set meat before
them, and rejoiced greatly, with all his
house, having believed in God.
35 But when it was day, the magistrates sent
the serjeants, saying, Let those men go.
36 And the jailer reported the words to Paul,
saying, The magistrates have sent to let you
go: now therefore come forth, and go in
37 peace. But Paul said unto them, They have
beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men that
are Romans, and have cast us into prison;
and do they now cast us out privily? nay
verily; but let them come themselves and
38 bring us out. And the serjeants reported
these words unto the magistrates: and they
feared, when they heard that they were
39 Romans; and they came and besought them;
and when they had brought them out, they
40 asked them to go away from the city. And
they went out of the prison, and entered into
the house of Lydia: and when they had seen
the brethren, they comforted them, and de-
parted.

25 *At midnight.* Remember that they had been beaten until their bodies were gashed, and that in the prison their feet were screwed fast in the stocks. Their sufferings no doubt were so great that they could not sleep, and they sought to forget their pain in praise and prayer. The words imply that these exercises were continued for some time, and it is probable that they passed the greater part of the night in devotion. *Prayed and sang praises.* They gloried in tribulations. Rom. 5: 3. What they sang we do not know, perhaps some of the Psalms of David, or some of the hymns which Pliny says Christians sang at their meetings before the sun rose. The praying here was not so remarkable as the praising. Many people can pray in trouble who cannot give thanks. *The prisoners heard them.* Revised Version, *Were listening to them.* The words imply attentive, interested listening. The other prisoners may have been in the same inner prison, or in the upper apartment.

26 *Suddenly there was a great earthquake.* God thus, in answer to the prayers of his servants, assured them of his presence and interest in them. See chap. 4: 31 for a similar answer. *Every one's bands were loosed.* It is probable that the chains were fastened in the masonry, and that the shaking of the walls loosened them.

27 *The keeper of the prison.* The same as the jailer, in v. 23. See also Revised Version. He slept in some part of the building, and was roused from sleep by the earthquake. *Drew out his sword.* He supposed that his prisoners had all escaped, and he knew that if this were

so he must suffer the same penalties which his prisoners would otherwise have suffered. *Would have killed himself.* Suicide was, in those days among the Romans, the common resort of men who had failed. They were taught that it was justifiable, some of their great teachers, such as Seneca, Epicurus, Lucretius and Pliny, defending it.

28 *Paul cried with a loud voice.* There must have been some supernatural intimation of the jailer's intention made to the apostle, for it was midnight and dark, and the jailer could scarcely have been in such position that his actions could be seen by one in the inner prison. *We are all here.* Why had not the prisoners fled when they found themselves free to escape? They may have been so impressed by the strange occurrences, so awe-struck, as not yet to have noticed that the doors were open.

29 *He called for light.* Revised Version, *Lights*, enough to light the whole prison. *Came trembling.* Literally, *Terror-stricken. Fell down before Paul and Silas.* He connected all that had just occurred with these two men, and supposed that they must be more than other men. He must have known before they were cast into the prison that they were the heralds of a new religion, and probably knew of the healing of the demoniac by the word of Paul. He was prepared, therefore, after what had now taken place in the prison, to regard his prisoners with a feeling of awe and deference.

30 *Brought them out.* From the inner prison, perhaps into the courtyard. *Sirs.* A most respectful greeting, indicating great deference. *What must I do to be saved?* Not from the terrors of the earthquake, for that was past. Not from punishment at the hands of the Romans, for his prisoners were all safe. Evidently there had been awakened in his soul a new sense of danger, and his question referred to his personal salvation. No doubt the earthquake had something to do in producing his conviction of sin and his sense of need. Probably he had heard of these men preaching that all were sinners and needed a Saviour. v. 17.

31 *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.* Not merely believe the doctrines about Jesus Christ, but entrust yourself to him as Saviour. See Acts 2: 38. *And thy house.* See v. 32.

32 *They spake . . . the word.* They explained to him more fully the way of salvation. *And to all that were in his house.* His family and household, all of whom had gathered with him.

33 *He took them . . . and washed their stripes.* The stripes made by the beating. Mercy and gentleness awoke at once in his breast, showing his change of heart. *And was baptized.* Paul and Silas had told him that he must repent and be baptized, and he did not delay to confess Christ. Chrysostom says: "The jailer washed them and he was washed himself. He washed their stripes and he was washed from his sins." *And all his.* All his household had heard the word (v. 32), and believed (v. 34), and all were baptized. Alexander says: "Here again, the narrative proves nothing by itself, but will always be interpreted according to the previous conclusions of the reader. He who regards immersion as the essence of the rite, will of course assume the one wherever the other is mentioned; he who does not will find it hard to believe that the jailer at Philippi and his household were immersed at midnight either inside or outside the prison. . . . He who considers infants as excluded from the ordinance by its very nature, will, of course, exclude them from the *all* here mentioned; he who regards them as entitled to it by the stipulations of a divine covenant, will just as naturally give the word its widest application. What is most important is to settle this disputed question upon other grounds and higher principles, and then explain these historical details accordingly."

However, this expression, "Was baptized, he and all his," is naturally connected with its use on other similar occasions. Lydia was baptized, "and her household;" Paul baptized personally "the household of Stephanas." 1 Cor. 1: 16. It would be a marvel truly if there were no little ones in these households presented—as they would naturally expect from the precedents of the old dispensation—for baptism upon the confessed faith of their parents. As to the *mode* of the baptism of the jailer and his household, it requires a great power of imagination to fancy that they were immersed, within the jail, at midnight. The eminent Baptist champion, Carson, seeing the difficulty, suggests that the baptism was at the Strymon, or some other place out of doors! Fancy a Roman jailer going away from his charge, at midnight, to a stream at some distance from the city in company with two of his prisoners! In truth, the Scriptures testify to the minor importance of the *mode* of baptism by saying very little about it. The mistake of our Baptist friends is their making of the *mode* a term of Christian membership and fellowship.

34 *Into his house.* Which was probably over the prison. *Set meat.* Literally, *A table. Rejoiced, believing.* The believing was the source of the rejoicing. He was now saved, and this gave him joy.

35, 36 *The serjeants.* The lictors, the per-

sons who had been employed to scourge Paul and Silas. The magistrates had heard of what had occurred, and wanted to get their prisoners quietly off their hands.

37 *Unto them.* The persons who had brought the order to let the prisoners go. *They have beaten us openly.* Revised Version, *Publicly.* They had probably been tied to the public whipping post, and there beaten. *Uncondemned.* Without trial or inquiry. v. 22. *Being Romans.* See chap. 22: 25, where Paul had been already bound with thongs to the whipping post, and was about to be scourged when he pleaded his Roman citizenship and was instantly released. In the same connection (v. 28) we learn that Paul had inherited his Roman citizenship from his father. *Thrust us out privily.* The scourging and imprisoning had been public; Paul demanded that the release should be as public. He demanded his rights. The magistrates had violated the law, and the insult required an apology.

38, 39 *They feared.* It was a grave crime to scourge or bind a Roman citizen, and the magistrates saw that they had made themselves liable to sore punishment. See chap. 22: 29. *Came and besought them.* With regrets and apologies they begged them to overlook the wrong done, and to go away quietly from the city.

40 *The house of Lydia.* They probably waited there for some time. Lydia had already given them a home in her house. v. 15. *The brethren.* The converts at Philippi. How many of these there were at this time we cannot tell, but evidently Lydia and her household were not the only ones who had believed. *Comforted them.* Exhorted and encouraged them. *Departed.* They could not longer remain, but the work they had done there was not lost. The church at Philippi, the first in Europe, became very dear to the apostle's heart, and gave him great joy, as we learn from the Epistle which he wrote to them toward the close of his life. From v. 40 it has been supposed that Luke himself remained at Philippi, as he says, "*they* comforted them and departed."

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

I. The Peace of the Believer. vs. 25, 26.

1. **Songs in the night.** *About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns unto God.* It was surely a strange place and a strange time for singing. Most people are in the song mood only when their circumstances are most pleasant, and a very small trouble hushes every voice of song. But here were men singing in the midst of great pain and trouble. What was the secret? It was their faith in God. They had learned to rejoice even in tribulations. The peace of God was in their hearts. They knew that all things were working together for their good. Christ was with them in their dungeon, and instead of being cast down they rejoiced. We should learn to rejoice in our troubles. If we are true Christians there can come to us no experience that ought to stop our rejoicing. There is even in the sorest trouble some cause for joy. We may not be able to see it, but here is where faith is to come in. We know that our Father's hand is in every pain or trial, and we know that whatever he sends or allows must be blessing. We are to believe this when we cannot see it, and rejoice. The trouble is, we walk by sight and not by faith, and when anything *seems to us* to be against us, away goes our joy.

2. **Answers from heaven.** *There was a great earthquake, so that the foundations . . . were shaken, . . . the doors were opened, . . . every one's bands were loosed.* The kind of prayers God hears soonest are those that go up on wings of praise. The prisoners were listening that night to the songs, and they must have been impressed by the singing of men in such plight; but there was Another listener. God heard, and then answered. We do not know for what these men prayed; perhaps it was for release from the prison, if that were God's will. They may have thought of Peter's release, when an angel came and took off his chains and opened the gates and led him out. They knew that God could get them out, too, and would, if that were the best thing. So at midnight the answer came. There is no prison too strong for God to open; there are no chains too heavy for him to break; there are no walls too great for him to shake. If we are in prisons of trial, of temptation, of sorrow, of any trouble, if we call upon God in faith-filled prayer he will open the door for us in some way and lead us out.

II. The Terror of the Sinner. vs. 27–30.

1. **Terror amid earthly dangers.** *The jailer . . . drew his sword and was about to kill himself.* Suicide was the resort in those days of men who had failed. In his desperation the jailer was about to seek escape from his danger by rushing out of life at this gate. He knew no better refuge from trouble than this. But there *was* a better refuge. Christ's minister was there, and the despairing man was saved from self-destruction. The gospel does not merely save men's souls from the pains of hell; it saves them also from earthly dangers. Instead of dying by his own hand and going out into hope-

less darkness, this man lived to become a child of God, an heir of heaven, and to inherit everlasting life. This is what the gospel does for every one who listens to its call. It saves men from self-destruction, and lifts them up to glory.

2. **Terror about his lost soul.** *He . . . trembling for fear, fell down before Paul and Silas . . . and said, Sirs, What must I do to be saved?* What made him tremble so? Why was he afraid? There was no danger from the Roman law, for his prisoners were all safe, though the earthquake had opened the doors and loosened the chains. That fear was past. Why then should he tremble now? Ah! he had had a glimpse of a more terrible danger. He had seen God that night, and he saw himself to be a lost man. No wonder he asked this question, "What must I do to be saved?" But every one of us must ask the same question if we are ever to reach heaven. Let us look at it closely. The best way to get at its full meaning is to take it all apart and study each separate word. "What must I do—not these other prisoners, not the people that live in the big houses, or those that live in the dens of sin—but what must *I* do?" It must be a personal question. It is really never asked at all until it is asked in this way. We must stand alone before God and ask it, each for himself. "What must I do?" Not, What *may* I do? What is the pleasantest thing to do? What *must* I do? The necessity is absolute. Something must be done or I never can be saved. "What must I *do?*" Mere drifting along will never save me. I will never to all eternity get into salvation unless I do something. God's mercy is very great, but if I just stand here and wait and do nothing it will never lift the guilt off my soul. Christ is offering his salvation everywhere, offering it to me, but there is something I must do or I will never be taken up by him into life. What must I do? What must I do to be *saved?* It is not some trifle of help that I need, a little medicine, a little good advice, a little light, a little encouragement; I need to be *saved.* I am a lost soul. The wrath of God abideth on me. I am condemned already. I am about to perish. I need to be saved. What must I do to be saved—not to save myself, but *to be* saved? We see what the question means.

III. The Way of Salvation. vs. 31–34.

1. **The way shown.** *They said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved.* Never was there a more important question asked than the jailer's. His eternal salvation depended on his receiving the right answer. Only suppose for a moment that he had received a wrong answer: his soul might have been hopelessly wrecked. But he had come to the right place with his question. In all the world he could have found no one more fit to give him a true answer than Paul. It had not been so very long since he had fallen down, trembling, on the earth, and asked the same question. Thus he knew how to answer the jailer's question. He was able to tell his fellow-sinner how he himself had been saved. As for the answer, it was just the same for this heathen jailer that it had been for the learned rabbi, Paul. There is only one Saviour, and all need him. There is only one way of salvation; it is by believing on the Lord Jesus. But what is it to believe? It is more than assenting to the Bible truths about Christ. We must "do" something. We must entrust ourselves to him as our Saviour. We must submit our lives to him as our Lord. Believing on Christ is more than laying our sins on him; it is giving ourselves to him to be his for ever. The first thing is to be saved from our sins, but that means more than being saved from punishment; it is being saved from the sins themselves, from their power and their pollution. The next thing is to come under Christ's sway and to take up his commands and go on doing them.

2. **The way taken.** *He . . . washed their stripes, and was baptized . . . immediately . . . and set meat before them and rejoiced greatly.* It is not enough to know the way to God; we must *go* in the way if we are ever to reach blessing. It is not enough to stand before Christ and know that he is ready to save; we must accept him. This man immediately did the thing necessary to salvation. He received Christ and gave himself to him; then he was baptized, thus confessing his sins and confessing Christ as his Lord. We see also at once the fruits of faith. His heart was changed. He became tender and compassionate. He loved Christ's disciples, and sought to relieve their sufferings and satisfy their wants. He also began to rejoice. The songs the prisoners had been singing a little while ago broke now from his lips. True conversion always produces these effects. It leads men to confess Christ and take their place among his people. It makes them gentle and compassionate. It makes them love God's people. It makes them rejoice

IV. The Deliverance of the Prisoners. vs. 35–40.

Men's wrath made to praise God. *They came and besought them . . . to go away . . . and they went out of the prison.* The very men who had torn off their clothes and beaten them were compelled to come and humbly ask to be

forgiven, and then publicly lead them out of the prison and release them. Those who fight against Christ's people fight against Christ himself, and must be defeated in the end. There is also here a prophecy of the ultimate release of all God's people who in this world are bound in any kind of prison. For even the truest and holiest Christian life here has its limitations and restraints. Some are kept in chains all their days by sickness, and are never free to serve God as their hearts desire. With others it is poverty, or misfortune that builds the walls. Then there are others who never in this life get the chains of their old evil habits or their besetting sins broken off. Many of God's best children are prisoners all their days. It is a cheering thought to such that death at least will bring full and glorious release. Every soul shall be free for ever when it passes away from earth's prison into the complete liberty of heaven.

LESSON POINTS.

1. The Christian soul cannot be imprisoned even though the body be in chains and stocks. v. 25.

2. Faith sings its songs of praise even in earth's midnight. v. 25.

3. God answers prayer, sometimes by terrible things. v. 26.

4. Sin provides no refuge that is not even worse than the danger escaped. v. 27.

5. The gospel has a refuge from all kinds of danger. v. 28.

6. God's providences sometimes awaken men to a sense of their danger. vs. 29, 30.

7. The most important question any one can ask—how to be saved. v. 30.

8. There is only one way of salvation. v. 31.

9. Believing on Christ should be followed immediately by confessing Christ. vs. 32, 33.

10. Conversion softens the hard heart and changes terror to joy. v. 34.

11. It is right for Christians to claim the protection of law. v. 37.

12. God makes men's wrath praise him in the end. vs. 39, 40.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

How to Commence.

Hold a conversation about the conversions narrated in Acts—the conversion of the three thousand at Pentecost (Acts 2: 1–41); those converted under Peter's other sermon (Acts 4: 4); the Ethiopian (Acts 8: 27–39); the conversion of Saul (Acts 9: 1–20); of Cornelius (Acts 10); of Sergius Paulus (Acts 13: 7–12); of Lydia (Acts 16: 13–15). What is common to all these different conversions? 1. They repented of sin. 2. They believed in Christ. 3. They were baptized. How many of these conversions were *sudden?* By what power were they all brought about? What is effectual calling?

How to Divide.

THE { *Convulsion of Nature.*
Conversion of the Jailer.
Change in the Magistrates.

How Practically to Apply.

I. *The Convulsion of Nature.*

Picture in words Paul and Silas in the dungeon—feet made fast in the stocks; the city asleep; midnight songs. What are they singing? David's Psalms it may be. Read Ps. 102: 19, 20; 79: 11; 146: 6–8. Describe the heathen prisoners, aroused by the noise and wondering at the singing in such a place, at such an hour. Then describe the great earthquake, the severe and sudden shocks, the rocking of the earth, the shaking of the prison, the opening doors, the loosed bands. Why do you regard this earthquake as an answer to prayer? "By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation." Ps. 65: 5. See also David's answer—an earthquake. Ps. 18: 6, 7.

II. *The Conversion of the Jailer.*

What was the Roman law concerning jailers who on any account allowed their prisoners to escape? Why did this jailer suppose all his prisoners were fled? What was his intention? Why kill himself? Who saw his movements? What was his call to the jailer? What did the jailer do? What was the cause of his trembling? How do we know he did not tremble for his office, nor for his reputation, nor for his life? For what did he tremble? Why do you think he was a truly awakened sinner? What had caused his anguish for sin? He must have known of the apostles casting out the demon. He must have heard something of their teaching of Jesus. He saw how they endured the scourging and the dungeon and the stocks. He had been aroused by the earthquake. Paul had saved him from suicide. All this made him feel God's nearness and his own sin and need. What question did the jailer ask? From what did he want to be *saved?* On what accounts is this the great question? Why is it a pleasant question for Christian workers to hear? What was Paul's answer? To whom does he point the inquirer? What is the difference between believing Christ and believing *on Christ?* What is faith in Jesus Christ? "Receiving and resting upon Jesus Christ as he is offered to us

in the gospel." 1. Receiving, taking Jesus Christ *as my Saviour*. 2. Resting upon, trusting in, relying on him. What else did they speak to the jailer? v. 32. What do you understand here by the word of the Lord? In what way did the jailer show his changed heart? Why did he wash their stripes before being baptized? What bearing does the baptism of Lydia's "house" and the jailer's "house" have on the question of *infant baptism?* How long did it take this heathen jailer to become a Christian? How long will it take any person to become a Christian?

III. *The Change in the Magistrates.*

What change had taken place in the circumstances of Paul and Silas since they were thrust into the inner prison? What change had taken place in the jailer? What change of opinion had taken place in the magistrates? What had caused this change? What word did they send? Why did Paul refuse this manner of being dismissed? In what way had Paul and Silas been greatly outraged? What is it to be a Roman? From what treatment was a Roman always exempt or free? What were the magistrates compelled to do? What effect would this change in the treatment of Paul and Silas have upon the position of the new church at Philippi? Why did Paul yield to the request of the magistrates to depart out of the city? Who remained at Philippi? For what purpose? What lesson may you learn from the occurrence of the earthquake? From the midnight conversion of the jailer? From the dignified conduct of Paul toward the magistrates afterwards?

Questions on the Lesson for Sabbath, Feb. 24th:

1. Describe the geographical position of Thessalonica and its history.
2. What truths did Paul preach at Thessalonica?
3. In what ways has Christianity turned the world upside down?
4. Narrate the persecution at Thessalonica.
5. What noble traits did the Bereans possess?
6. What are now the benefits of real study of the Scriptures?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

SUGGESTIONS.—The first gospel sermon in Europe was by a river's side; the second was in a prison cell. How effective were both! The incident of the present lesson is a remarkable one. Have a large letter S on the board. Speak of the event which led to the arrest of Paul and Silas, and the trial before the unbelieving magistrates. After speaking of the "many stripes" which were laid upon God's servants, and describing this mode of punishment, print "Stripes" as in diagram. Then they were "thrust," not led into, the inner cell. "This was a pestilential cell, damp and cold, from which the light was excluded, and where the chains rusted on the limbs of the prisoners." To make their imprisonment doubly secure their feet were made fast in the stocks. Describe the painfulness of this posture, with their flesh torn and bleeding from the stripes of the hard leather thongs with which they had been beaten, and print "Stocks" as in diagram. Note the sustaining grace of God, and print as in diagram. The effect upon Paul and Silas—"they prayed and sang praises unto God." Here was an instance where the choir was in the pulpit. The feet of the publishers of peace were in the stocks, but none the less beautiful. "They couldn't bend their knees in prayer, but they could lift their hearts and voices to heaven." God gave them a song in the night. Print "The song in the night." Note heaven's Amen to the prisoners' prayers, and heaven's chorus to their songs, "The shaken prison," and print same. The effect of all this upon the jailer—the at-

tempted and prevented suicide, the opening of his heart to the truth as it was in Christ, and the salvation of himself and his family. Two miracles here performed—the opened jail and the opened hearts. Print, as in diagram, "Salvation through Christ," and explain that it is a fact.

A certain fact—"Thou *shalt* be saved."

A personal fact—"*Thou* shalt be saved."

The board at the close will present an outline of the lesson, that will tend to fasten the truth on the mind of the youngest scholar.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Blackboard.—A rude outline of a prison. Marks for prisoners; a square for an inner room, with marks for the missionaries. A red line leading upward to represent their prayers. Let class describe the scene, you throwing in the vivid details.

At the proper time, in the development of the story, make several links representing the broken chains in the prison, and draw a white line from the one representing prayer, letting it touch these broken links. Print on this line the words—

GOD'S ANSWER.

Impress the thought that his part was the apparently impossible. No human power could have broken those chains, or so suddenly thrown open all those closely locked doors, but God had no difficulty in doing it.

The jailer's question—the most important question that ever has or ever can be asked.

Print the name JESUS in large letters inside the prison, and make rays of light diverging from it. Jesus said hundreds of years ago that he was the light of the world; and the world, if it ever gets to heaven, must still be lighted there by him. Paul's answer is just as true today as it was then.

Now for the practical part—two lessons. The teacher must determine which to use, according to the needs of her class.

1. The way to heaven. Have the children found it? Is Jesus the LIGHT to them? Many illustrations troop up before the mind which might be used at this time. A light is of no use unless one uses it. Charley's father's lantern may be lighted, ready to show the way through the dark street, but if Charley refuses to take it, he will go stumbling along in the dark, no matter how brightly that lantern may be shining for somebody else. Have your little children refused to let Jesus shine into their hearts?

The golden text needs careful explanation, and should be illustrated simply. The story of Charley and the lantern can be utilized. If Charley believes that he cannot get through the street in the dark, and that the lantern would guide him safely, he will certainly take it. It is because he trusts in himself, believes that he shall get along pretty well alone, that he neglects to take it.

2. If your children belong to Jesus, they must spread the light. The world is full of people who are calling, like the jailer, for light, and the only sure light is that which shines from Jesus. Paul showed it to the jailer. Who can your children guide to the true Light?

Lesson VIII. THE THESSALONIANS AND BEREANS. Feb. 24th, 1884.

Acts 17: 1-14. Memorize vs. 2-4.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."—Acts 17: 11.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 17: 1-14....*Scripture Study Commended.*
T. Deut. 6: 1-13....*Scripture Study Commanded.*
W. Neh. 8: 1-28.....*The Scriptures Read.*
Th. Ps. 119: 33-48...*The Scriptures Searched.*
F. Luke 24: 13-32..*The Scriptures Explained.*
S. Ps. 119: 97-112..*The Scriptures Loved.*
S. 1 Thess. 1: 1-10..*The Thessalonians Commended.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Gospel at Thessalonica. 2. The Gospel at Berea.

Time.—A. D. 51.

Places.—Thessalonica and Berea.

Catechism.—Q. 60. *How is the Sabbath to be sanctified?* The Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day, even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days; and spending the whole time in the public and private exercises of God's worship, except so much as is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—From Philippi the missionaries hastened on to other cities. Paul never rested anywhere. As soon as he had done his work in one place he hastened on to another. We must

remember that he was not a tourist, traveling for pleasure, or to see the country, nor a man seeking his fortune in strange lands. There was in his heart a mighty twofold love that led him on, a love for Christ and a love for the lost. So we see him here hurrying on with great eagerness, and preaching Christ wherever he went. His example in this ought to be very inspiring to us. We ought to be just as earnest as he was in our desire to carry the gospel to those who are lost. Every one that hears of Christ is commanded to go out and invite others to come to him. Every one that is saved ought to be earnest in desiring to see others saved too. Our lesson tells us how he was received at two different places—Thessalonica and Berea. At the one place the greater part of the people became so angry that they would not even listen to hear what he had to say, but raised a mob and drove him away. At the other place they listened patiently, and then began to look into the Scriptures to see whether what they heard was really true.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

1 Now when they had passed through Am-phip'o-lis, and A-pol-lo'ni-a, they came to Thes-sa-lo-ni'ca, where was a synagogue of the Jews:

2 And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, [Luke 4: 16; Acts 9: 20; 19: 8.]

3 Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Je'sus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ. [Luke 24: 26, 46.]

4 And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Si'las; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few. [Acts 28: 24; 15: 22, 27.]

5 ¶ But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Ja'son, and sought to bring them out to the people. [1 Thess. 2: 14; Rom. 16: 21.]

6 And when they found them not, they drew Ja'son and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also.

7 Whom Ja'son hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Cæ'sar, saying that there is another king, *one* Je'sus. [Luke 23: 2; John 19: 12.]

8 And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things.

9 And when they had taken security of Ja'son, and of the others, they let them go.

10 ¶ And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Si'las by night unto Be-re'a: who coming *thither* went into the synagogue of the Jews. [Acts 9: 25; 2 Thess. 2: 16, 17.]

11 These were more noble than those in Thes-sa-lo-ni'ca, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. [Isa. 34: 16; John 5: 39.]

12 Therefore many of them believed; also of honorable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.

13 But when the Jews of Thes-sa-lo-ni'ca had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Be-re'a, they came thither also, and stirred up the people.

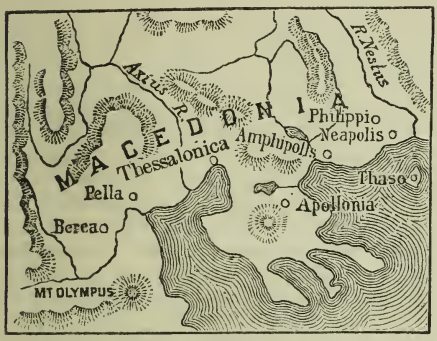
14 And then immediately the brethren sent away Paul to go as it were to the sea: but Si'las and Tim-o'the-us abode there still. [Matt. 10: 23.]

REVISED VERSION.

1 Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thes-
salonica, where was a synagogue of the
2 Jews: and Paul, as his custom was, went in
unto them, and for three sabbath days rea-
3 soned with them from the scriptures, opening
and alleging, that it behoved the Christ to
suffer, and to rise again from the dead; and
that this Jesus, whom, *said he*, I proclaim
4 unto you, is the Christ. And some of them
were persuaded, and consorted with Paul
and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great
multitude, and of the chief women not a
5 few. But the Jews, being moved with jeal-
ousy, took unto them certain vile fellows of
the rabble, and gathering a crowd, set the
city on an uproar; and assaulting the house
of Jason, they sought to bring them forth to
6 the people. And when they found them not,
they dragged Jason and certain brethren be-
fore the rulers of the city, crying, These that
have turned the world upside down are come
7 hither also; whom Jason hath received: and
these all act contrary to the decrees of
Cæsar, saying that there is another king, *one*
8 Jesus. And they troubled the multitude and
the rulers of the city, when they heard these
9 things. And when they had taken security
from Jason and the rest, they let them go.
10 And the brethren immediately sent away
Paul and Silas by night unto Berœa: who
when they were come thither went into the
11 synagogue of the Jews. Now these were
more noble than those in Thessalonica, in
that they received the word with all read-
iness of mind, examining the scriptures daily,
12 whether these things were so. Many of
them therefore believed; also of the Greek
women of honorable estate, and of men, not
13 a few. But when the Jews of Thessalonica
had knowledge that the word of God was
proclaimed of Paul at Berœa also, they came
thither likewise, stirring up and troubling
14 the multitudes. And then immediately the
brethren sent forth Paul to go as far as to
the sea: and Silas and Timothy abode there
still.

1 *Amphipolis.* About thirty-three miles from Philippi, on the Egnatian road. It figured

prominently in the history of the Peloponnesian war. At the time Paul passed through it it was an important Roman military station. Its name means "Roundabout town," from the fact that it was nearly surrounded by the river Strymon. *Apollonia.* An unimportant town about thirty miles from Amphipolis. No stay was made in



either of these places. *Thessalonica.* So called by Cassandra, one of Alexander's generals, who enlarged the city and named it in honor of his wife. At the time of Paul's visit it was the most important city in Macedonia and its metropolis. It is now called Saloniki, and has a population of 70,000, more than half of whom are Jews. *Where was a synagogue.* This fact determined Paul's stopping there. It was a decided advantage to him to have a synagogue in which to begin his work in any place.

2 *As his manner was.* Chaps. 13: 14; 16: 13; 17: 10; 18: 4. See also Luke 4: 16, where we learn that our Lord's custom was the same. *Three sabbath days.* Jewish sabbaths, on which days the Jews would assemble. His custom was to offer the gospel first to the Jews. He must have remained longer than three weeks, since he left there the nucleus of a strong Christian Church, but he probably gave the three sabbaths to special work among his own people. The fact that while there the Philippian Christians twice sent gifts (Phil. 4: 16), indicates a considerable stay, since the distance was a hundred miles. Paul supported himself while at Thessalonica. 1 Thess. 2: 9.

3 *Opening and alleging.* He reasoned with the Jews from their own Scriptures, *opening* or explaining to them the prophecies concerning the Messiah, and *alleging*, setting forth the proofs. *That Christ must needs.* That their Scriptures so required. *That this Jesus.* That Jesus was the very Messiah foretold. He preached, first, that their prophecies required a *suffering* Messiah; second, that Jesus fulfilled the requirement.

4 *Some of them believed.* Some of the Jews. *Consorted with.* Cast in their lot with, became confessed Christians. *Devout Greeks.* Gentiles who had been worshiping with the Jews. They were not necessarily all full proselytes; some may have been proselytes of the gate, having only in part embraced the Jewish faith. There were many more of these than of the Jews. *Chief women.* Prominent Gentile women.

5 *The Jews . . . moved with envy.* Revised Version, *Jealousy.* Because they saw some of their number drawn away from their party. These were probably prominent Jewish leaders, who were afraid of losing power over their people. *Certain lewd fellows.* Idle men who lounged about the market-places, and were ready always for anything. *An uproar.* They stirred up a popular tumult. *The house of Jason.* Jason was evidently entertaining Paul and Silas in his house. *To bring them out.* That is, the missionaries. The rabble wished to have them in their own power.

6 *They drew Jason.* Failing to get their hands on Paul and Silas they seized Jason, and violently dragged him before the rulers. The word for *rulers* here is *politarchs.* Thessalonica was a free city. It is a striking incidental proof of the accuracy of this history that while the word *politarch* is nowhere in classic Greek applied to the rulers of a city, an inscription has been found on an ancient arch at Thessalonica, which contains the names of seven magistrates of that city who are called *politarchs. Upside down.* Evidently the fame of what Christianity had already done had reached their ears. This enforced testimony by heathen men to the power of the gospel is very striking.

7 *The decrees of Cæsar.* The Roman emperor under whose jurisdiction Macedonia was. *Another king, one Jesus.* Paul had no doubt preached of Christ as a King, and the mob seized on this fact to make out a charge of treason against him as a justification of their uproar. See Luke 23: 2; John 19: 12.

8, 9 *They troubled the people and the rulers.* This statement caused alarm, suggesting revolt. *Security of Jason.* Perhaps a deposit of money was required as security that no treason should be attempted, or possibly that Paul and Silas should depart from the city.

10, 11 *Sent away.* To avoid further danger. *By night.* For greater safety. See chap. 9: 25. *Berea.* Sixty miles south-west from Thessalonica. The modern name is Verria. *More noble.* Primarily the word refers to birth or rank, secondarily to character. Here the secondary sense is to be taken. *In that they received the word.* The writer here shows in what

their nobleness consisted. They received the word of the missionaries with readiness, and examined the Scriptures to see if what they heard was really so. That is, they were not bound by national prejudices.

12 *Therefore many of them believed.* Notice the "therefore;" their believing resulted from their study of the Scriptures. It was therefore an intelligent and well-grounded faith. *Honorable women.* Revised Version, "Women of honorable estate," that is, distinguished in this city for wealth, influence and position. See also chap. 13: 50. The frequent mention of women among the early converts is to be noticed. *Which were Greeks.* Referring to the women primarily, but probably "the men" in this verse were also Gentiles, v. 11, referring to *Jewish* converts.

13 *The Jews of Thessalonica.* See v. 5. *Came thither also.* They had driven Paul and his companions from Thessalonica, and now pursue them with bitter hatred, to break up their successful work in Berea. *Stirred up.* The Revised Version adds, "*and troubling.*" The figure in the first word is that of a storm at sea, stirring the waters to their lowest depths. Compare Isa. 57: 20. The second word is the same found in v. 8, probably implying that the trouble was produced in the same way as at Thessalonica, by false charges against the missionaries of disloyalty to Cæsar.

14 *Sent away Paul.* For safety. This was done immediately, indicating that the excitement was intense and the danger to the apostle very great. *As it were to the sea.* Revised Version, "As far as to the sea." In the Authorized Version the impression is given that Paul made a pretence of going by sea, and then to baffle his enemies went by land. The Revised Version, however, corrects this impression. *Silas and Timotheus abode there still.* The chief feeling of bitterness was against Paul, he being the prominent leader, and the others only his assistants. Silas and Timothy were not therefore in any particular danger and remained at Berea.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

I. The Gospel at Thessalonica. vs. 1–9.

1. **Christ found in the Old Testament.** *Paul . . . reasoned . . . from the Scriptures, opening and alleging that it behoved the Christ to suffer and to rise again.* As the rose with all its beauty and fragrance lies folded up in the unopened bud, so the gospel with all its preciousness lay wrapped up in the Old Testament. Paul found Christ in the ancient Scriptures, and when he preached to the Jews he took his texts from Moses and the prophets, and then showed how Jesus of Nazareth exactly fulfilled their ideas of the Messiah. Some people think that the Old Testament is dry and uninteresting, but when we get to understand it we find it full of rich things. Christ is everywhere in it. Dr. Arnot, speaking of Paul's preaching, says: "The Old Testament he treated as a nut. He broke the shell, opened out the kernel, and presented it as food to the hungry. The Jews were like little children who had a fruit-tree in their garden, their father's legacy. The children had gathered the nuts as they grew, and laid them up with reverence in a store-house; but they knew not how to break open the shell and so reach the kernel for food. Paul acts the part of elder brother to these little ones. He skilfully pierces the crust and extracts the fruit and divides it among them." That is what the teacher is to do in every lesson—open the nut of Scripture truth, take out the rich meat and give it to the hungry souls in the class.

2. **Christ accepted; Christ rejected.** *Some of them were persuaded and consorted with Paul and Silas. . . . But the Jews, being moved with jealousy, . . . set the city on an uproar.* So wherever the gospel goes it divides the people into two companies. Some accept and gather about Christ and into the company of his followers; others reject and array themselves against Christ. It was so when Jesus was on the earth. A few came close about him and clung to him with loyal love, while the multitude went their way in indifference or bitter hate. It was so at the last. When he hung on the cross there was a little cluster of devoted friends standing near and weeping while the throngs jeered and mocked. It is so wherever the gospel goes to-day; it is so in every Sabbath-school; it is so in many a class. (Is it so in yours?) It will be the same on the judgment-day. There will be two companies—a company of believing, obedient, loyal friends, the heirs with Christ of his glory, and another company of rejecters, disobedient, rebellious, unbelieving. To which of these companies we shall belong in that final day is being settled now, for in the judgment every one shall be where he belongs by life and character.

3. **An unconscious testimony.** *These that have turned the world upside down.* It is good to make the enemies of Christianity write its history and describe its triumphs. Many of the finest and truest things in the gospel about Christ are words spoken by his bitter foes. For example, when they saw publicans and sinners

drawn to Christ, they said, "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." Again, when he went home with Zaccheus, they said, "That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner." Both these bitter words in reality expressed truths which were the very glory of Christ's mission. When he was on his cross his enemies said in mockery, "He saved others; himself he cannot save." Again they spoke a great truth, for he could not save himself *and* save others; and he saved not himself that he might save others. In like manner, in their angry charge against these Christian missionaries, the Jews first gave a striking contemporary testimony to the influence of the gospel in the world, and further unconsciously described the very work which Christianity claims to do." "The world is wrong side up, and needs to be turned *upside down* to be brought right side up."

II. The Gospel at Berea vs. 10–14.

1. **Bereans listen eagerly.** *They received the word with all readiness of mind.* "Take heed how ye hear," said the Master, and here is an example of the right kind. They want to learn all they can. They do not think that they know everything. They listen with open ear and open mind. They are like the little flowers that turn their faces toward the sun to receive ever fresh warmth and light. They bend their faces toward the east whenever the faintest glimmer of light appears. Not only do they listen, but they listen with a childlike teachableness, ready to receive every word of truth they hear. They do not reject without inquiry everything which does not accord with their own theories and opinions. They are ready and eager to be taught and to be set right if they are wrong. They want to know the truth, even if it does play havoc with their pet ideas.

2. **Bereans are diligent inquirers.** *Examining the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so.* They listen eagerly and with teachable minds, but they do not blindly accept every word they hear as truth, until they have given it honest and sincere examination. They sift the teachings they hear. They think for themselves. No matter who the teacher is, they do not receive his words as invariably and infallibly true. They must first consider them and test them. This is what every one should do who listens to a sermon or a lesson in the Sabbath-school. Yet how many Christians have ever really investigated and thought out for themselves the statements of doctrine in the creed which they profess to hold? Yet this is the true thing to do. We ought to be able to give a reason for our beliefs and hopes.

3. **Bereans recognize the Bible as the only infallible standard of truth.** *They received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so.* They do not settle merely in their own mind the question whether what they hear is true or not, for they know that they are ignorant and apt to be mistaken. They carry every doctrine and every new statement they hear to the Bible and test it there. This is the revealed will of God, and is always true. There is no appeal from what the Scriptures say. It is important to remember this, for some who claim the right of independent judgment do not recognize any standard of truth outside of themselves. Reverence for God's word and the acceptance of its teachings as final and infallible are the marks of the genuine Berean spirit.

4. **Bereans believe what they find to be true.** *Many of them therefore believed.* Whenever they find that a statement or doctrine really accords with the Bible they unhesitatingly accept it, no matter how many of their former beliefs or ideas it may set aside. In the case of these first Bereans their whole former conception of the Messiah was swept away by the new teachings; but they did not hug their old idea and reject the new when they saw that the new was true according to the Scriptures. Believing, in the Bible sense, means the instant shaping of our life and conduct according to the teaching. For example, if you are satisfied that Christ is the only Saviour you should immediately make him *your* Saviour by personal faith. If you find a statement in the Bible that the only true life is one devoted to God in obedience, service and trust, you should instantly thus devote yourself to God. That is Berean believing.

LESSON POINTS.

1. We should have *habits* of Christian worship and service. v. 2.

2. The gospel finds its roots in the Old Testament. v. 3.

3. The teacher's and preacher's work is to find Christ in the Scriptures and show him to those who hear. v. 3.

4. The gospel divides men wherever it goes. vs. 4, 5.

5. The spirit of persecution refuses to listen and to examine. v. 5.

6. The noblest minds are those that receive truth with a teachable spirit. v. 11.

7. We are to examine the doctrines taught us to see if they are true. v. 11.

8. The word of God is the standard of truth by which all teachings are to be tested. v. 11.

9. Whatever we find to be God's truth we should take into our lives. v. 12.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

SUGGESTIONS.—Have the board prepared as above previous to the opening of the school, but not exposed to view until the desk lesson is commenced. Contrast the reception of Paul's teachings by the Thessalonians with that of the Bereans. Urge the scholars to have the nobility of the latter, which was not the nobility of rank, but the nobility of disposition; a desire to know whether these things are so; and then have each text read, proving out of the Scriptures that a sin-bearing Saviour must be a suffering Saviour. In Thessalonica, "some believed;" in Berea, "many believed." How will it be with us? Reserve the drawing of the cross outline until the close of the lesson, and magnify the death of Christ as the atonement for sin.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

There are two ways in which this lesson may be taught. One is the common way of following the narrative of Paul's labors and persecution at Thessalonica and at Berea. Step by step, and as you go along, apply the lessons suitable for your scholars. Another way is, to seize upon one great theme in this passage and make all else revolve around that. Shall we not, to vary our method, attempt this latter way? What is the great theme of Paul both at Thessalonica and at Berea? Undoubtedly *Christ's sufferings and resurrection as contained in the Scriptures.* Read vs. 2, 3 and 11. All the verses cluster in their meaning around that. Outline our subject.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES.	*At Thessalonica*	Taught, Believed, Opposed.
	At Berea	Taught, Studied, Believed, Opposed.

Then fill up.

I. AT THESSALONICA. *Christ in the Scriptures taught.* Bring out the distance of Thessalonica from Philippi; its history, importance, geography, the number of Jews there, etc. To whom did Paul first preach in any city? Why? How long was his stay in Thessalonica? In what words are his teachings in the synagogues described? vs. 2, 3. What concerning Christ did he most emphasize? From what did he strive to prove to the Jews that Christ must needs die and arise? What Scriptures? On what accounts is it best to base all our efforts to win souls on the Scriptures? They are God's chosen means (1) of convincing men of sin (Rom. 3: 20; 7: 9); (2) of regenerating the soul (1 Pet. 1: 23; James 1: 6); (3) of enabling us to believe (Rom. 10: 17); (4) of making us holy. John 17: 17; Eph. 5: 26. Bring out that all the Scripture centres in Christ. John 5: 39. Then bring out the point that Paul *taught—conversed* with those in the synagogue, and did not simply preach and lecture. He "*reasoned*" with them out of the Scriptures. The result. *Some Jews, and a great multitude of Greeks believed.*

Opposed. What evil passion was the origin of this persecution? For what did the Jews envy Paul and Silas? Their popularity and success. Bring out faithfully the facts relating to this mob, especially the charges that Paul and Silas were "turning the world upside down," and Jason's grand behavior. What gave rise to the charge that Paul had said that "there is another king, one Jesus?" Paul we know preached and taught that Jesus was *the coming King.* Luke 23: 2. What kind of a King is Jesus? John 19: 12.

II. AT BEREA. Why did they travel at night?

In what were the Bereans more noble than the Thessalonians? Golden text. In what ways did they probably search the Scriptures?

1. *At Home.* It says "daily." Probably they did not go daily to the synagogue. What are some of the advantages of studying the Bible *in the family?* (*a*) The family is God's first Bible-school. Gen. 14: 14; 18: 19. See also again 2 Tim. 3: 15; Deut. 6: 4–9. (*b*) By the laws of nature God gives the home the first place as a Bible-school.

2. *In the Closet.* Ps. 1: 2; Job 23: 12; Ps. 119: 97.

3. *In the Church.* What was the result of the Bereans' faithful searching of the Scriptures? What advantages are there in an entire church meeting as a Bible-school? (*a*) On what accounts does every one in the church and in the community need to come to the Bible-school? (*b*) What are Christ's followers most commonly called in the New Testament? Disciples. What is the meaning of the word disciple? Learner, *scholar*, one who is in Christ's school. How would the whole church at Bible study in the school increase their knowledge? In what way would it make it a *working* church? How would the attendance of the whole church at the Bible-school help to gather in those outside? Bring out also the nobility of Bible study. See v. 11.

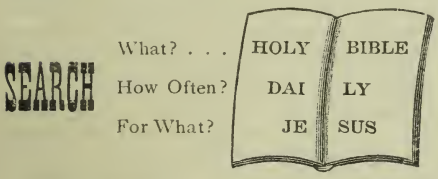
1. It has the noblest subject—Christ.
2. It has the noblest author—the Holy Spirit.
3. It has the noblest object—salvation.
4. It has the noblest students—the saints of all ages.

Questions for Sabbath, March 2d:

1. Describe Paul's journey from Berea to Athens.
2. For what was Athens noted?
3. How did all its art and philosophy and life make Paul feel?
4. Describe Mars' hill.
5. What are some of the truths in Paul's speech on Mars' hill?

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Blackboard Outline.—Sign of nobility—



The Lesson Introduced.—"One day I saw a little girl down on her hands and knees pushing away the dried leaves that lay in heaps on the ground, looking eagerly all the while, first on one side of her, then on the other. What do you think she was doing?" (Enlarge upon this as much as necessary, until you get the answer that she was *searching* for something.)

Suppose she had just given a glance at the leaves, rustled them about with her feet a little, and then ran away, do you think she could have been anxious to find it?

Suppose she had forgotten to look for it, would that have made you think she was very anxious?

The Lesson Developed.—Our lesson to-day is about a treasure for which people were to search. (Print the word.) It is also about two kinds of people. One kind, it says, were more "noble" than the others. What do you think is the meaning of that word? Encourage a talk about nobility. Would your children like to be called "noble?" How can they show to others that they are? Call for facts in the lesson, drawing them out by questions.

Now what did these Bereans search? (Print the word "What," and outline the Bible.) I know a little boy who reads a few verses in the Bible every Sunday. How often did these people read it? (Print the word "DAILY.") If you should drop a penny on this floor, do you think it would be worth looking for? But suppose you had a ten-dollar gold piece, and should drop it, do you think you would look more carefully? If I should tell you there was something very precious hidden in this book for you (hold up a large Bible), do you think you would try to find it? Well, did the Bereans look for something that was worth spending time over? (Call out the answer, and print the word "JESUS.")

Let your personal object in teaching this lesson be, to try to educate a company of daily Bible readers. So many things to search for in the Bible. They have all heard of heaven, but the Bible is the only book in the world that tells about it. Suppose they search for all that it says about heaven and the way thither? They have heard that Jesus can cure the disease of sin. Will they search and see if he said so in the Bible? Does the Bible tell about any whom he cured?

You get my idea, teachers. It will bear developing in many ways. Study out the way best adapted to your scholars. Encourage in them a desire to be "noble" in God's sight.

But, finally, they all know enough of what is in the Bible to begin to serve Jesus to-day. Will they do it?

ABOUT NEW BOOKS.

..An edition of Professor Alexander F. Mitchell's recent work, THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY: Its History and Standards, will soon be gotten out by the Presbyterian Board of Publication. It is decidedly in advance of any work on this subject heretofore produced; indeed, Professor Mitchell is the authority *par excellence* on the doings of that historic and immensely influential assembly, whose labors gave their standards to the Presbyterian churches of the Old and New World.

..The appearance of ECCE CŒLUM by the then little known author, Dr. E. F. Burr, of Lyme, Connecticut, created a sensation in the reading community, and gave promise of good things to come. The promise has not been unfulfilled. A volume by Dr. Burr, soon to be published by the Presbyterian Board of Publication, with the title ECCE TERRA, it is thought will take rank at once with his first and still most popular book, ECCE CŒLUM, to which it is a mate and counterpart, but written with more mature powers. Its fire, force and brilliancy will give it a high place at once. It develops the idea of the manifested working of a divine hand in the structure and government of the earth.

..THE RIDE THROUGH PALESTINE, by Dr. J. W. Dulles, is a book that is proving itself most helpful in very many quarters. It tells so much about Palestine in such a delightful way that all who have the book find themselves using it as a book of constant reference in the study of the Bible. This fresh notice of it is given here that teachers and adult scholars who do not have access to it may know of its great value. It abounds in excellent illustrations and maps, and is written in a style of great clearness and simplicity. Presbyterian Board. Price, $2.00.

..*The Interior* has this to say among other things of DR. GRANTLEY'S NEIGHBORS, by Ella Beckwith Keeney and Annette Lucille Noble: "The characters that are portrayed, the incidents that are described, the devotional spirit that is manifested, and the saving gospel truths that are forcibly yet attractively inculcated render this one of the most wholesome and pleasant volumes that have been recently written for the young people. It can scarcely fail to be a successful book, and it should soon find a prominent place in all our Sabbath-school libraries." Price, $1.15.

..WEEK-DAY RELIGION, by the Rev. J. R. Miller, still has a large sale. Letters are constantly coming with commendatory words. One pastor writes: "I have read with great interest "Week-Day Religion," and now wish half a dozen copies to loan continually in my congregation. The book will help many young Christians in the way of eternal life. God has blessed the author's words, and will still do so." A Christian lady writes: "I have read and re-read it with pleasure, and with profit, too. I love to circulate it among my friends, and have given away a number of copies." Presbyterian Board. Price, $1.00.

..THE STORY OF A STORY. By Margaret Lee. The aim of this book is to teach the importance of the girls of a family, in however good worldly circumstances, being so trained as to be able to support themselves should adversity ever overtake them. The girls of a family in reduced circumstances find themselves, though having received a "finished" education, with no knowledge of any branch sufficient to qualify them to teach it. One of them undertakes to remedy the defect, and we have here the narrative of her struggles and failures for a time, until at last she finds her "talent," and the world finds out she has it, when success follows. The "Story" whose story is here told was the means of winning the way for the weary author. New York: Ward & Drummond. Price, $1.25.

..ROSA VON TANNENBURG. Translated from the German of Schmid. By Lucie Agness Archer. This story has long been popular among the Germans. It is intended to inculcate the lesson that "careful religious training in youth best secures true happiness and usefulness in after-life." There is much of interest in the story itself, and its lessons are true and of a high order. The translation is graceful, and the publishers have given the book a beautiful dress. New York: Ward & Drummond. 172 pages. Price, 75 cents.

..GLEAMS FROM PAUL'S PRISON. By Wayland Hoyt, D.D. The secondary title gives a fuller idea of the design of this little volume. It is a series of "Studies for the daily life in the Epistle to the Philippians." In his preface the author says that his book is an attempt to read one of the sweetest and most stimulating of the Epistles of the great Apostle *through*, and to disclose its multiform relation with the daily life. It is not a commentary, but a series of expository sermons. Dr. Hoyt handles God's word with skill. New York: Ward & Drummond. Price, $1.00.

..We have four stories from the pen of Silas K. Hocking, all of which are pleasantly written, with good teachings. The first is, HER BENNY. In the preface the author, who appears to be a pastor in an English city, intimates that the materials for his story were gathered among the lower classes in his parish work, and says that while the grouping of the characters is fictitious the characters themselves are not. It is a story of the better side of street Arab life, showing what the influences of the gospel may do in the taking up of the most ignorant and degraded, and the transforming of them into nobleness of character. Another of these stories is HIS FATHER. A dying mother bequeaths as a legacy to her boy the care of his father, who is a wretched man. The book tells of the boy's faithfulness to his trust amid many sore trials and at great personal sacrifice. The incidents are interesting. SEA WAIF is the story of a child brought ashore by a dog in a basket from a wreck. He is cared for by kindly people, whom he afterward well repays by sending valuable help in the time of great need. IVY is the story of a girl who by her mother's death was left at eleven years of age to assume the care of the home, and who proved herself brave and noble, fulfilling well her mission. These stories may all be commended. They are designed to show the value and the elevating influence of Christian principle. The books are handsome in their make-up, and are uniform in binding. New York: Ward & Drummond. Price, each volume, $1.00.

..In a private letter to the editor of the WESTMINSTER TEACHER, Dr. W. M. Baker, shortly before his death, in speaking of his "Ten Theophanies," said: "Of course I am liable to be mistaken, but I venture to hope that I have made in two or three of the Theophanies, especially the first, what may almost be styled discoveries; not imaginations of my own, but actual discoveries in regard to the Christ before his incarnation, which rest upon the most evident interpre-

THE WESTMINSTER TEACHER.

VOL. XII. MARCH, 1884. No. 3.

—Primary class teachers will thank us for Pansy's excellent article in this number. It will not do other teachers any harm to read it. Even superintendents may get a hint from it.

—Are you doing the better work you promised on New Year's day to do this year? This is a good time to ask the question. Any one can have good intentions and make good promises; it is the *doing* that is the test of living, not the planning and resolving. It is the doing, too, that counts in results; mere intentions do not yield much at fruit-gathering time.

—This month brings us again to a quarterly review, and it is in order to say, that in this lesson very little help can be given either to teachers or superintendents. All depends on the kind of work that has been done during the quarter. If nothing has been taught, there is of course nothing to review. If the teaching has been thorough, there will be little difficulty.

—Three years ago Dr. H. Clay Trumbull, the editor of the *Sunday School Times*, visited the Holy Land and made some important discoveries concerning the site of Kadesh-Barnea. The results of these discoveries, to which the author has added greatly by exhaustive studies since his return, are now presented in a book of great interest, entitled "Kadesh-Barnea." The volume will receive full notice in our next number. The price is $5.00.

—Of "Half Hours with the Lessons of 1884," most gratifying reports are heard. The book realizes our promise that it would even excel the similar volume of last year. It is not yet too late to get it. Besides being exceedingly helpful to superintendents and teachers, it is an admirable help in the home, where all prepare the lesson together. We would suggest that if the sermons on the lessons were read aloud in the home, on Sabbath evenings one week in advance, the benefit would be great.

—The praises of sympathy are often and justly sounded. But the sympathy that truly helps is more than a mere responsive echo to sorrow or need; it enters into the experiences of others that it may by its inspirations make them stronger and more able to bear trial or grief. It is sometimes said in commendation of a pastor: "He is so sympathetic, that the poor and those who have trouble all love him." That is very well, but how much good does he do them by his sympathy? Does he merely weep with them, talking over their trials, commiserating them, and then leaving them where he found them? If that is all, what better are they for his visits? If he is a wise and really helpful friend, he will not be content with such sympathizing. He will try to put great thoughts of comfort into their hearts to help them to bear their troubles. He will seek to inspire courage and hope where he finds discouragement and despair. He will endeavor to teach them not only to *submit* to God's will, but to *do* his will as well, to go on with their duty, to bear their sorrows Christianly, and to come out of them better, stronger, richer, in life and character.

Personal Talks With Scholars.

THERE is no part of a teacher's work that requires more thought and wisdom than that of personal dealing with scholars concerning salvation. The true aim of all teaching, until pupils have become Christians, is to bring them to Christ. The lessons should be so directed as to keep before them continually, on the one hand, their need of a Saviour, and on the other hand, the completeness of Christ's redemption work. But class-teaching, however wise, faithful and careful, is not enough. The lesson needs to be followed up by the teacher in the case of each individual member, in close, personal and watchful soul-care. Otherwise, tender impressions made in the class on the Sabbath, which might be deepened and permanently fixed, are apt to pass away like the early dew. The teacher's work does not end when the lesson closes and the class scatters; he is a pastor, with the care of souls and must seek in every way to bring them into the fold of Christ.

Class-teaching may be very earnest and faithful, and the divine word may be so presented as to produce very deep conviction and a strong desire to be saved and to confess Christ; yet there is need, in most cases at least, of private conversation besides, to guide the trembling penitent to the cross and to impart to the timid soul the courage necessary for a public confession. Many sincere seekers after Christ walk along in dark-

ness and perplexity for want of only a few wise words to bring them out into the full light. Many who have truly given themselves to Christ and are faithfully following him in secret, do not for a long time make a public confession, and simply because no one speaks to them the word of encouragement which they need to enable them to take this decisive step.

But while this personal work is so important, it is also one of very great delicacy and responsibility, and requires much wisdom. It is not enough, each time a communion is approaching, to urge a scholar to unite with the church. There is too much of this sort of perfunctory and mechanical talk in many classes, which results too often in church-membership without conversion. The true aim in teaching is not to get scholars to join the church, but to lead them to Christ and to attach them to him by saving faith.

Another frequent mistake is *too much talking* to scholars on the subject of personal salvation. This is the error of very zealous and earnest teachers, who lack the patience of Christ in sowing the seed and waiting for it to grow in its natural way. Spiritual work must not be hastened. Fruit must not be forced on the branches of God's vine. Too persistent urging has driven many a pupil away from a class, delaying for a long time at least, perhaps imperiling altogether, a soul's conversion. Or it has led to premature church-membership aud immature, superficial discipleship, marring the whole after Christian life. There is the greatest need of wise patience in leading tender souls out into the light and into public avowal. It would seem to be impossible to make a mistake in urging prompt decision for Christ, yet really great harm may be done in this way to sensitive souls. As in nature, so in grace, the seed must have time to grow in its own order. The wise teacher, while intensely earnest in his desire to see his scholars confess Christ, and while never intermitting his faithfulness, will not try to hasten the work but will quietly wait for the processes of the Holy Spirit.

While guarding against these and other mistakes, it is yet most important that every teacher of unconverted scholars should, from time to time, speak personally with all of them on the matter of their own salvation. However, no rules can be prescribed for this part of the teacher's work. Indeed, it should never be done by rule at all, or from a sense of duty, but always from love. No teacher is ever qualified for such words unless his heart is burdened with a desire for his scholars' salvation. Perfunctory appeals will accomplish nothing. It is loving and gentle guidance that the young need. This the teacher can best give by being the close and intimate friend of his scholars, by meeting them frequently outside of the school, by keeping up a constant familiarity with their life and thought, by conversing with them whenever opportunity offers, thus knowing their state of mind at all times with regard to religious things and being ready at any point to speak the word in season. If a certain lesson appears to make a deep impression on a particular scholar, the watchful teacher will take the earliest opportunity, in a few quiet words in private, to deepen the impression. This must be done very cautiously, for religious feelings are very sensitive. Ofttimes a single warm earnest word, spoken as the teacher takes the scholar's hand at parting, will do more to deepen feeling, to start serious thought or to fix good resolve than an hour of pleading and urging would do at another time. Often indirect influence is better than purposed effort. A letter is sometimes of more value than a conversation, for it is likely to be kept and read over and over.

But the teacher who is truly interested in the salvation of his scholars will find ways of reaching them; for, after all, it is a heart of love that is the best qualification for winning souls. Christ loved sinners into loving him. He entered into sympathy with them; he was moved with compassion for them; he went down to them where they lay in their sins, and by the strength of his affection for them drew them up toward his own blessed purity, as the sun lifts the soiled water from the gutters and leaves it on the mountain-tops in flakes of snow as white as its own radiant beams.

The great secret for the teacher is love—love for Christ and love for souls, for souls must be *won*, and only love can win.

Christian Activity.

BY THE REV. M. C. BAILEY.

IN the providence of God I was once made for a short time a guest of the Superintendent of an United States arsenal. I observed that armed soldiers were kept incessantly pacing their beats day and night. As it was a time of profound peace, the regulation requiring such service appeared not only useless but oppressive. In answer to the question why such duties were enjoined my host said, "We impose this obligation for disciplinary purposes. If these men were not required to obey such orders they would become dissatisfied and soon cease to be good soldiers." How forcibly this illustrates the need of the Christian soldier. Setting aside the missionary command to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every

creature, shutting our eyes to the good we may do to others, we need Christian work for our own good. The law of activity is intimately connected with our entire well-being. Our happiness and safety depend much more than we can believe upon our activity. The idle man is a ready prey and a fit instrument for Satan. This is true of our Christian life. When we cease to work, our love becomes cold, our faith becomes weak, and our hearts become the abodes of sins and doubts. The best cure for such troubles, and the best safeguard against them, is Christian activity. It will do us more good to pray for others than to have others pray for us.

Foreign Missions in Primary Classes.

BY PANSY.

THE question: How to develop the spirit of benevolence in children, is one that demands careful attention. I am persuaded that little is being done in this direction compared with what might be done. The great majority of primary workers among the masses, seem to think that such a thing as intelligent conscientious giving in childhood, is an impossibility. The result is, that the darkest ignorance prevails among the babies as to what is done with their money after it is dropped into that great vortex, the collection box.

I once questioned a class of little immortals who had obediently dropped their pennies, when the long-handled box was poked at them, as to what was to be done with those pennies; whether they were glad to give them, whether they thought it a wise investment on the whole. I received a variety of puzzled answers, bearing evidence of gross ignorance. Not a small minority of the midgets agreed that the pennies went to pay teacher for her Sabbath-school work. I was glad that the blushing young teacher heard the embarrassing answer, for I feel certain that she, at least, carefully taught from that time, the intended uses of these pennies. Since that experience, I have made the experiment a number of times, and with nearly equal failures. One class of children were sure that their pennies were to pay the pastor for coming in to see them every Sabbath morning, because he always took them away in his pocket. Not having been taught any better, I appeal to you as to whether this was not an entirely legitimate conclusion.

Teaching nothing at all about giving, is the great extreme. Yet you would be astonished at the large number of Primary teachers who do just that, and nothing else. Teaching a one-sided benevolence, or at best a very narrow-sided one, is the next mistake, only a shade less disastrous than teaching nothing at all. I am acquainted with Sabbath-school workers who unhesitatingly affirm that they do not believe in teaching little children anything about Foreign Missions. They are too young to comprehend the subject; they have so little to give, that it should be held at home; they can be made to understand home work, and sympathize with it, but it is absurd to expect them to care for the heathen, or to understand anything about the work of Foreign Missions.

That all this is nonsense, I need hardly stop to prove. You who are posted on the subject, know there is nothing that sounds quite so much like a marvelous fairy tale, as a well told story of the manners, and customs, and progress toward the Light, which heathen nations are making; and you who teach little children, know how delightedly they revel in the kingdom of the marvelous. As a matter of fact, it is much more easy to interest wee people in Foreign, than in Home missions. Some common-place little boys and girls who wear coats, dresses, shoes and stockings, like other people, and eat and sleep and talk like other people, who believe in the same great God, but who do not pray to him at all, who know about the Bible, the one book of God, but who never read it, may be very hungry, very homeless, very ignorant, but the average baby forgets in two minutes to be sorry for them, or to think anything about them. But those queer, olive skinned, strangely dressed, little painted creatures, who eat with their fingers, or with chopsticks, who never slept on a bed in their lives, who have a dozen gods and pray to them all, who believe in signs, and omens, and witches, and everything else that the average American baby knows is all nonsense; you can hold your children spell-bound with accounts of these far away, picturesque heathen; and they will be not only ready but eager to send their pennies across oceans, if you but open to their imaginations the direct channel of communication.

Why should not the little ones be carefully instructed in regard to Foreign Missions? Sometimes I think we forget that the word Foreign as we use it, is a word of our own. The Lord Jesus who made of one blood all the nations of the earth, and who was "lifted up" on the cross, that he might "draw all men unto him," and who left the commission: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," said nothing about Home or Foreign fields, save to direct that the work *begin* at *once* just where the workers are. It is well to remember, that the only foreigners he recognizes as such, are those who are "strangers from the

covenant of promise," and those whom he looks upon as at home, are, "fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God."

There is a right and a wrong way to do things, you will remember, and a great many shades lying between those two extremes. To go into your class-room and say: Now children we are going to take up a collection to-day for the poor benighted heathen across the ocean, and we hope you will give liberally to this cause," is about as useless a waste of words as can well be imagined. Remember, you are dealing with people who care nothing about a "world lying in wickedness," or the "millions that sit in darkness." They are practical little sinners, every one of them; give them facts that they can see, or as a child expressed it the other day, "shut her eyes and see," and you will hold them. Let us suppose a case. You are thoroughly imbued with the spirit of missions; you desire to teach a lesson on the subject to your children. You select China. There are literally millions who "sit in darkness" in that land, but remember, it will do almost no good to refer to them. We will suppose that you are especially interested in a certain missionary laboring there; for purposes of illustration, we will suppose that it is Mrs. Fitch, who ought to be called the children's missionary, such an inspiration is she to them. What if you make on the blackboard an outline of a tree, whose trunk shall bear the name Jesus, whose branches, twelve of them shall bear the initials of the twelve apostles; suppose other branches grow out of these, as they bear fruit, and still others, and others, and the tree spreads out its arms, and reaches East, and West, and North, and South, until finally, here is a branch which reaches to China; let us name it Mrs. Fitch; then suppose you select from the many incidents which she has left in this country for us, one clear cut, pointed story. Perhaps it may be of the Chinese mother's idea of prayer. An evil spirit is after her little boy, and she must pray a great many prayers all the time, or the evil one will get him; so she goes about the house repeating her sentence of prayer! *O me toh fe*, which is an ejaculation addressed to some of the gods; but the mother has not the least idea what it means. If your children were in her home and could understand Chinese, they might hear something like this: "Bring me the rice. O me toh fe! Carry the hot water out. O me toh fe! How do you do to-day? O me to fe!" And that the mother calls prayer. Suppose you give the Chinese name of that poor woman, and the name of her child, and, as the lesson progresses, and the woman comes in contact with Mrs. Fitch (which she did) she learns of one Jesus, who can and will help her just for the asking; suppose she learns, as she did, just how to pray to him in spirit and truth, and, by and by you make another branch on that gospel tree, and print on it the Chinese woman's name, yes, and the name of her child, for the little boy is delivered from Satan's bondage and has been chosen by Jesus, and is bearing fruit for him; will not your children be ready to sing:

> "See heathen Nations bending,
> Before the God of love."

If, in conclusion, you take up the pennies with the distinct understanding that they are to be sent to China, to help spread the branches of the tree whose fruit shall remain for ever, will not that collection be given understandingly for the cause of Foreign Missions?

All that we really need, in order to develop in the children an absorbing interest in this work, is knowledge in detail on the part of our teachers. Object teaching is also an effective aid. Photographs of missionaries, images of idols, bits of foreign goods, specimens of fruits and plants which grow there, the veriest trifle itself, becomes in skilful hands, a peg on which to hang a missionary lesson.

I have in my possession a bit of delicate lace-work, made by one of the natives of Africa from the fibre of one of their marvelous thread plants; this was given me by a missionary friend, now gone to heaven, and I once made it the basis of a lesson on African missions that held the attention of the youngest in the class. I want to call the attention of Primary teachers to the curious fact, that every month of the current year gives us a lesson which, they will observe, seems specially intended to work out in a missionary channel. The truth is, the Bible is a rare book on Foreign Missions.

Activity in the Sabbath-School Every Christian's Duty.

BY THE REV. WM. BRENTON GREENE, JR.

OUR Lord's command is, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." The Apostle tells us that, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect" or complete, "thoroughly furnished unto all good works." The conclusion is, that if our master is to be obeyed, his word in all its parts must be carefully and deeply studied.

The psalmist describes the truly happy man as one "who meditates in the law of the Lord day and night;" that is, as one who is so versed

in the scriptures that his mind naturally reverts to their familiar words in the intervals of all other employment. The inference is that happiness, as well as obedience to Christ, depends on as thorough a mastery as possible of the Bible. It will, then, be admitted by all that it is the duty and privilege of every one to gain such a knowledge of the word of God. How may this be done? Not by listening to sermons. This is not said in depreciation of the sermon. "By the foolishness of *preaching* it has pleased God to save them that believe." Yet while this is so, and in part because it is so, it is not the aim of the sermon to give knowledge. It may explain, it may illustrate, it may prove scriptural truths; but it does so that it may *persuade* men to *act* on these truths. Its purpose is not the instruction of the minds, but the influencing of the wills of the hearers. Hence, while the sermon often adds much to the biblical knowledge of the congregation, it is not its first purpose to do so. Indeed, the perfect sermon would cause the hearers to become so absorbed in doing the duty that it urged, that the arguments used would be forgotten. In the heat of the struggle the Christian soldier would cease to think of the summons to war.

Moreover, were the sermon to be what it should not be, a lecture, meant primarily to instruct, it would in many cases fail of its object. While most persons can carry away the general impression of a half-hour discourse, few can remember its successive steps and so gain from it any systematic knowledge. What we really learn has to be acquired "line upon line" and "precept upon precept." Even in our colleges the advantages of the lecture system are often questioned. And though it were possible for the majority to carry away the instruction given in the sermon, this would not be sufficient. Knowledge, to be retained, must be talked over and recited, and if it is to be made useful, it must be applied to special cases. For one to be satisfied with hearing sermons only, is to act as foolishly as would that medical student who should attend lectures but neglect the Quiz club and the clinic.

Nor, on the other hand, can home study alone supply that thorough knowledge of the Bible that the performance of our duties and the full enjoyment of our lives demands. At least it cannot do so *now*. Men associate themselves for study of every kind. If you wish to read Shakespeare you join a Shakespeare club. You need the stimulus of others. Must not a like stimulus be equally necessary in the acquisition of revealed truth? Is not this necessity increased by the unattractiveness of the Bible to the natural heart? As a matter of fact, how many who have no connection with the Sabbath-school do "search the scriptures" at home? Nor does it do to say that if the home were properly regulated, this stimulus could be supplied there. It is a question whether many homes admit of this regulation. On Sabbath evening the family now gather at church instead of around the father for cathechetical instruction. We may dislike the change, but is there not in a majority of cases a reason for it? Our cities swarm with young people who are away from their homes. Surely the church should afford for such persons a home on Sabbath evenings. If, however, the churches are to be open, the regular worshipers should be present; otherwise the services will lack dignity and the church a homelike feeling.

Even, however, if there were no calls from home on Sabbath evening, are not many families so scattered that home instruction would fail of the stimulus of numbers, as it must usually fail, even in large families, of the stimulus that comes from intercourse with those who look at truth differently from ourselves, or whose experiences are unlike ours? Moreover, just in proportion as household instruction is faithful, is the necessity of the Sabbath-school felt. The parent realizes his own need of training that he may properly teach his children. He desires to have his instruction of them supplemented by that of another, though the other may not be a better teacher. He would not divide his responsibility for his children with others, but he must have those wiser than he show him how to discharge it, and others help him in doing so. Not to think thus argues ignorance of one's duty or appalling self-conceit.

Since, therefore, obedience to God and a due regard to our own happiness demand increasing familiarity on our part with the Bible; since this cannot be attained by listening to sermons, nor ordinarily now by home instruction alone; since, indeed, the latter to be what it ought to be, must be accompanied by Sabbath-school work, are we not justified in claiming that activity in the Sabbath-school is both the duty and the privilege of the Christian, be he young or old?

Would it not aid in securing such general activity in the Sabbath-school, if its exercises were given a place as prominent and as convenient in respect to time, as any of the preaching services? Might not this be effected by substituting it for one of the preaching services on the Sabbath? At all events, is not this question of attendance by the *whole church* on the instruction of the Sabbath-school so vital as to demand prompt consideration and action on the part of our churches?

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FIRST QUARTER.

1. Jan. 6.—The Conference at Jerusalem. Acts 15: 1–11.
2. Jan. 13.—Hearing and Doing. James 1: 16–27.
3. Jan. 20.—The Power of the Tongue. James 3: 1–18.
4. Jan. 27.—Living as in God's Sight. James 4: 7–17.
5. Feb. 3.—Paul's Second Missionary Journey. Acts 15: 35–41 and 16: 1–10.
6. Feb. 10.—The Conversion of Lydia. Acts 16: 11–24.
7. Feb. 17.—The Conversion of the Jailer. Acts 16: 25–40. [14.
8. Feb. 24.—Thessalonians and Bereans. Acts 17: 1–
9. March 2.—**Paul at Athens.** Acts 17: 22–34.
10. March 9.—**Paul at Corinth.** Acts 18: 1–17.
11. March 16.—**The Coming of the Lord.** 1 Thess. 4: 13–18 and 5: 1–8.
12. March 23.—**Christian Diligence.** 2 Thess. 3: 1–18.
13. March 30.—**Review.**

Lesson IX. **PAUL AT ATHENS.** March 2d, 1884.

Acts 17: 22–34. Memorize vs. 29–31.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"In him we live, and move, and have our being."—Acts 17: 28.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 17: 14–34.....*The True God.*
T. Isa. 44: 1–20.....*The Only God.*
W. Ps. 139: 1–12.....*The All-seeing God.*
Th. Gen. 1: 1–31.....*God the Creator.*
F. Matt. 6: 24–34.....*God the Preserver.*
S. Rom. 5: 1–21.....*God the Redeemer.*
S. Rev. 20: 1–15.....*God the Judge.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. Paul's Address. 2. Its Effect.

Time.—A. D. 51.

Place.—The Areopagus in Athens.

Catechism.—Q. 61. *What is forbidden in the fourth commandment?* A. The fourth commandment forbiddeth the omission or careless performance of the duties required, and the profaning the day by idleness, or doing that which is in itself sinful, or by unnecessary thoughts, words, or works, about our worldly employments or recreations.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

INTRODUCTORY.—When Paul was compelled by the bitter hatred of the Jews who followed him from Thessalonica to leave Berea, he was conducted by his friends to Athens. His intention seems to have been simply to wait there for his companions, and not to preach. v. 15. But while he waited his spirit was so provoked within him by the idolatry which he saw everywhere that he could not forbear to speak. So he went to the synagogue of the Jews and reasoned there with those who came to worship, and then to the market-place and debated with the Athenians, preaching Jesus and the resurrection. v. 18. There was much excitement produced, and in their eagerness to hear him the Athenians took hold of him and brought him to the Areopagus, a hill, where he could be heard by many people, and desired him to explain the new teaching of which he had been speaking.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

22 Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Ath'ens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. [Jer. 10: 2, 3; 50: 38.]

23 For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. [Ps. 147: 20; John 17: 3, 25; 1 Cor. 1: 21.]

24 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; [Gen. 1: 1; John 1: 3; Acts 7: 48.]

25 Neither is worshiped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; [Gen. 2: 7; Isa. 42: 5.]

26 And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;

27 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find

him, though he be not far from every one of us: [Rom. 1 : 20.]

28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. [Col. 1 : 17; Heb. 1 : 3.]

29 Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. [Isa. 40 : 18, 19.]

30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent: [Acts 14 : 16; Rom. 3 : 25; Luke 24 : 47.]

31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead. [Acts 10 : 42; Rom. 2 : 16; 2 Cor. 5 : 10; Acts 2 : 24.]

32 ¶ And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this *matter*. [Acts 24 : 25; Heb. 3 : 7, 8.]

33 So Paul departed from among them.

34 Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which *was* Di-o-nys'i-us the Ar-e-op'a-gite, and a woman named Dam'ar-is, and others with them.

REVISED VERSION.

22 And Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus, and said,
Ye men of Athens, in all things I perceive
23 that ye are somewhat superstitious. For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this set I
24 forth unto you. The God that made the world and all things therein, he, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples
25 made with hands; neither is he served by men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he himself giveth to all life, and
26 breath, and all things; and he made of one every nation of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined *their* appointed seasons, and the bounds of their
27 habitation; that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he is not far from each one of
28 us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain even of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.
29 Being then the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and
30 device of man. The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent:
31 inasmuch as he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.
32 Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked; but others said, We will hear thee concerning this yet again.
33 Thus Paul went out from among them.
34 But certain men clave unto him, and believed: among whom also was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

Athens was celebrated in ancient times for its architecture, its statuary, its learning and culture, and for its warriors, statesmen, poets and philosophers. At the time Paul visited the city it had lost much of its beauty and splendor, through the desolations of war and other vicissitudes. Much of its old-time glory still remained, however. There were temples to Ceres, Minerva and Jupiter, and many others beside. The city was full of idols. v. 16. Wherever the apostle turned, his eye fell on these sculptured images. Most visitors would have been struck by the splendid architecture and the fine sculpture, but Paul saw only idols and idolatry.

22 *Mars' hill.* The same place named the Areopagus in v. 19. The Latin god of war, "*Mars*," was identified with the Greek *Ares; Pagos*, Greek for hill. Stone steps, sixteen in number, led up from the agora, or market-place, where Paul had been talking with the Athenians, to the hill of the Areopagus. This is famous in classic literature as the place where the Athenian council of Areopagus met. *Ye men of Athens.* The usual mode of address followed by Athenian orators. *Too superstitious.* R. V. *Somewhat superstitious.* The word means either to be superstitious or religious. The American Revisers preferred "very religious." Paul referred to the devotion of the Athenians to their religion as represented in the temples and idols he saw about him, and the reverence of the people for them. The use of the word in this sense showed great skill. The apostle thus caught the attention of his hearers.

23 *As I passed.* When he had been walking about the city. *Your devotions.* R. V. *The objects of your worship*, and not the *acts* of their worship. *To the unknown God.* He had been reading the various inscriptions on the idols. We know from history that there were altars in Athens to unknown gods. Probably when the altar was set up it was because of some visitation, the cause of which was unknown. Not being able to ascribe it to any known deity, they set up this altar and offered propitiatory sacrifices to "An Unknown God." *Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship.* See R. V. They were reaching out beyond their own gods toward a God yet unknown; this God, the true God, he now declared to them.

24 *God that made the world.* In these words Paul declared that there was a God, that he was a God of power and activity, and that the world

did not come into existence by chance, but was the work of God's hands. Thus he opposed the tenets of Greek philosophy. *Lord of heaven and earth.* Master and ruler everywhere. *Dwelleth not in temples made with hands.* A reference to the Athenian temples, and the idols that dwelt in them. See Acts 7: 48. Paul's words are an echo of Stephen's, which he had heard, and perhaps now remembered. It is interesting to note how often in Paul's after-life these echoes of the martyr's last speech are heard, showing how deep an impression the scenes of Stephen's death made upon the young persecutor.

25 *Neither is worshiped.* R. V. *Served.* The reference is not to acts of worship, but to needed service. The heathen brought costly offerings of food and drink to the temples, as though their imaginary gods required such things. But the true God needs no such service, is in no sense dependent on his creatures. The second clause makes the meaning clear—"as though he needed anything." *He giveth to all life.* Instead of needing men's gifts and services he is the giver of all things to men, life itself, then the very breath, each breath. He not only gives life, but sustains it.

26 *Of one blood.* The heathen idea was that there were different ancestors. The Athenians believed that *they* had sprung from the soil of Attica. Here Paul asserts, first, that God was the creator of all men (Mal. 2: 10), and second, that all had sprung from one common stock. *Hath determined the times.* The periods of prosperity, growth and power in nations. See Job 12: 23. *Bounds of their habitation.* God assigns to nations the place of their abode. This is a striking statement of the truth of God's providence over nations, and that he has a great plan which takes in all that concerns national life.

27 *That they should seek.* God's design in all his care for men is, that they should seek him. *Feel after.* The words describe the action of one groping in the dark, trying to find something. *Not far.* He is really close to each one of us, although in our blindness we cannot see him, and continue groping.

28 *In him we live.* He is so close to us that we live *in* him; he is our very life; without him, apart from him, we have no life and cannot move. See Eph. 1: 10; Col. 1: 17; Heb. 1: 3. *Your own poets.* The quotation is from Aratus, a native of Cilicia, Paul's country, who lived about 270 B. C. Another poet, Cleanthes, of about the same time, used almost the same words. Paul quotes from the heathen writers when speaking to the heathen, because they are familiar with these, and will accept them. See also 1 Cor. 15: 33; Titus 1: 12. The God that made us must be greater than we ourselves.

29 *We ought not to think.* If we are God's offspring, surely we ought not to suppose that he is so much beneath us as to be like an idol of gold, silver or stone.

30 *The times of this ignorance.* The ages before Christ's coming, when the heathen nations were left without the knowledge of the true God. *Winked at.* A very incorrect translation. In the R. V. correctly, *Overlooked.* He had left them alone to the teachings of nature and the suggestions of their consciences, without any direct revelation. *But now commandeth.* The period of overlooking is now past, and to all the heathen nations comes the command to repent. See chap. 11: 18. The "all men" is emphatic. Previous to Christ's coming the word of God came only to the Jews, but now it is to all nations.

31 *He hath appointed a day.* This is given as the reason for the command to repent. A day is appointed on which all men must be judged, and if they will not repent they must be condemned. *By that man.* R. V. *The* man. The reference is to Christ. *He hath given assurance.* Christ's resurrection was the proof and confirmation of the gospel.

32–34 *Some mocked.* Resurrection was denied by Greek philosophers, and the doctrine was ridiculed. See Acts 2: 13. *We will hear thee again.* Perhaps only a more courteous way of adjourning the meeting and ending Paul's address. *Certain men clave unto him.* Attached themselves to him. *Dionysius the Areopagite.* A member of the court of Areopagus, and hence a man of position and influence, and over sixty years of age. Tradition says he was the first bishop of Athens, and died as a martyr. *Damaris.* Nothing is known of her. Paul's preaching at Athens yielded but very little fruit, and but one reference (1 Thess. 3: 1) does he make to his visit here. How long he remained we have no means of knowing. He expected Timothy and Silas to join him there, and waited for them, but they did not come to him until he was at Corinth. He was not driven away from Athens by persecution, as he was from other places, but seems to have left because his preaching found no acceptance there. He appears never to have re-visited Athens; that first rejection was the throwing away of the one opportunity for the people of that city who heard the word at the apostle's lips and rejected it.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

I. Paul's Address. vs. 22-31.

1. **Where it was delivered.** *In the midst of the Areopagus.* It was in the heart of a city which was the brilliant centre of the world's culture. Here philosophers and poets and artists flocked. The city was full of splendid temples and magnificent works of art. But those temples were the shrines of idolatry, and those works of art were worshiped as gods. No doubt Paul loved to look upon fine architecture and statuary, for he was a cultured man, but when he saw the people worshiping these lovely creations of art instead of the true God, his spirit was stirred within him. He forgot the beauty in his grief over the idolatry, and could not but speak out of his full heart. It is one of the finest scenes in history. Utterly alone, he did not hesitate to speak for Christ in the face of all the world's wisdom and culture.

2. **The text.** *I found an altar with this inscription, TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.* They had thousands of imaginary deities which they worshiped, and yet their hearts were not satisfied. They still reached out after some other God, and since nothing that they knew of or could conceive of would answer their cravings, they had set up this altar to an Unknown God. It may fairly be said that in Athens heathenism had done its very best. Literature and art and poetry and philosophy had there attained their proudest height. If any people ever had an opportunity to test the value of "culture," it was the Athenians. If there is enough in learning and in art to meet the needs of human souls, it ought to have been proved here. Yet what do we see? Amid all this beauty, with all their thirty thousand gods, the people were still unsatisfied, and had set up this altar *To An Unknown God*, their hearts reaching out after something better and greater than anything they had found. "Truly the world through its wisdom knew not God."

3. Paul then proceeds to declare the true and only God as the Unknown God, for whom unconsciously they had been seeking. *What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this set I forth unto you.* He sets forth God:

(*a*) **As Creator and Lord.** *The God that made the world and all things . . . Lord of heaven and earth . . . he giveth to all life.* These truths are to us very natural and easily received, but we must remember that Paul was speaking then to heathen men to whom every word was new and strange, and whose own beliefs were all attacked by the apostle's address. One of the Athenian schools taught that there was no God, and that the world was formed by chance. Another taught pantheism, that all things were God, and that God was all things. Then the popular mythology believed in many gods and goddesses. Paul's words taught that there was a God, that there was but one, and that he was not only maker, but sovereign ruler and disposer of all things. He taught further, the *spirituality* of God—"dwelleth not in temples made with hands"—thus sweeping away all idolatry, and declaring every splendid temple about him empty. Next he declared that all nations were alike, the offspring of the one God, thus striking at the pride of the Athenians, who claimed to be a superior race by themselves, with an origin far higher than any other nation. He not only declared that this one God made all nations, but that he determines the circumstances, place of abode, and measure of power and prosperity, of each nation. Thus he taught the great truth of the Providence of God, which extends to "all creatures and all their actions." This struck right in the face of the doctrine of chance held by the Athenians. Thus the apostle attacked heathenism in its own citadel, preaching a religion that swept away its every fundamental belief.

(*b*) **As the Father of all men.** *We are also his offspring.* That is, we partake of God's nature. This means more than that we were created by him. Rocks and trees and rivers and birds were made by him, but they are not his offspring. That which distinguishes man from all other creatures on the earth is, that he was made in the image of God. Even the Athenians accepted this truth, and their own poets taught it. Referring to this admission, Paul shows them how unreasonable it was to suppose that God was like gold, or silver or stone, carved by human skill into any form of beauty. This was making the Creator far less than the creature. Thus again he attacked idolatry, and showed how false and unsatisfying it was.

(*c*) **As a Saviour.** *Now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent.* The word "*now*" refers to the gospel dispensation, the time waited for so long. Probably Paul here told them of Christ and what he had done for the lost world, and then proclaimed the offer of salvation to all who would repent and believe. Up till this time, till Christ had come and made redemption, God had overlooked the

ignorance and sin of the heathen, but now with the accomplishment of the Saviour's work and the proclamation of the gospel, all were called to repentance. Notice that repentance is a divine *command*, not a mere privilege; that the command is to *all*, *everywhere*, and not to Jews only; that it is *repentance* that is commanded, the turning of the whole heart and life away from sin to God. No doubt Paul expanded this teaching, declaring mercy and life to all who would repent and believe on Christ.

(*d*) **As a Judge.** *He hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by the man whom he hath ordained.* Thus he taught that they were not done with life as it passed from their hands, but that they must stand before this unknown God to be judged. They might go on in rejection of God as a Saviour; but they could not get clear of judgment. The only way to be safe on that dread day would be by repentance now.

II. Its Effect. vs. 32–34.

1. **Some mocked.** This is still one of the ways in which men treat the gospel of Christ. They cannot answer it, and instead they try to turn it to ridicule.

2. **Some deferred.** *We will hear thee concerning this yet again.* This is another common way of meeting the claims of the gospel. It satisfies conscience, for it does not appear to be a rejection of the Saviour. But it is a most fatal course. More souls are lost in this way than in any other. These people never did hear Paul again, for he never came again to Athens.

3. **Some believed.** *Certain men clave unto him and believed.* They decided promptly, and accepted Christ. The results of his labors there seem to have been very small, but we know not what may have come in the end of it, for these few who believed may have become great powers for Christ.

LESSON POINTS.

1. If we love souls as Paul did we will not be able to go among the lost unmoved.

2. There is need for wisdom in preaching and teaching. Much zeal is unavailing, because of the want of it. vs. 22, 23.

3. In Athens we see the best that human wisdom can do for men, and yet it did not satisfy. v. 23.

4. The only God that will satisfy a human soul is the God who is Creator, Father, Redeemer and Judge. vs. 24–31.

5. The gospel declares a God who is the author of all things and the source of all life. v. 24.

6. The gospel declares a *spiritual* God. v. 24.

7. The gospel declares a God from whom all blessings of life come. v. 25.

8. The gospel declares *one* God, who made all men and cares for all. v. 26.

9. The gospel declares that God is near to every one, and not hard to find. v. 27.

10. The gospel declares that men are God's offspring, and as such owe him love and obedience. v. 29.

11. The gospel calls all to repent. v. 30.

12. The gospel reveals a judgment. v. 31.

13. There are different ways of treating the gospel. vs. 32–34.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

BY JAMES A. WORDEN, D.D.

INTRODUCE by (1) rapidly glancing at the labors and sufferings of Paul at Philippi and Thessalonica and Berea. He is about to meet another kind of opposition—a pagan culture and a pagan philosophy. 2. Have the route from Berea to Athens pointed out on the map. Bring from the class a description of Athens, its situation, its history, its schools, its art, its idols, its philosophy, especially its two kinds of philosophers—the *Epicureans* and the *Stoics*.

QUESTION AND APPLY.

Of course you will ask such questions as, How did Paul feel when he saw Athens filled with idols? What did he do? What particular philosophers encountered him? Here briefly describe the Epicureans and Stoics. What did they think of Paul? What did they do with him? What was Mars' hill? How was it situated? Why did they bring Paul to Mars' hill? Explain that so far from arresting Paul these men simply brought him to the Areopagus as to a quiet place, where he might more conveniently speak to them without interruption. On what accounts was this an important crisis in the history of Christianity? The gospel was about to be preached to the most cultivated audience in the world. What was the question to which Paul's speech was a reply?

I. How did Paul introduce this speech? What was the altar "to the Unknown God?" In what sense was this an altar to the true God whom Paul preached unto the Athenians? What is it to *know* God? How have we been taught of God? What did Jesus say of knowing God? John 17: 3.

II. What is the general outline of the speech?

1. This God is the Creator. v. 24.

2. This God is spiritual in his essence. vs. 24, 29.

3. He has in himself life and all things. v. 25.

4. He is the Providential Ruler of the World. vs. 26–28.

5. The human race is one, and came directly from God. vs. 26–28.

6. The government of God is moral; that is, by it he is leading men to a knowledge of himself, that they might not worship idols. vs. 28, 29.

7. Men, spared in time past, in spite of their sins, should now repent and believe on Christ, who has come and died and risen from the dead, and shall be their final Judge. vs. 30, 31.

These are sublime truths. The problem is, How are you going to adapt, question on and apply them to your class? Pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Think. Select the one or two truths most applicable to your particular scholars. For instance v. 28. Ponder on the nearness and the life-giving power of God till your own soul is thrilled with it. If you can implant in the souls of your scholars a sense of the everlasting *nearness of God* to them, you will do a great work for and in them. Then there is the truth—*Jesus is to be our Judge.* vs. 30, 31. What is meant by God's "winking at" our past sins? See Revised Version. What does God command? In what ways is God sending us this command? Have class turn to and read such Bible passages as Matt. 9: 13; 3. 2, 8; 4: 17; 11: 20, 21; 12: 41; Luke 11: 32; Acts 2: 38; 3: 19; 26: 20. How is God calling us by his providence to *repent.* Luke 13: 1–3. Recall warnings of God's providence in your community. How is God calling us by his Spirit to repent? What is repentance unto life? Take up each clause of the answer to this question and enforce it. What great day does Paul announce in v. 31? By whom will God judge the world? Who is meant by "that man?" What assurance had God given of this? What effect should the fact that Jesus is to be our Judge have on sinners? What is this Saviour now doing? Rev. 3: 20. What shall occur at his door on the judgment day? Luke 13: 25–28. Why should sinners now fear God and Christ? These two truths, *the nearness of God* and *Jesus our Judge*, will be sufficient. Then turn to the effects of Paul's speech—"Certain men clave unto him and believed," "Some mocked," "Others said, We will hear thee again of this matter."

Questions for March 9th:

1. What do you know of the geography and history of Corinth?

2. Give what the Bible says of Aquila and Priscilla.

3. What was the Jewish custom as to boys learning a trade?

4. What and how did Paul preach at Corinth? 1 Cor. 2: 1–5.

5. What trials did Paul have at Corinth?

6. In what way did Jesus comfort and strengthen him?

7. What can you find out about Gallio?

8. How did Paul's persecution at Corinth end?

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

BY MRS. G. R. ALDEN—"PANSY."

Central Thought.—We belong to God.

Blackboard at Close of Lesson.—Outlines of altars variously marked. One, "To an Unknown God;" one "Play," one "Dress," another "Money," etc. Finally, one on which shall be the cross, and at its base, a heart.

Outline of lesson for a subdivided class.

Review last lesson, and call for name of present one. What did Paul see on the hill at Athens. (At this point make and letter the altar.) Explain that altars were used to make offerings to those whom the people worshiped, or in child-parlance, and in accordance with the Christian idea, to the one whom they loved. Here were these heathen worshiping an unknown God?

Paul had something to tell them about the true God. He told four things. What was the first one? The second? etc. You have here an opportunity to call out the answers as given on the pink papers, and to discover which of your scholars are studying. Mark the figures on the board, and use initial letters to indicate the answers. If you fail to receive any answer to one or more, leave them blank to be called for afterwards. In like manner call for answers to the questions about the three kinds of listeners.

But here are some altars not marked. They are like some that boys and girls sometimes set up in their hearts. When you have had a talk with your teachers, perhaps you will tell me what to put on them.

This form of presenting the lesson starts with the presumption that you, the teacher, have a teachers' meeting, where you carefully instruct your fellow-workers as to what you expect of them, and that they have been taught first to review the work which you have done, and then to talk about these other altars. When Johnny kneels down to pray at family worship, or in Sabbath-school, his heart is so full of play that he does not hear a dozen words of the prayer,

and does not pray at all. But he is kneeling down for worship, and his altar should be marked "To Play." Katie, under similar circumstances, thinks of nothing in the world but her pretty new dress, therefore her altar must be marked, "To Dress." But Charley has been given a present of a gold dollar, and during prayer he is showing it to his neighbor, and whispering about it, so their altar is marked, "To Money."

It will be seen that this method of teaching is intensely practical.

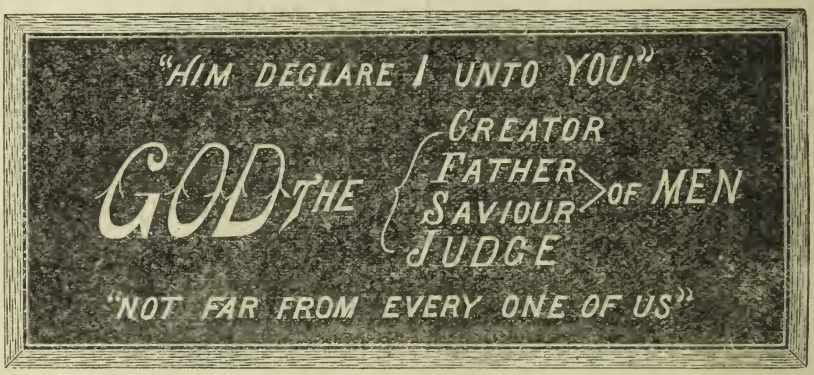
I am supposing that the division teachers have now finished their work, and the classes are again before the leader for closing. It is her business to recall all that has been taught; to mark the altars according to the children's direction, and then to present the last altar, with the cross, for the Great Sacrifice once offered, of which all the lambs and goats were types; therefore we offer those no more.

What God wants now is the heart's love. He calls on all those children who have been thinking of other things, and not trying to pray or to serve him, to REPENT.

Finally, to which class of listeners this day do your children belong? Do they honestly wish to join in the closing prayer, "Take my life," etc., or are they going to put the whole thing off to some other time?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

BY J. HOWARD SEAL.



SUGGESTIONS.—Waiting for Silas and Timothy to join him (vs. 15, 16) in Athens, Paul was not an idle spectator in this "city of idols." Petronius says, satirically, "that it was easier to find a god at Athens than a man." Another ancient writer says, "that some of the streets were so crowded with those who sold idols, that it was almost impossible for one to make his way through them." Paul's "spirit was stirred in him when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry," and he disputed with the Jews in the synagogues, and in the market daily with them that met with him. He was never ashamed of Christ's gospel, and so at last he is brought before the philosophers in the court of the Areopagites, where he grandly declares unto them the God they ignorantly worshiped. And just this is the use we should make of the lesson. There are many ignorant worshipers in our schools. Cover top and bottom lines in diagram with paper, to be removed when making the application. Take the heads of Paul's address, God the Creator, the Father and Saviour of men, the Judge, and show how he is all these, and only he. Remove the paper covering top line, and after earnestly applying the truth, remove the paper covering the bottom line, and make these five points so finely given by Bonar:

"How *close* the relationship between God and us,
How *important* it be one of friendship,
How *sad* if there be estrangement,
How *terrible* if there be wrath,
How *blessed* to enter into fellowship now."

When we were studying this same lesson in the summer of 1877, I drew on my board an altar, and over it the words, "The Unknown God." I endeavored to show how Paul took the U and the N out of the Athenian inscription (erasing them from the board), and drawing the cross of Jesus around the Athenian altar, preached "The Known God" in Christ Jesus, crucified, buried, risen from the dead, and to be Judge of all.

Direction as to Coloring.—Top and bottom lines, green shaded with yellow; "God," in bold letters, white shaded with brown; "Creator," white; "Father, Saviour of Men," purple; "Judge," red.

Lesson X. **PAUL AT CORINTH.** March 9th, 1884.

Acts 18: 1-17. Memorize vs. 9-11.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city."—Acts 18: 10.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 18: 1-17....*Paul at Corinth.*
T. 1 Cor. 2: 1-16....*He Preaches Christ Crucified.*
W. 1 Cor. 15: 1-20...*He Preaches Christ Risen from the Dead.*
Th. 2 Cor. 11: 1-12...*He Labors at his Own Charges.*
F. 1 Thess. 3: 1-13..*He Receives Good Tidings.*
S. John 15: 17-16: 4.*Human Opposition Foretold.*
S. Matt. 10: 16-31...*Divine Help Promised.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Faithful Missionary. 2. Divine Encouragement. 3. Human Opposition.

Time.—A. D. 51-53.

Place.—Corinth.

Catechism.—Q. 62. *What are the reasons annexed to the fourth commandment?* A. The reasons annexed to the fourth commandment are, God's allowing us six days of the week for our own employments, his challenging a special propriety in the seventh, his own example, and his blessing the Sabbath day.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—Corinth was a great city. It excelled in the fine arts, being famous for its temples, monuments and architecture. In morals it was very low and debased. Paul went from Athens to Corinth, and stayed there for a year and a half. He worked on week-days at his old trade of tent-making to support himself, while he preached on Sabbaths to Jews and Gentiles. He met opposition, but when one door was shut another was opened, and a great work was done. A church was planted there which grew to be very strong, and became an important centre of influence for Christianity throughout all that region. Two of Paul's Epistles were afterward written to the church at Corinth.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

1 After these things Paul departed from Ath'ens, and came to Cor'inth; [Acts 17: 32.]

2 And found a certain Jew named Aq'ui-la, born in Pon'tus, lately come from It'a-ly, with his wife Pris-cil'la; (because that Claud'i-us had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them. [Rom. 16: 3, 4; 1 Cor. 16: 19.]

3 And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tent-makers. [Acts 20: 34; 1 Cor. 4: 12.]

4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.

5 And when Si'las and Ti-mo'the-us were come from Ma-ce-do'ni-a, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews *that* Je'sus *was* Christ. [Job 32: 18; 2 Cor. 5: 14.]

6 And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook *his* raiment, and said unto them, Your blood *be* upon your own heads; I *am* clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gen'tiles. [Matt. 10: 14; Acts 13: 51; Lev. 20: 9; Ezek. 33: 3, 4; Acts 13: 46; 28: 28.]

7 ¶ And he departed thence, and entered into a certain *man's* house, named Jus'tus, *one* that worshiped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue.

8 And Cris'pus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Cor-in'thi-ans hearing believed, and were baptized. [1 Cor. 1: 14.]

9 Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: [Acts 13: 9.]

10 For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city. [Josh. 1: 9; Matt. 28: 20.]

11 And he continued *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

12 ¶ And when Gal'li-o was the deputy of A-cha'ia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment-seat,

13 Saying, This *fellow* persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law.

14 And when Paul was now about to open *his* mouth, Gal'li-o said unto the Jews, If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O *ye* Jews, reason would that I should bear with you: [Acts 23: 29; 25: 11, 19.]

15 But if it be a question of words and names, and *of* your law, look ye *to it;* for I will be no judge of such *matters.*

16 And he drave them from the judgment-seat.

17 Then all the Greeks took Sos'the-nes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat *him* before the judgment-seat. And Gal'li-o cared for none of those things. [1 Cor. 1: 1.]

REVISED VERSION.

1 After these things he departed from
2 Athens, and came to Corinth. And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, a man of Pontus by race, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from
3 Rome: and he came unto them; and because he was of the same trade, he abode with them, and they wrought; for by their
4 trade they were tent-makers. And he rea-

soned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded Jews and Greeks.
5 But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul was constrained by the word, testifying to the Jews that Jesus
6 was the Christ. And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook out his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood *be* upon your own heads; I am clean: from
7 henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles. And he departed thence, and went into the house of a certain man named Titus Justus, one that worshiped God, whose house joined
8 hard to the synagogue. And Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were bap-
9 tized. And the Lord said unto Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak,
10 and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to harm thee:
11 for I have much people in this city. And he dwelt *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.
12 But when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul, and brought him before the judgment-
13 seat, saying, This man persuadeth men to
14 worship God contrary to the law. But when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews, If indeed it were a matter of wrong or of wicked villany, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with
15 you: but if they are questions about words and names and your own law, look to it yourselves; I am not minded to be a judge
16 of these matters. And he drave them from
17 the judgment-seat. And they all laid hold on Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment-seat. And Gallio cared for none of these things.

1 *Corinth.* This city was about forty-five miles from Athens. Old Corinth was one of the most renowned of ancient cities, but it was destroyed by Mummius (146 B. C.), its treasures of art were carried to Rome, its people were slaughtered or sold as slaves, and its buildings were pillaged and burnt. For a century it lay in ruins, and then (46 B. C.) Julius Cæsar rebuilt it. It grew rapidly, even surpassing its former splendor, and at the time Paul visited the city it was next to Rome in commercial importance. It was proverbial for its bad morals. To the Christian student Corinth is important as having been so long the home of Paul, and the place where many of his letters were written. Nothing now remains of the ancient city except a few ruined Doric columns.

2 *Aquila . . . his wife Priscilla.* It is supposed by some that they were Christians before Paul came, as he appears to have been warmly welcomed by them from the first. The fact, however, that Aquila is here called "a certain Jew," is against this theory. They accompanied Paul to Ephesus, and were with him there when he wrote his first Epistle to the Corinthians. 1 Cor. 16: 19. Their house in Ephesus was given up for Christian worship. At some time and place they did Paul some important service at great personal risk. See Rom. 16: 3, 4. *Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart.* Suetonius says that Claudius drove the Jews from Rome because they were constantly raising tumults, at the instigation of one Chrestus. The similarity of this name to "Christus," *i. e.*, Christ, suggests the probability that there were Christians in Rome long before this, perhaps from soon after the day of Pentecost, and that the other Jews raised persecutions against them, the result of the tumults being the imperial decree banishing all Jews from the city. When Paul wrote his letter to the Romans, six years later, Aquila and Priscilla had returned. Rom. 16: 3, 4.

3, 4 *Of the same craft . . . tent-makers.* Among the Jews every boy was taught some trade, so that he might be able to earn his bread wherever his lot might be cast. Jesus was taught the carpenter's trade. Mark 6: 3. Tent-making was a common employment in Cilicia, Paul's native place. The tent-cloth was made of the coarse hair of goats which abounded in that country. So much of it was made there that the cloth itself took the name of the place, and was called *Cilicium.* The hair was plaited into strips, which were then joined together. The cloth was used for portable tents of soldiers and travelers. Paul was an inexpensive missionary, as he cared for himself while he preached the gospel. *In the synagogue.* He began his work among the Jews.

5 *When Silas and Timotheus were come.* From Berea. 17: 4. *Pressed in the spirit.* R. V. "Constrained by the word." Two meanings are possible: One, that when Silas and Timothy came they found him "constrained by the word," that is, earnestly occupied in preaching the word; the other, that the coming of these helpers gave him a new impulse for his work, that after they came he preached with new earnestness. The latter view appears preferable. Not only did the arrival of his friends cheer and inspire him, but they brought a contribution with them from Thessalonica (2 Cor. 11: 9; 1 Thess. 3: 6), which freed him from the necessity of so much work at his craft, and enabled him to devote himself more fully to missionary work.

6 *When they opposed themselves.* Set themselves in violent and organized opposition to to the gospel. See 1 Thess. 2: 14–16. *Blasphemed.* In the margin of the Revised Version the word is rendered *railed. He shook his rai-*

ment. R. V. "Shook out," that is, shook the very dust out of his garments. See chap. 13: 51. In both cases the meaning is, that he now left them, and would no more come to them with the offer of the gospel. See Christ's direction in Matt. 10: 14. *Your blood be upon your own heads.* See Ezek. 33: 4. He had offered them the Saviour, and they had blasphemously rejected him; now the responsibility for their soul-ruin is their own. See Pilate's act and words, and the response of the Jews, in Matt. 27: 24, 25. Pilate's act was mockery, however, for he had not done his part, and was guilty still, while Paul had done his whole duty. *Unto the Gentiles.* That is, the Gentiles in Corinth, for elsewhere after this he addressed the Jews first. See 19: 8.

7, 8 *Justus.* R. V. "Titus Justus." Paul went out of the synagogue and entered this man's house, which adjoined the synagogue, and preached there, many of his hearers no doubt following him. *Crispus.* One of those baptized by Paul. 1 Cor. 1: 14. His position as ruler of the synagogue made his conversion important and influential. *All his house.* Another case in which a whole family become Christians. See 16: 15, 34. *Many of the Corinthians.* Among these were Gaius and Stephanas, both of whom Paul himself baptized (1 Cor. 1: 14–16), his helpers, Silas and Timothy, probably baptizing the others.

9–11 *Then spake the Lord to Paul.* Paul seems to have become discouraged for some reason, and possibly thought of leaving Corinth, and this vision was given to reassure him. *Much people in this city.* Not yet converted, but who would be converted. Paul's work would not be in vain. *A year and six months.* This period either covers the whole time of the apostle's stay at Corinth, or up to the incident mentioned in the following verses. During his stay here he wrote the two letters to the Thessalonians, the earliest of his Epistles.

12 *Gallio was the deputy of Achaia.* R. V. "Proconsul." Achaia was a Roman province, about corresponding in extent to the modern kingdom of Greece. Gallio was the brother of Seneca, the famous philosopher, the tutor of Nero. He is spoken of by Roman writers as a fine scholar, and a popular and beloved man. *Insurrection.* R. V. "Rose up against." *Judgment-seat.* The place where the proconsul sat to hear the causes that were brought before him.

13–16 *Contrary to the law.* The same charge had been made at Philippi. Chap. 16: 21. The Jews claimed that Paul was violating the Roman law in preaching a religion not sanctioned by the government. *To open his mouth.* In self-defence. *Gallio said.* He does not want to listen to the case at all, regarding it only as a quarrel among the Jews themselves concerning their own religion. *Wrong or wicked lewdness.* R. V. "Villany." If it were a case of injustice or malicious conduct, he would listen to it; but if it referred only to matters of their own law, he was not disposed to be a judge. That is, he understood the real animus of the Jews, and looked upon the matter with contempt.

17 *Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue.* Probably he had become ruler after Crispus was converted. v. 8. The crowd, ready always to show their hatred of the Jews, took this occasion, when the proconsul had driven them from his presence, to vent their bitter feeling upon them; and Sosthenes being the leader was seized and roughly handled. There is no ground for identifying this Sosthenes with the person of the same name mentioned as a Christian in 1 Cor. 1: 1, as the name was common. *Gallio cared for none of these things.* He looked even upon this brutal assault of the Jews by his own people with indifference. This was inconsistent with his own declaration in v. 14. Here was a case of "wrong" in which he ought, as a ruler, to have interfered.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

I. The Faithful Missionary. vs. 1–6.

1. **Unwearied in his work.** *He departed from Athens and came to Corinth.* He never stopped to rest. When his work was done in one place he was instantly off to another. When one door closed he sought another that was open. He swept on with resistless energy over land and sea. No opposition stopped him. No persecution daunted him. He is thus a model for all Christ's followers. But we must get his motive before we can have his career. It was love for Christ and love for souls which constrained him. There is no use in our trying to imitate his zeal unless we can first get his spirit. Here are two locomotive engines. They are precisely alike, from the same builders, equally strong and powerful, but one of them rolls over the rails at fifty miles an hour, drawing its immense train; while the other stands quiet and motionless in the round-house. The difference is, that the one has a heart of fire, which gives it power, while the heart of the other is cold. It was a *heart of fire* that made Paul the great missionary that he was. There

are plenty of people in the churches, of the other kind, wanting only the fire to make them mighty workers for Christ.

2. **Supported himself** while he preached. *He was of the same trade . . . and they wrought.* Here for once the trade learned in youth became useful. He was in Corinth to preach, but he must live meanwhile, and there was no church there to provide for him, nor any great Board back of him to support him. By means of his trade he was able to stay and preach the gospel, maintaining himself by his own labor. Here was a great opportunity, and he was ready for it. There are thousands of young men in our country who utterly fail in life because they have not in youth trained themselves to any useful service. Thrown upon their own resources they are helpless, and sink down in miserable failure. It is no shame to any young man to have a trade by which he can support himself at manual work, if his circumstances ever necessitate it. It is said that the Crown Prince of Germany is an excellent book-binder. Paul was a tent-maker. Jesus was a carpenter. The lesson is for young girls as well. No matter how good a home they have now, or how unnecessary it is for them to care for themselves, they ought to learn to do something by which they can provide for themselves if the need ever comes for it.

3. **Found preparation made for him.** *He found . . . Aquila . . . with his wife Priscilla.* These people proved of great help to him in his work, and it is interesting to notice that they were now at Corinth *because* the emperor had driven them away from Rome. Thus the Lord had used heathen persecution to prepare for Paul a home, friends and helpers, in that strange city. "In Rome the emperor must expel the Jews, in order that Aquila may come to Corinth, and offer house and board to the apostle. Thus the All-Ruling God uses the designs of princes and the changes of the world to provide for his children, and to advance his kingdom."

4. **Preached earnestly.** *He reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath.* He did not give up preaching when he went to tent-making. Laboring faithfully at his trade during the week, he gave his Sabbaths to preaching. The busiest Christian people can do the same, resting on the Sabbath from worldly employments, and doing something for Christ and for other souls.

5. **Not discouraged by failure.** *When they opposed themselves, he . . . said . . . I will go unto the Gentiles.* He loved his own people very greatly, and was deeply interested in their salvation, but he had done all his duty. He had preached Christ to them, faithfully and repeatedly, and they had only blasphemed. There was no use to delay longer with them. He saw that their rejection was obdurate. There were other dying souls in the city; he would turn to these. One truth to mark here is, that after the gospel has been faithfully preached, all the responsibility rests upon the hearers. "Your blood be upon your own heads: I am clean." Another lesson is, that rejected blessings may depart. When we want to accept them they may be gone. Read Prov. 1: 24–28.

II. Divine Encouragement. vs. 7–11.

1. **Fruit.** *Crispus . . . believed . . . many of the Corinthians hearing believed.* This was very encouraging after the failure of his work among the Jews. Nothing cheers a preacher or teacher more than to have souls saved.

2. **Bidden to preach on.** *The Lord said, . . . Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace.* For some reason Paul had been discouraged. We do not know all the circumstances. Evidently there was personal danger, for God tells him not to be afraid. He seems to have thought of giving up preaching there, for the Lord bids him to continue to speak and not to hold his peace. We are all liable to be depressed and disheartened at times, and to feel like giving up. Here is God's counsel to us in all such circumstances. The encouragements follow.

3. **Assured of the divine presence.** *For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee.* Probably he felt a sense of loneliness in the great city; to this the Lord said, "I am with thee." There was personal danger, and here is the assurance of safety. This did not mean that there should be no persecution, but that no harm should come to him. When God has a work for his servants in any place he will protect them while they do it.

4. **Assured of success.** *I have much people in this city.* No doubt Paul was thinking there was no use to preach to such people, that there would be no results. Christ comes then and tells him that he has many people in that wicked city. They had not yet believed on him, but they would believe. He had died for them. They were sinners yet, and buried away in the world, but when the gospel was preached they would accept it and be saved. This was a wondrously inspiring assurance. Paul stayed and found the Lord's people who were there.

III. Human Opposition. vs. 12–17.

1. **Jewish persecution.** *The Jews with one accord rose up against Paul.* Garibaldi was appealing for recruits to set Italy free. The

young men asked what pay they would receive. "Poverty and hardships and battles and wounds and—*victory*," the old hero answered. In enthusiasm they flocked about his standard. Does any ask for the reward that Christ's soldiers will receive? The answer is the same—"self-denial, struggles, sacrifices, toils and—*victory*."

2. **Providential protection.** *Gallio . . . drave them from the judgment-seat.* If a man like Pilate had been proconsul, Paul's work might have ended right here; but Gallio would not be a tool to execute Jewish malignity. He refused to have anything to do with their quarrel, and thus held Paul under the secure protection of Roman law. The apostle was therefore enabled to continue his preaching in spite of the persecuting spirit of the Jews.

LESSON POINTS.

1. The earnest Christian does not wait for opportunities to do good, but seeks them. v. 1.

2. God prepares the way for his earnest servants wherever he leads them. v. 2.

3. The true man does not shrink from honest work in any circumstances. v. 3.

4. Working with the hands is no shame; to be ashamed of work is a shame. v. 3.

5. Week-day secular work should not interfere with Sabbath work for Christ. v. 4.

6. When we love souls we are constrained to speak the gospel to them. v. 5.

7. No one can compel another to receive Christ; all are free to accept or reject. v. 6.

8. When the gospel has been offered to us the responsibility for our salvation is with us. v. 6.

9. The faithful worker for Christ never has real reason for discouragement. vs. 9, 10.

10. Christ has "much people" even in the worst city or neighborhood, and it is ours to find them. v. 10.

11. God provides shelter and protection from danger while his servants do his work. vs. 12–17.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

Begin by asking, What kind of a city was Athens? What did Paul tell the Athenians? What success had he in Athens? Ask for title, golden text and memory verses of this lesson. Call for report on the questions. What do you know of the geography and history of Corinth? Have the map. How far from Athens was Corinth? Point out the route from Athens to Corinth. In what respects did Corinth differ from Athens? Athens was almost purely Greek in spirit and inhabitants; Corinth was full of Romans, Jews and Greeks. Athens was a city of colleges; Corinth a city of business. Athens' glory had faded; Corinth's glory was in its prime. Athens was philosophic and immoral; Corinth was sensual and immoral. With what feelings did Paul approach Corinth? 1 Cor. 2: 1–3. Why did not Paul stop working and take a long vacation when he felt so badly? 2 Cor. 5: 14, 15. Divide (for your convenience in teaching) thus—

TOILS,
TRIALS,
TRIUMPHS.

Proceed topically, not in historical order.

QUESTION AND APPLY.

I. TOILS.—1. *Temporal Business Toils.* At what trade did Paul work at Corinth? What was the nature of this trade? Call for the report on the question? What was the Jewish custom as to boys learning a trade? What were the advantages of this custom? In what passages does Paul refer to his manual toil? 1 Thess. 2: 9; 2 Thess 3: 8; Acts 20: 34. Call for the report on Aquila and Priscilla.

2. *Gospel Toils.* With what words do vs. 4 and 5 describe Paul's preaching? What is the true meaning of the words, "was pressed in spirit?" How does v. 11 describe the length of time he worked and what he taught? How could Paul work at tent-making, and also "reason," "persuade," etc.? Where does Paul say that ministers ought to be supported when they are preaching the gospel? 1 Cor. 9: 7–9. Why did he not take advantage of this? Paul sometimes accepted financial support, but more frequently he supported himself to avoid all appearance of self-interest. What lesson is here for all young people? To maintain a noble independence by honest toil.

II. TRIALS.—1. On what accounts was it a trial for Paul to be poor? 2. How would his small success at Athens naturally cast him down as he drew near to another Greek city? 3. Where were Paul's traveling companions? What passages show that he depended greatly on his companions? Acts 28: 15; 2 Cor. 2: 13; 7: 6. What shows that he came to Corinth *alone?* v. 5 and 1 Thess. 3: 1. In what way would this loneliness at Corinth affect him? 4. What shows that all the time he was in Corinth he was anxious about the Thessalonians? 1 Thess. 3: 1–7. 5. What shows that Paul, in addition to all his other trials, was *sick* at Corinth? 1 Cor. 2: 3. The word rendered "weakness" is in Gal. 4: 13 translated "infirmity." 6. In addition to being destitute of money, discouraged by his partial failure at Athens, lonely and anxious, sick and weak, what opposition did he encounter at Corinth?

Combine all these trials and ask, Who wonders that he was cast down?

III. TRIUMPHS.—Where did Paul's preaching have the greatest success? At Corinth. Read v. 8; compare also 1 Cor. 1: 14. Where did persecution first fail to drive Paul from the city? At Corinth. In what way did the Lord Jesus console him? Have one read vs. 9, 10. In what other places did Jesus appear to Paul? Acts 9: 4, 5; 22: 17–21; 23: 11; 27: 23, 24.

Special Questions.—What lesson is there here for those who think the world owes them a living? For those who are ashamed to work with their own hands? What lesson for those who think they are so busy in toiling for support that they cannot study the Bible? What for those who think they are too busy to labor in the Sabbath-school? What lesson here for those young people who are bent on getting a soft place in life, with little work and large pay and much luxury? What lesson for the lonely? The poor? The discouraged? The sick? The persecuted?

Questions for March 16th:

1. What do you know of the geography and history of Thessalonica?
2. Give the history of Paul's first labors in Thessalonica.
3. What benefits do believers receive from Christ at their death?
4. What events shall accompany Christ's second advent?
5. What shall happen to those who are then alive?
6. How are we to wait for Christ's second advent?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

SUGGESTIONS.—The top and bottom lines to be exposed to view during class studies; the rest to be covered with paper until needed. As with Paul at Corinth, so will it be with all earnest Christian workers—there will be discouragements and opposition and danger. Bishop Hall says: "Our privacy may perhaps sit down in peace; but never man did attempt a common good without opposition. It is a sign that both the work is holy and the agent faithful, when we meet with strong opposition." But in all our difficulties let us remember that the same encouraging voice which came to Paul in the night by a vision, comes to us out of the inspired Scriptures with the voice of the Holy Spirit. God has "much people" in our land, and we are bidden, first, to banish fear ("Be not afraid"); second, to exercise the power of speech ("Speak"). Remove the paper covering the rest of the lesson on the board, and impress that we ought to speak fearlessly, faithfully and frankly. Remember Luke 10: 16, 19, 20; Isa. 54: 17; Matt. 28: 20. To all who will accept Christ as their Saviour he will say, "Be not afraid," "*I am with thee.*"

Directions for Coloring.—Top line, purple shaded with orange; "Speak," white shaded with red; "Fearlessly, Faithfully, Frankly," yellow; lower line, brown shaded with yellow.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The Teacher Before her Class.—See this double arch on the board. What does it mean? Who can give me the first promise? ("I am with thee.") And the second? ("No man shall hurt thee.") And what is there about fear? ("Be not afraid.")

I know a boy who, when he was very small, used sometimes to waken and be afraid of the darkness, but his mother would say: "Don't be afraid, mamma is here;" then he would cuddle close to her and go to sleep. But as he grew older he learned that mamma had not

power to keep him from all dangers, and there were many times when he was afraid. If one says to us, "Don't be afraid, nothing shall hurt you," we would like to know that he has power to keep us from danger. How could Paul be sure of this? How came he to be afraid?

I know a little girl who is afraid of her own shadow almost. She cries out in fear when there is really nothing to alarm. Was Paul's fear like this? Oh, angry men, so angry that they contradicted and used oaths! A great company of them. I suppose they threatened to kill Paul. No wonder he was afraid. What had he been doing to make them so angry? Only telling them good news about Jesus; trying to coax them to come to him and be saved! What a strange thing to make people angry! Suppose he had been saying angry or cruel or hateful words? Do you think God would have sent him the pleasant message that we have on the arches?

Poor Paul! I think he felt very lonely that night. He had a few friends in Corinth. Who are the two whose names are given in this lesson? (Aquila and Priscilla.) Remember them, for we shall hear more about them. But he thought there were very few who cared for him; and there was that great angry crowd. I think he was sad when he lay down to rest. Or perhaps he was kneeling to pray. Hark! there is a voice speaking to him. It says: "Paul, be not afraid: I am with thee; no man shall hurt thee." And now listen to this: "I have much people in this city." Oh, how glad Paul must have been to hear that! If God had much people in Corinth, then Paul had many friends, for he knew that God's people were his friends.

There was once a boy who went away to a great school for soldiers' orphans. He was to sleep in a long room, full of little white beds, and while he was getting ready for bed he wondered what he should do about praying. His mother had taught him to pray every night, but he was afraid of those boys, most of them larger than himself. Perhaps they would fight him; they would surely laugh at him. He did not know what to do. At last he made up his mind that he would kneel down, as his mother had taught him, whatever happened. So he did. It was still while he was kneeling, and when he arose softly, what was his surprise to see more than twenty boys on their knees. God had "much people" there, though little Paul did not know it.

Now the great difference between Paul and some of our boys and girls is, that he had nothing to be afraid of in God's sight. The words he had been saying were all such as would please Jesus. He had been trying to live and to speak for him. His lips were full of "messages," such as Jesus had sent him to give; therefore he could trust him. Will my boys and girls try this week to speak only such words as will please Jesus? They cannot do this without his help, but he is waiting to help.

The above is a sort of compressed form of the colloquial method of presenting a lesson. It is of course very incomplete, as children invariably answer in a way to suggest other ideas and illustrations. This method helps the teacher to learn how much study has been given to the text, and enables her to hold closely to one practical application; which, in this case, I have made *the safety* of those whose lips are entirely given to God.

Lesson XI. **THE COMING OF THE LORD.** March 16th, 1884.

1 Thess. 4: 13–5: 8. Memorize vs. 14–17.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."—1 Thess. 4: 14.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 1 Thess. 4: 13–5: 8.... *The Coming of the Lord.*
T. Matt. 24: 29–42..... *The Elect Gathered.*
W. Matt. 25: 14–30..... *Final Awards.*
Th. 1 Thess. 1: 1–12..... *Glorified in His Saints.*
F. Matt. 25: 1–13..... *"Watch Therefore."*
S. John 14: 1–13..... *Many Mansions.*
S. 1 John 3: 1–8..... *"We Shall be Like Him."*

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Comfort of His Coming. 2. The Suddenness of His Coming. 3. Preparation for His Coming.

Time.—A. D. 53.

Place.—Written from Corinth.

Catechism.—Q. 63. *Which is the fifth commandment?* A. The fifth commandment is, *Honor thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.*

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—This Epistle to the Thessalonians was written by Paul while he was at Corinth; for this reason we study it now, in connection with the account of the apostle's visit to Corinth, of

which we studied in our last lesson. It was the first written of the thirteen of Paul's Epistles. It will be remembered that when Paul preached at Thessalonica (see Lesson VIII., Feb. 24th) there were some that believed. The apostle did not forget these Christians after he had gone away from them, and he sent them this letter to instruct them in Christian doctrine, to comfort them in their sore trials, and to correct some wrong views they had received about Christ's second coming. The passage contained in the present lesson tells us some wonderful things about the way in which our Lord will come again, and what will take place then.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. [Lev. 19: 28; Eph. 2: 12.]

14 For if we believe that Je'sus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Je'sus will God bring with him. [1 Cor. 15: 13, 18, 23; 3: 13.]

15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. [1 Kings 13: 17, 18; 20: 35; 1 Cor. 15: 51.]

16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: [Matt. 24: 30, 31; Acts 1: 11; 2 Thess. 1: 7; 1 Cor. 15: 23, 52.]

17 Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. [1 Cor. 15: 51.]

18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Ch. 5: 1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. [Matt. 24: 3, 36; Acts 1: 7.]

2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. [Matt. 24: 43, 44; 25: 13; Luke 12: 39, 40; 2 Pet. 3: 10; Rev. 3: 3; 16: 15.]

3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. [Isa. 13: 6-9; Luke 17: 27.]

4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. [Rom. 13: 12, 13; 1 John 2: 8.]

5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. [Eph. 5: 8.]

6 Therefore let us not sleep, as *do* others; but let us watch and be sober. [Matt. 25: 5; 24: 42; 25: 13; 1 Pet. 5: 8.]

7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. [Luke 21: 34, 36.]

8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. [Isa. 59: 17; Eph. 6: 14, 16, 17; Rom. 9.]

REVISED VERSION.

13 But we would not have you ignorant,
brethren, concerning them that fall asleep;
that ye sorrow not, even as the rest, which
14 have no hope. For if we believe that
Jesus died and rose again, even so them also
that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring
15 with him. For this we say unto you by the
word of the Lord, that we that are alive,
that are left unto the coming of the Lord,
shall in no wise precede them that are fallen
16 asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend
from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of
the archangel, and with the trump of God:
17 and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then
we that are alive, that are left, shall to-
gether with them be caught up in the clouds,
to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we
18 ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort
one another with these words.
1 But concerning the times and the seasons,
brethren, ye have no need that aught be
2 written unto you. For yourselves know per-
fectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as
3 a thief in the night. When they are saying,
Peace and safety, then sudden destruction
cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman
with child; and they shall in no wise escape.
4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that
5 that day should overtake you as a thief: for
ye are all sons of light, and sons of the day:
6 we are not of the night, nor of darkness; so
then let us not sleep, as do the rest, but let
7 us watch and be sober. For they that sleep
sleep in the night; and they that be drunken
8 are drunken in the night. But let us, since
we are of the day, be sober, putting on the
breastplate of faith and love; and for a
helmet, the hope of salvation.

13 *I would not.* R. V. "We," as Paul speaks for himself and his companions. *Have you to be ignorant.* For similar expressions, see Col. 2: 1; 1 Cor. 10: 1; 11: 3; Phil. 1: 12. *Concerning them which are asleep.* R. V. "That fall asleep," referring not merely to those who have already departed, but to all who shall hereafter fall asleep. Evidently the Thessalonians were greatly troubled concerning those who had died, or who might yet die before Christ came again. They were expecting an early return of the Lord, and they seem to have felt that any who died before he came would miss the blessedness connected with the advent. Paul had heard of their fears and anxieties, and writes to assure them that those who fall asleep before Christ comes will miss nothing, but will participate in all the glories of the hour. *Asleep.* The figure of sleep is frequently used in the New Testament to denote death. See John 11: 11; Acts 7: 60, and elsewhere. *That ye sorrow not.* It was because they were ignorant concerning

those that died that they sorrowed; the best way, therefore, to put an end to this grief was to tell them the truth about death. The expression does not mean that they should not sorrow *as* others do, but that they should not sorrow at all. We must remember that it was *for the dead* they mourned, supposing these had missed the joy and triumph of Christ's second coming. Knowing the truth about death they should not grieve at all for them. Of course this does not forbid grief for our own loss when our friends die in Christ, although even this grief should be tempered and moderated by the glorious truth of immortality. *Others which have no hope.* The heathen, and all unbelievers.

14 *If we believe.* Not expressing any doubt, but affirming that since the Thessalonians did believe these facts they ought also to get the comfort which came from them. *Jesus died and rose again.* It is not said that Jesus fell asleep, but that he died. There was no mitigation of death for him. The sting was not taken out of it. Jesus *died;* but believers in him only *fall asleep.* In his rising again was his victory over death. Death could not hold him. *Even so them also.* Showing the close and intimate connection between Christ and all who believe in him. Because he lives they shall live also. *Which sleep in Jesus.* See Rev. 14: 13. This limits the apostle's teaching here to believers. The expression "in Jesus" means that they were in living communion with him, vitally attached to him, as branches in a vine. John 15. *Will God bring with him.* With Jesus when he comes. The same God who brought Jesus from the dead will also bring those who sleep in Jesus, and they shall share the glories of his advent.

15 *By the word of the Lord.* This was a distinct revelation from God to the apostle. *We which are alive and remain.* See Revised Version. Those who shall be living on the earth when Christ comes, never having died. The use of "we" here does not necessarily imply that Paul positively expected Christ to come again while he himself was alive. He is speaking of the dead, and classes himself with the living in contrast. *Shall not prevent.* R. V. "In no wise precede." Those who are living at the time will have no advantage over those who have fallen asleep.

16 *The Lord himself shall descend.* It will be a personal coming—"himself"—and not by a messenger. *With a shout.* The word means a shout of command. By whom it is given we are not told. In John 5: 25 we are told that the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, but here it may be "the voice of the archangel" that gives the shout. *The archangel.* The chief or highest of the angels. *Trump of God.* See Ex. 19: 19, and 1 Cor. 15: 52. *Shall rise first.* Instead of being preceded by the living, the dead in Christ shall be waked and called up before the living shall be caught up to meet Christ.

17 *Then we . . . shall be caught up.* In 1 Cor. 15: 51–53 the apostle teaches that the living "shall be changed," the corruptible putting on incorruption. *Together with them.* At the same time, and in company with those who have been called from their graves. *In the clouds.* Jesus was caught up in a cloud at his ascension (Acts 1: 9), and he is to come again with clouds. Rev. 1: 7. The spiritual bodies will not need anything more solid than air and clouds to tread upon. *To meet the Lord in the air.* Above the ground, to meet him on his way as he comes from heaven. *So shall we ever be with the Lord.* The apostle does not describe the scenes of the judgment; he only wished to show that the dead in Christ would miss nothing by departing before he returned, and it only remains to say in one word that for ever all the saints should be with Christ.

18 *Comfort one another.* Tell these things to those who sorrow for the dead, and let them be comforted by these blessed truths.

5: 1 *Of the times and seasons.* The first word refers to the great stretches of time, and the second to the definite periods. See 2 Peter 3: 8. He refers to the time of the second coming of Christ. *Ye have no need.* Because they had already been instructed on the subject.

2 *Know perfectly.* They had been explicitly taught. *The day of the Lord.* The day of his return to judge the world. *Cometh.* Is now on its way, is imminent. *As a thief.* Unexpectedly, without warning. The expression occurs frequently (Matt. 24: 43, 44; Luke 12: 39, 40; 2 Peter 3: 10), and besides indicating suddenness, has also a suggestion of danger and great loss to the wicked and unprepared.

3 *When they.* The worldly and unwatchful. See also Matt. 24: 38; Luke 17: 27. True believers are ever on the watch. *Peace and safety.* Regarding everything as secure, and not dreaming of danger. *Sudden destruction cometh.* Christ's coming will bring destruction to all who are not already his friends.

4 *But ye.* Believers, in contrast with those just referred to. *Are not in darkness.* As are those who know not Christ as their Saviour. Eph. 4: 18; 1 John 2: 9. *Should overtake you.* Find you unheeding, unwatching. They knew

that it was coming, and coming suddenly, and would therefore be always ready so as never to be surprised.

5 *Children of light.* Light is the emblem of truth, of the gospel, of Christ himself, and the children of light are those who have been enlightened by the truth, by the gospel, by Christ. To such the coming of Christ can never be a cause of terror but of expectation and joy.

6, 7 *Let us not sleep.* That is, be indifferent, careless, like those described in v. 3. *Watch and be sober.* Be vigilant, and avoid whatever would stupefy or intoxicate. *Sleep in the night . . . drunken in the night.* Sleep belongs to the night, and so sleep in its figurative sense, implying carelessness and inattention to spiritual things, is fit only for those who are yet in moral night, unenlightened by divine grace. Drunkenness, too, even in those heathen times, and in those depraved heathen cities, was almost never seen in the day.

8 *Who are of the day.* Enlightened, saved. *The breastplate of faith.* There is need for arming against foes as well as for watching against danger. The breastplate was a piece of defensive armor fitting close to the body and covering the breast, and shielding it against sudden blows. Nothing makes such a protection as faith in Christ and love to God and man. *For an helmet.* A covering for the head. *The hope of salvation.* One who is sure that he is saved is never afraid of anything that may come.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

I. The Comfort of Christ's Coming. vs. 13–18.

We would not have you ignorant concerning them that fall asleep. It is ignorance of what God has revealed concerning the death and the future of believers that makes our sorrow so bitter when our Christian friends die. If we really knew and believed all that the Bible teaches on this subject, there could be no bitterness in our grief. A profitable Bible study would be to go through the New Testament and seek out every reference to the death of Christians. It will be found that there is not one dark line in all the glorious splendor.

That ye sorrow not. Of course tears are not forbidden. Parting must always be sad when one we love is taken away from us. Our own hearts cannot but feel the desolation and the loneliness. The Bible does not forbid our mourning, for religion does not make us indifferent to our friends, nor deaden the sensitiveness of our affections. Jesus himself wept by the grave of his friend, and so may we weep when our friends are gone. We may weep for ourselves, but not for those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. Why should we? They have lost nothing by dying; it has been glorious gain to them.

The Lord himself shall descend from heaven. No truth is taught in the New Testament more clearly and positively than that Christ shall come again. Here we learn several things about this coming. It will be a *personal* advent—"the Lord *himself*." As he ascended from Olivet, the angels declared to the watching disciples that *this same Jesus* should come again. The coming of the Spirit, or Christ's coming in Providence, does not meet the full sense of the promises. The Lord *himself*, he of Bethlehem and Nazareth, he of Bethany and Calvary, will come again. His coming will also be *glorious*. We cannot understand the meaning of the words which here describe his advent—the "shout," "the voice of the archangel," and "the trump of God;" but we know that they speak of incomprehensible glory and splendor. To the friends of Christ this glory will be all joy and blessing, but to his enemies it will be unspeakable terror and woe. Which will it be to us?

The dead in Christ shall rise first: then we that are alive . . . shall together with them be caught up . . . so shall we ever be with the Lord. These few words describe the most wonderful and momentous scenes. First, all the Christian dead who have fallen asleep in Christ through all the centuries shall come from their graves, and stand on earth, living again; not with bodies infirm, diseased, decrepit, worn with age, but youthful, perfect, beautiful spiritual bodies. Next, a change shall pass on all the Christians living, by which their bodies shall lose all that is mortal and corruptible, and become like unto Christ's glorified body. The dead and the living shall thus stand together. Next, all shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and then shall begin the blessed and eternal heavenly life with Christ.

Comfort one another with these words. If we want to comfort those who are in sorrow we should bring them such great truths as these from God's revealed word, and not the mere cold and empty commonplaces which too often are spoken to the sorrowing. Compare also the way in which Jesus comforted his friends at Bethany, speaking to them the glorious truths of the resurrection and the immortal life.

II. The Suddenness of His Coming. vs. 1–3.

The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. It will be sudden, and when men are not looking for it. No warning will be given. Of the day and hour no man knoweth. There will be no time then to prepare for his coming. He will find us just as we are. The only way to be ready for him will be to be always ready, so that any moment his most sudden appearance at our door would not find us unprepared. "Wherefore . . . be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."

III. Preparation for His Coming. vs. 4–8.

So then let us not sleep, as do the rest, but let us watch and be sober. Not that we are literally to keep awake all the while, watching for Christ's coming, but that we are never to fall into the sleep of carelessness. Nor is it an idle waiting and watching for Christ's advent that is here enjoined. In the next lesson this is severely condemned. He wants to find us, when he comes, not gathered on hill-tops, gazing up into heaven, looking for him, but at our work. The best and only true readiness to receive our Lord is fidelity in all duty. First of all, we must be sure that we are saved by faith in him; second, that we are living in holiness, with garments unspotted; then, that our work of all kinds is done, moment by moment.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Ignorance of God's word leaves us without comfort when sorrow comes. v. 13.

2. Those who know the truth about death and the future life ought not to sorrow for their friends who die in Christ. v. 13.

3. Christ's death and resurrection secure the eternal salvation of all who believe in him. v. 14.

4. Christ will surely come again, in his own person, and in glory. v. 16.

5. When Christ comes again he will gather all believers to himself to be with him for ever. v. 17.

6. Of the time of Christ's second coming we cannot know.

7. He will come suddenly, without warning, when none are expecting him. v. 2.

8. His coming will be terrible to his enemies. v. 3.

9. Christ's friends ought not to be surprised at his coming, but should be always ready. v. 6.

10. The only way to make sure of being ready when he comes is to be always ready. vs. 7, 8

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

Lines of Approach.

Ask one of the scholars to point out Thessalonica on the map. Have Acts 17: 1–9 read. Recall the account of Paul's first labors there. If possible bring out from some scholar the fact that Paul told the Thessalonians that Jesus was coming again and would be *King*. This was why the mob said that Paul taught "that there was another King, even Jesus." Then question class on all they know about this Epistle to the Thessalonians. *When* was it written? (About A. D. 52.) *Where* was it written? (At Corinth.) Why did Paul write it? 1. He desired to supply what was lacking in the faith of the Thessalonians. 1 Thess. 3: 10. 2. Some of them needed to be warned against prevailing heathen vices. 1 Thess. 4: 1–7. 3. Some of them had wrong views of the second coming of Christ, and had ceased to work for their own support. 1 Thess. 4: 11, 12. 4. Some of them had lost friends by death. These were greatly troubled lest when Jesus came the second time their dead should not share in the glory of his coming. This brings you to the lesson.

A Working Outline.

Comfort Concerning the Dead.
Warning for the Living.

How to Question and Apply.

I. *Comfort Concerning the Dead.* vs. 13–18.

1. Bring out the meaning of all the unusual expressions in these verses—"them which are asleep," "which sleep in Jesus," "remain unto the coming of," "prevent," "a shout," "the voice of the archangel," "the trump of God," etc. (See Dr. Miller's Notes.)

2. Bring out again the *mistake* of the Thessalonians in reference to their dead friends. Then bring out how Paul comforts them.

3. Ask, Who in this class have lost Christian friends by death? Is it wrong to sorrow at the death of friends? Why not? Paul does not say "Sorrow not," but "*Sorrow not, even as others who have no hope.*" Have read John 11: 35. It is not wrong for Christians to weep or sorrow for *themselves as bereaved.* But it is wrong for them to weep for the *state* or *condition* of their *dead Christian friends.*

Why is it wrong thus to sorrow? 1. They *sleep.* v. 13. 2. Jesus died and rose again. v. 14. 3. Our Christian dead "sleep in Jesus." A railroad man was accustomed to send his wife a telegram announcing his coming home, thus: "Tell Arthur I shall sleep with him tonight." The little boy was very proud of these telegrams. He took the scarlet fever. The

night he died the mother was crying by his bed, the little one turned calmly in his bed and said: "Don't cry, mamma; I shall sleep with God, you know. Send God a teledraff, and tell him I shall sleep with him to-night."

4. God will bring them with Jesus. v. 14. What other passages tell us that Jesus is coming again? Matt. 24: 3, 27, 37, 39; 1 Cor. 15: 23; 1 Thess. 2: 19; 4: 15; 2 Thess. 2: 1–9; James 5: 7, 8; 2 Pet. 1: 16; 3: 4, 12; 1 John 2: 28. Make selections from these for your scholars to read. When Jesus comes again, what shall happen to those who sleep in him? What to those Christians who are alive when Jesus comes?

5. They shall be ever with the Lord. What effect should these truths have on the bereaved?

II. *Warning for the Living.* vs. 1–8.

Where else in the New Testament is the time of Christ's coming called "The day?" "The day of God." 2 Pet. 3: 12. "The day of the Lord Jesus." 1 Cor. 1: 8; Phil. 1: 6, 10; 2 Pet. 3: 10. "That day." 2 Thess. 1: 10; 2 Tim. 1: 12, 18. "The last day." John 6: 39, 54. "The great day." "The day of wrath." "The day of judgment." Jude 6; Rev. 6: 17; Rom. 2: 5. Where else in the Bible is the time of Christ's coming said to be unknown? Matt. 24: 36; Mark 13: 32; Luke 12: 40; Acts 1: 6, 7; 2 Pet. 3: 3, 4, 10; Rev. 16: 15. What effect ought the certainty of Christ's second coming to have on Christians? Where are we taught that we ought to "look for the Saviour?" Phil. 3: 20. That we ought to be ready for his coming? Luke 12: 35, 37; 1 Cor. 1: 7, 8; 1 Thess. 1: 9, 10; 2 Tim. 4: 8; 2 Pet. 3: 12; Rev. 22: 20. How ought the truth of Christ's coming again to affect the unconverted? Read Mark 13: 35, 37; 2 Pet. 3: 9, 10; Jude 14, 15.

Points to be assigned for March 23d:

1. What do you know of the date and design of Second Thessalonians?
2. Why ought we to pray for ministers and Sabbath-school workers?
3. In what ways does the Bible warn against idleness?
4. What are the different forms of the apostolic benediction?

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The teacher who can secure among her friends, or borrow from a jeweler, an old-fashioned watch, from which the case can be removed, will have a valuable object with which to illustrate this lesson. Let the blackboard be covered with outlines of graves, large and small; or if it is easier to make grave-stones, mark them with varying ages. Over some of them print the word "DEAD;" over others, "ASLEEP." The difference between them is infinite and endless, and should be clearly marked. Show an envelope with letter enclosed after the modern method. The lesson is from Paul's letter to the people in Thessalonica, and if Paul were living now, and were to send a letter to the people in your town or city, he would arrange it in the modern way; so to make the matter real to the children, illustrate in this way. Let them talk enough about death to realize its universality; to remember that all through the years since Paul died, death has been busy gathering in the people. The crowded blackboard is but a faint picture of the many graves which death has made. Paul wrote about it. What did he say? Open your letter and read: "I would not have you ignorant concerning them which are asleep." What did he mean? Did he call all the dead, asleep? Make clear the fact that the Bible speaks of Christians as "Asleep in Jesus." The class can tell what Paul said about them, as given in the golden text. Make a rainbow arch. Print on it the word "COMING."

Encourage talk about the interest with which we wait and watch for the coming of those we love. But these people are sleeping; sleepers cannot watch. They are dead; the dead cannot hear! Yes, there is one voice that they will hear. The day is coming when the Lord shall descend with his trumpet and call to the dead in Christ. Think of the joy with which those bodies shall come out of their graves to go with the dear Lord! Will he put them back into their graves after they have been with him a little time? Look at Paul's letter and see.

"*So shall we ever be with the Lord.*"

When will this be? We cannot tell. All we know is, that Jesus told us to "WATCH." That is, to get all ready, so that if at any time he came for us there would be nothing to do but meet him with joy.

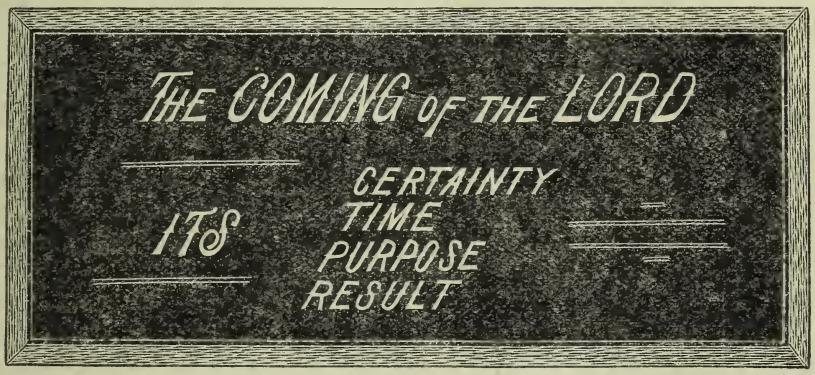
But many years have gone by, and many people have died. Do they have to lie buried in the ground all these years waiting? Look at this watch in my hand. Let us think of it as a picture of the soul and the body. When one dies, we say of him, "He is dead." We mean that his body is. Look, I have taken the case from this watch. Let it be a picture of the body. I put it to my ear. It does not tick; it is dead. If it is a picture of the body, let us think of it as laid away in the ground to wait.

But this part is ticking; all the wheels are in motion. Let this be a picture of the soul. It is taken out of the body, and is gone away. If it belonged to Jesus, it is gone to be with him. By-and-bye, when he comes, he will bring with him the souls who love him, and will call their bodies to rise out of the graves.

The obvious practical thoughts in this lesson are, that death in itself is no more to be feared than we fear to take off an old dress and lay it away, because we do not need it any more. And, that the time to get ready, so that our bodies will lie in the graves which may be marked "Asleep," is now. We do not know how soon the body will be called to lie there, and the soul will go to meet God. If we belong to him, we shall certainly be glad to go when he calls, and if we do not belong to him, we will be afraid. Who will come to him now?

The old story, dear teachers: Come to Jesus. Let us never be weary of ringing its changes, so long as there is a child left to call.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



SUGGESTIONS.—Let the superintendent's desk lesson be a Bible reading on the precious truth, so little understood by a large number of Christian people. The blackboard outline will aid in fastening it in the mind as the texts are read and impressed. 1. The certainty of the Lord's coming is confirmed by Scripture. Zech. 14: 5; Acts 1: 11; Matt. 24: 30; Mark 13: 26. 2. The time of the Lord's coming is uncertain. Matt. 25: 13; 24: 42, 44; Mark 13: 35; Rev. 16: 15. 3. The purpose of His coming is to gather his saints from the four quarters of the earth, and to reward every man according to his works. Matt. 24: 31; Mark 13: 27; Matt. 16: 27. 4. The result of the Lord's coming will be the glorification of his saints with himself, and the overwhelming of his enemies. Dan. 7: 13, 14, 18; 1 Thess. 4: 16, 17; Rev. 3: 21; John 5: 29; Matt. 25: 46. Assign the different texts to different classes or individuals; or, if preferred, read them in concert. Impress John 5: 28, 29, "*The hour is coming, . . . all . . . shall hear . . . shall come forth.*" Notice "*all,*" "without exception, no annihilation," "shall hear." "While living men may close their ears, but the time is coming when *all must hear,* and not only hear, but obey. All will be raised from the dead, but not all to life." With which resurrection will we come forth? Press an answer to the question.

Directions as to Coloring.—"The Coming of the Lord," purple shaded with yellow; "Certainty," white; "Time," red; "Purpose," orange; "Result," green.

Lesson XII. **CHRISTIAN DILIGENCE.** March 23d, 1884.

2 Thess. 3: 1–18. Memorize vs. 1–5.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Be not weary in well-doing."—2 Thess. 3: 13.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 2 Thess. 3: 1–18 *Christian Diligence.*
T. Eph. 4: 1–16.... *Unity, Peace.*
W. Col. 3: 1–7..... *Kindness, Charity, Humility.*
Th. Phil. 2: 16..... *The Sons of God, without Rebuke.*
F. Phil. 3: 13–21... *Pressing Forward.*
S. 1 Thess. 5: 9–25. *Blameless unto Christ's Coming.*
S. Ps. 91: 1–16..... *Safety and Salvation.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. Prayer and Watching. 2. Orderly Walking. 3. Benediction and Salutation.

Time.—A. D. 53.

Place.—Written from Corinth.

Catechism.—Q. 64. *What is required in the fifth commandment?* A. The fifth commandment requireth the preserving the honor, and performing the duties belonging to every one in their several places and relations, as superiors, inferiors, or equals.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—The Second Epistle to the Thessalonians was also written from Corinth, soon after the first. This letter is full of earnest words of encouragement and of instruction. It consists of three principal parts. The first part (chap. 1) commends the Thessalonian Christians for their faithfulness in the midst of persecutions. The second (chap. 2) corrects their error concerning the immediate coming of the Lord. In the third part, the part contained in our lesson, the apostle teaches them some very important duties. There are some good suggestions about the value of prayer. Then there are some wise words about the sin of idleness. The apostle did not have any very complimentary words for lazy, idle people. There is a word, too, about busybodies, people who have no employment of their own, and therefore have to meddle in other people's business. All these words are profitable for our study to-day.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

1 Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have *free* course, and be glorified, even as *it is* with you: [Eph. 6: 19; Col. 4: 3; 1 Thess. 5: 25.]

2 And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all *men* have not faith. [Rom. 15: 31.]

3 But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep *you* from evil. [1 Cor. 1: 9; 1 Thess. 5: 24; 2 Pet. 2: 9.]

4 And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you. [2 Cor. 7: 16; Gal. 5: 10; 1 Chron. 29: 18.]

5 And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ. [1 Thess. 1: 3.]

6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Je'sus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. [Rom. 16: 17; 1 Tim. 6: 5; 1 Cor. 5: 11, 13; 1 Thess. 4: 11; ch. 2: 15.]

7 For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; [1 Cor. 4: 16.]

8 Neither did we eat any man's bread for naught; but wrought with labor and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: [Acts 18: 3; 2 Cor. 11: 9.]

9 Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us. [1 Cor. 9: 6; 1 Thess. 2: 6.]

10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. [Gen. 3: 19; 1 Thess. 4: 11.]

11 For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. [1 Thess. 4: 11; 1 Tim. 5: 13; 1 Pet. 4: 15.]

12 Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Je'sus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread. [1 Thess. 4: 11; Eph. 4: 28.]

13 But ye, brethren, be not weary in well-doing. [Gal. 6: 9.]

14 And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. [Matt. 18: 17; 1 Cor. 5: 9, 11.]

15 Yet count *him* not as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother. [Lev. 19: 17; 1 Thess. 5: 14; Tit. 3: 10.]

16 Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord *be* with you all. [2 Cor. 13: 11.]

17 The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write. [1 Cor. 16: 21; Col. 4: 18.]

18 The grace of our Lord Je'sus Christ *be* with you all. Amen. [Rom. 16: 24.]

REVISED VERSION.

1 Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the
word of the Lord may run and be glorified,
2 even as also *it is* with you; and that we may
be delivered from unreasonable and evil
3 men; for all have not faith. But the Lord
is faithful, who shall stablish you, and guard
4 you from the evil *one*. And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye
both do and will do the things which we
5 command. And the Lord direct your hearts
into the love of God, and into the patience
of Christ.
6 Now we command you, brethren, in the
name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that
walketh disorderly, and not after the tra-
7 dition which they received of us. For yourselves know how ye ought to imitate us: for
we behaved not ourselves disorderly among
8 you; neither did we eat bread for nought at
any man's hand, but in labor and travail,
working night and day, that we might not
9 burden any of you: not because we have not
the right, but to make ourselves an ensample
10 unto you, that ye should imitate us. For
even when we were with you, this we com-
manded you, If any will not work, neither
11 let him eat. For we hear of some that walk
among you disorderly, that work not at all,
12 but are busybodies. Now them that are
such we command and exhort in the Lord
Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work
13 and eat their own bread. But ye, brethren,

14 be not weary in well-doing. And if any man
obeyeth not our word by this epistle, note
that man, that ye have no company with
him, to the end that he may be ashamed.
15 And *yet* count him not as an enemy, but ad-
monish him as a brother.
16 Now the Lord of peace himself give you
peace at all times in all ways. The Lord be
with you all.
17 The salutation of me Paul with mine own
hand, which is the token in every epistle: so
18 I write. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
be with you all.

1 *Pray for us.* In almost every epistle Paul makes the same request. See Rom. 15: 30; 2 Cor. 1: 11; Eph. 6: 18, 19; Col. 4: 3; 1 Thess. 5: 25. *That the word.* His heart was burdened for the success of the gospel, and he wanted the people to pray for the divine blessing upon his preaching. *Free course.* R. V. "May run." He longs to see the word spread over all the world. See Ps. 147: 15. *Be glorified.* Honored; that its real glory may so shine out as to convince men of its inherent excellence.

2 *May be delivered.* Not so much for his own sake, to be freed from persecution and danger, as for the sake of the word which he longed to spread. See Rom. 15: 31. *Unreasonable and wicked men.* The former of these words occurs in only three other places—Luke 23: 41 (amiss); Acts 25: 5 (wickedness); Acts 28: 6 (harm). It means something misplaced, unsuitable. Our word "perverse" perhaps best expresses its sense in this verse. By a reference to Acts 18: 6, 12, we learn who these men were. *All men have not faith.* Faith to receive the word. This accounts for the dangers to which he was exposed.

3. *The Lord is faithful.* Though men are perverse and hostile, yet the Lord is never so; he is always faithful. *Stablish you.* Put you on a sure foundation. Notice how he passes quickly from speaking of his own dangers to the people's. *Keep you from evil.* R. V. "From the evil one." Satan is the Evil One, and is the author of all oppositions and hindrances put in the way of good men in their work.

4 *Confidence . . . touching you.* He relied upon the believers to whom he wrote, and felt confident that they would be faithful. The phrase "in the Lord" implies that it was because they were in the Lord, and under his care, that the apostle was so confident of their faithfulness. The Lord would keep them, and through his grace they would be obedient. *Do and will do.* Would continue to do, and it is continuance that is the test of life.

5 *The Lord.* When this name is used the reference is generally to Christ. Here, however, and also in v. 3, it may be that no one Person of the Trinity is referred to. *The love of God.* Love for God on the believer's part. John 14: 21. *Patient waiting for Christ.* R. V. "The patience of Christ," that is, the patience with which he endured. The Authorized Version gives a wrong impression.

6 *We command you.* See v. 4. *In the name.* By the authority of. As an apostle he acted officially for Christ. *Withdraw yourselves.* The word means to avoid, to keep away from, to "steer clear of." *Every brother.* They were Christians whom he so condemned. *That walketh disorderly.* The expression means "out of rank." It is rendered "unruly" in 1 Thess. 5: 14. For the meaning here, see vs. 10, 11. *Tradition.* The apostle's former teaching. Evidently he had given them very definite instructions, perhaps a full code of ethics.

7 *To follow us.* The apostle and his companions had lived among them for a time, furnishing an example for imitation. The Thessalonians, therefore, knew well how to live, having had both teaching and example. *We behaved not ourselves disorderly.* See 1 Thess. 2: 10, where also he appealed to his own conduct.

8 *Any man's bread for nought.* As a gift. *Wrought.* Probably at his trade of tent-making. See Acts 18: 3. The words imply that his toil had been sore and wearisome, filling nights and days, that he might not be burdensome to any of the people. From Phil. 4: 15, 16, we know that when at Thessalonica, Paul did receive help from Philippi, his statement here, however, is that he had not been a burden to any of the Thessalonians themselves.

9 *Power.* R. V. "The right;" that is, the right to be maintained by those among whom he labored in the gospel. See Matt. 10: 9 for the law laid down by Christ. *An ensample unto you.* He had refrained from claiming his right for support that by working with his own hands he might furnish a model for others, and might stimulate them to activity.

10 *If any would not.* R. V. "*Will* not," that is, is not willing. He does not refer of course to those unable by reason of age or infirmity to work, but to those who are able and yet refuse to labor. *Neither should he eat.* R. V. "Neither let him eat." This was a *command.* Such a person should not be fed, that is, supported by charity. It seems that some system of charity had been adopted in that church, by which the poor were helped by the better off.

11 *Working not . . . busybodies.* There is a play here upon words. They did not work, and

yet they were busybodies. The sense is that they were busy in useless things, things that had better not be done, or that they were meddlers in the affairs of others. The latter thought belongs to the word in 1 Tim. 5: 13. Perhaps here it was feverish interest in religion that was made the excuse for idleness. See 1 Thess. 4: 11, 12. They may have been spending time in "religious" work which ought to have been directed to daily duties. Or their expectation of the speedy coming of Christ may have been their pretext for idleness.

12 *We command and exhort.* The first word is almost stern, but the second is more tender. *With quietness.* The rabbis say: "When a man eats his own bread he is composed and tranquil in mind; but if he be eating the bread of his parents or children, much more that of strangers, his mind is less tranquil." Perhaps these idlers had also been great talkers; now they were commanded to be quiet. *Work and eat their own bread.* Earn it first and then eat it.

13 *Be not weary in well-doing.* This is addressed to those who had been doing well; they should continue to do the same even amid trial.

14, 15 *Obey not.* Some had disregarded his former commands. *Note that man.* Mark him. *Have no company with him.* See v. 6. He refers still to the man who refuses to work and yet wants to eat the bread of charity; they were to separate themselves from him, leaving him alone, having nothing to do with him. *That he may be ashamed.* And thus be driven to take up his duty. *Not as an enemy.* Indulge no bitterness against him. He is a brother still, and is if possible to be reclaimed.

16 *The Lord of peace.* See John 14: 27. *Give you peace.* In the largest sense; not merely peace with one another, but peace as embracing all the blessings of the gospel. *Be with you all.* Another form of benediction. "All" is emphatic, assuring even those he has censured that he bears them no ill will.

17 *The salutation.* Thus far he had been dictating to a secretary; now he takes the pen to add this salutation with his own hand. *The token.* The autograph salutation was the mark by which all his epistles were known to be authentic. In chap. 2: 2 there is an apparent reference to forged letters, purporting to be Paul's, which had given trouble to the Thessalonians. Here he tells them how they may always know his letters. *So I write.* This is my writing. From Gal. 6: 11 (Revised Version) we suppose his penmanship was bold and large.

18 *The grace of our Lord.* This is the "salutation" referred to in v. 17. Paul used it in all his epistles. Notice the word "all" here again. The apostle's great heart left none out.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

I. Prayer and Watching. vs. 1–5.

1. **The people's prayer for the minister.** *Brethren pray for us.* Every minister wants his people to pray for him. No doubt, one reason ofttimes why blessing does not come on the preaching, is because the people do not pray for it to come. Miss Procter in her poem, "The Helping Prayer," tells of the monk who preached from his full heart while the flame spread, and hearts were melted. Meanwhile a poor lay brother, ignorant and old, sat there and listened. To the preacher spoke an angel:

"Know, O my son,
Thy words had all been vain, but hearts were stirred,
And saints were edified, and sinners won,
By his, the poor lay brother's humble aid
Who sat upon the pulpit stair and prayed."

2. **The minister's prayer for his people.** *The Lord direct your hearts into the patience of Christ.* No lesson is harder to learn than patience. Here we have as the model for our imitation, the patient Christ. He was patient in enduring wrongs and trials. He was patient in doing his work amid opposition and discouragement, not chafing nor losing heart at seeming failure. He was patient in waiting for the slow development of God's plans. Into this patience of Christ it is important that all his friends should come. One way to learn the lesson is by studying long and lovingly the pattern, going over and over the story of his life, and pondering it, until it lives before us in blessed reality. Then, whenever trials of patience come to us, we should at once ask, "How would Jesus act if he were in my place?" Another suggestion as to the learning of the lesson is that we must get his Spirit into our hearts. That is the only really effectual way. Efforts to fashion our lives into Christ's likeness merely *from the outside*, must always be failures. We must get the patient life *within*, and then the lesson will teach itself. So the minister prays here that *the Lord* may direct the people into this patience of Christ.

II. Orderly Walking. vs. 6–15.

1. **Idleness is disorderly.** *Withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly.* He refers to those who had given up their occupations in anticipation of Christ's speedy coming again, thinking it no use to work, since the end

of all things was at hand. This Paul condemns as disorderly walking, even commanding all the other members to cut off from such and keep away from them. He did not want any idle people in the church. They were out of rank in the Lord's army. A Christian should be diligent in business. Even devotion to religious exercises must not keep him from his daily work.

2. **Idleness must not be fed.** *If any will not work, neither let him eat.* Of course the apostle did not refer to the sick or disabled, but to those who were able to work and would not. Such should not be supported by the alms of others. There are a great many people in these days to whom this lesson should be read with an emphasis that would rouse their lazy powers to action. There are young men who imagine that labor is a disgrace, and that idleness is nobleness. There are young women who think it degrading to soil their dainty hands with any sort of work. They see nothing wrong in allowing weary mothers to slave for them, while they dress, and receive, and gad the streets; but to put their own white fingers to any household task would be a blot on their fair ladyhood. The apostle's rule should be read to such. "If any will not work, neither let him eat." The application of this rule might bring them to their senses.

3. **Idleness leads to meddlesomeness.** *We hear of some . . . that work not at all, but are busybodies.* They do not work, and yet they are busybodies. They do not work in their proper callings, and yet they are busy in other people's affairs. They are the same sort of persons the apostle describes elsewhere in this way: "They learn to be idle, going about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also, and busybodies, speaking things they ought not." Peter met some people of the same kind, and was moved to write: "Let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil-doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters." There are men and women too, of the same sort, in the days since the apostles. They let their own business suffer while they mind other people's business. They go about among their neighbors, not to do good, but to meddle, to gossip, and tattle. It is hard to use words too severe in speaking of these busybodies. The mischief they do is simply incalculable. Christianity condemns them, and commands them that "with quietness they work, and eat their own bread." That is, they should attend to their business, and become diligent and earnest in it, meanwhile letting their neighbor's affairs alone.

4. **Orderly walking is diligence in all good work.** *But ye, brethren, be not weary in well-doing.* Christians should show an example of diligence. They should never be indolent or thriftless. A Christian farmer should be the best farmer in the neighborhood. A Christian mechanic should be the best workman in his trade. A Christian woman should be the best housekeeper in the town. Besides, those who are Christ's disciples should be diligent in all good work, and should never tire in scattering blessings.

III. Benediction and Salutation. vs. 16–18.

1. **Peace.** *The Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in all ways.* Every word here is emphatic. Christ is the author and the source of peace. "Peace I leave with you." "In me ye shall have peace." The Christian may have Christ's peace. "*My* peace I give unto you." It is not a peace merely for quiet days, but for days of storm. "At all times, in all ways." In a picture of a stormy sea a rock rises out of the mad waves, and in a cleft in its side, amid flowers and herbage, a dove is seen sitting quietly on her nest. It is a representation of the Christian's peace. In a world of unrest and tempest, the Rock, Christ, stands ever unshaken, and in a cleft of this rock the believer hides where no storm can touch him.

2. **Grace.** *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.* Our first great need is grace. Grace means favor, mercy, undeserved help. Only a gracious friend can answer our needs, one who will not be turned away by our sins or our faults. Such a friend is Christ. He came not to call the righteous, but sinners. He came to seek and save the lost. He is a friend of publicans and sinners. So his help is given to us in all our unworthiness. It is no empty thing—this benediction of Christ's grace. It is a holy influence that goes out with us from the house of God, if we are God's true children, and rests upon us in all our work, and in all our ways.

LESSON POINTS.

1. We should pray for our pastor and for God's blessing on his words and work. v. 1.

2. We should give earnest heed to the things God's servants teach us from the Bible. v. 4.

3. We should seek to learn the lesson of patience as Christ gave us the pattern. v. 5.

4. We should choose for our friends and companions, even among Christians, only those who live nearest to God and are diligent. v. 6.

5. We should be faithful and diligent in our secular duties and earn our own bread. v. 10.

6. We should attend well to our own business, but never meddle with other people's business. v. 11.

7. We should never weary in doing our duty, and in doing good to others who need. v. 13.

8. We should have the mind of Christ, patient, brotherly and kind, even toward those who are disorderly. vs. 14–15.

9. We should receive by faith and love the peace and grace of Christ. vs. 16–18.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

SUGGESTIONS.—"The Waiting Church must be a Working Church," should be placed upon the board before the opening of the school and exposed to view during the class studies. In the desk lesson, show how Christian diligence is enjoined upon every believer. In our patient waiting for Christ we are to withdraw ourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly; we are to be ensamples to all men; not to be idle, nor busybodies, and not to be weary in well-doing. Have a scholar or teacher read Eph. 5: 15; another read Col. 4: 5; another 1 Thess. 4: 11, 12; and impressing the thoughts, print on the board as in diagram, "We are to walk circumspectly." Let all the girls read in concert Luke 19: 13, and print on the board, "Occupy till Jesus comes," explaining what it means. Have read Eph. 5: 16, and print on board, "Redeem the time." Find the explanation of this by having some one read Eccles. 9: 10; Rom. 13: 11. Let the boys read in concert 1 Tim. 5: 22; 4: 12, and the girls James 1: 27, printing on the board, "Keep ourselves pure." Now have the school read from the board these four things we are to do, so as to get them in mind. Bring out and illustrate the acrostic in its connection with the lesson, and read 1 Peter 2: 15, 16.

Directions as to Coloring.—"The Waiting Church," etc., green shaded with purple; the letters of the acrostic, "Work," white shaded with red; the rest white.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

HOW TO BEGIN.

Hold a conversation on tramps and idlers. What is the real cause of there being so many beggars and paupers? What is the only cure for the tramp nuisance? Thus lead the class into a free discussion of this evil. You can then pass to consider those who make religion a cloak of their idleness and a convenience for more successful begging. Who among the Thessalonian Christians were in danger of becoming religious beggars? Have class read 1 Thess. 4: 11, 12. How had these idlers obeyed Paul's gentle rebuke? That they refused to work will be clear by having a scholar turn and read v. 11 of the lesson. Persons pretended to believe that Christ's second advent was so near that it was no use to work. Now Paul writes this second letter, among other things, to break up this idleness.

A SUGGESTIVE DIVISION.

Prayer. vs. 1–5.
Labor. vs. 6–15.
Blessing. vs. 16–18.

METHOD OF QUESTIONING AND APPLYING.

I. PRAYER. 1. *The apostle's request for prayer.* In what words does Paul ask the prayer of the Thessalonians? What reason does he urge why they should pray for him? What reasons lead us to pray for our pastor? (*a*) If an inspired apostle needed the prayers of his people, how much more our pastor? (*b*) The Spirit alone can render our pastor's labors effectual. The Spirit comes only in answer to prayer. (See Miss Procter's poem

in Dr. Miller's Notes.) A pastor who formerly had been successful lost his power in preaching. When asked by one of his people the reason, he replied: "It is because I have lost my prayer-book." No one knew that he ever used a prayer-book. "My prayer-book," said he, "is my people's earnest prayers for me." Many other reasons may be drawn from the class for praying for the pastor. In the same way adduce reasons for praying for the superintendent and teachers.

2. *Paul's prayer for the Thessalonians.* Carefully draw from the class the full meaning of vs. 3–5, especially calling attention to the true rendering of the words translated, "The patient waiting for Christ." (See Notes on the Lesson.)

II. LABOR. vs. 6–15. With what gentle words had Paul in his first letter urged industry on them? See 1 Thess. 4: 10. "We beseech you." How does he more sharply speak in this second letter? v. 6. "*We command* you, brethren," etc. What is referred to in the words, "Every brother that walketh disorderly?" It is explained in v. 11. What example does Paul bring up to shame and rebuke the idlers? What facts are reported in v. 8? What was Paul's special reason for working to support himself at Thessalonica? v. 9. What is the great law of labor? v. 10. On what accounts is it a *righteous* law? A *good* law? On what accounts is it *noble to labor?* 1. God works, Jesus works. John 5: 17. 2. The command in Eden. Gen. 2: 15. 3. The greater the man, the greater the worker. Demosthenes, Lord Bacon, Sir Isaac Newton, Franklin, Washington, Wesley, Calvin, Luther, Knox, Gladstone, Lincoln, Garfield, etc. Use all your ingenuity and power to cleanse the minds of your scholars of all false ideas as to *labor*. What did Paul command the Thessalonians to do if any refused to obey the law of labor? How many people would be turned out of our church if all were excommunicated who sponge off others? We need not fear making this too strong. Young Americans have in this age need that this lesson be *burned* into their souls. Apply this to girls and young women as well as to boys and young men. Tell them all of the many ways of benefitting the world by labor, the avenues of work, etc., and that there is no hope hereafter, nor here, for those who "are busybodies, working not at all."

Points to be assigned for March 30th:

1. *To all.* Recite from memory the titles and golden texts of the last twelve lessons.

2. Locate on the map *all the places* mentioned in those lessons.

3. Name and describe as far as possible *all the persons* mentioned.

4. Some of the main doctrines taught by Paul on the second journey.

5. Some duties insisted on in these twelve lessons.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The lesson is for those who belong to Jesus. Some directions for us: First, there are some people described. We will make a list of them on the board.

WICKED PEOPLE,
DISORDERLY PEOPLE,
BUSYBODIES.

Let the teacher prepare carefully to hold a conversation with her scholars as to the persons who may properly be included under these names. Use the lesson to guard your children against the known influence of some bad man in the neighborhood who is "fond of children," perhaps because he can lead them astray. There are busybodies among the children; let their ways of working be described.

What does the direction say to us who belong to Jesus, above all things?

"WITHDRAW YOURSELVES."

There is a plain order: Don't make friends and associates of any such. But shall you treat them unkindly? Not at all. On the contrary, your directions are to do them any good you can, but not make companions of them, for two reasons. Can the scholars think of these reasons?

1. Because they may lead you into sin.

2. Because you will seem to approve of their actions.

Try to draw these reasons from the class by cross-questioning.

What is there that can always safely be done for all wrong-doers? Try to call out the word "PRAY," and encourage your class to adopt this method with all who, they think, are included in the classes mentioned.

One other direction, and one which may astonish the children. Put one word, printed in large letters, on a card—"WORK." Yes, those are the directions. If you belong to Jesus, you have no right to waste his time. Work at what? At whatever he has given you to do. It may be to get a spelling lesson, or to bring in wood, or to care for the baby, or to pick up the playthings. Heart and hands belong to Jesus. He must direct them. There is this thing always to be remembered: "I belong to Christ; my hands must do nothing to dishonor him. My tongue must take care to speak what he will like, my feet must only go where he pleases; then I am safe."

Lesson XIII. **FIRST QUARTERLY REVIEW.** March 30th, 1884.

[*From the Westminster Quarterly.*]

HOME STUDIES.

M. Lesson I.
T. Lessons II., III.
W. Lesson IV.
Th. Lessons V., VI.
F. Lessons VII., VIII.
S. Lessons IX., X.
S. Lessons XI., XII.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."—Rom. 1: 16.

REVIEW CHART.—First Quarter.

Lesson Passages.	*Title.*	*Golden Text.*	*Lesson Plan.*
1.—Acts 15: 1-11.	The Conference at Jerusalem.	We believe that—Acts 15: 11.	1. The Jewish view. 2. The gospel view.
2.—James 1: 16-27.	Hearing and Doing.	Be ye doers of the word—James 1: 22.	1. Right receiving of the word. 2. Right using of the word. 3. Right living of the word.
3.—3: 1-18.	The Power of the Tongue.	By thy words thou—Matt. 12: 37.	1. The tongue hard to control. 2. The evil the tongue can do. 3. What the tongue ought to do
4.—4: 7-17.	Living as in God's Sight.	Humble yourselves—Jas. 4: 10.	1. Living in holiness. 2. Living in love. 3. Living in faith.
5.—Acts 15: 35-16: 10.	Paul's Sec'd Missionary Journey.	Come over into—Acts 16: 9.	1. The separation from Barnabas. 2. The choosing of Timothy. 3. The call to Macedonia.
6.—16: 11-24.	The Conversion of Lydia.	Whose heart the Lord—Acts 16: 14.	1. Lydia's heart opened. 2. The soothsayer healed. 3. The opposers enraged.
7.—16: 25-40.	The Conversion of the Jailer.	Believe on the Lord—Acts 16: 31.	1. The peace of the believer. 2. The terror of the sinner. 3. The way of salvation. 4. The deliverance of the prisoners.
8.—17: 1-14.	Thessalonians and Bereans.	These were more noble—Acts 17: 11.	1. The gospel in Thessalonica. 2. The gospel in Berea.
9.—17: 22-34.	Paul at Athens.	In him we live—Acts 17: 28.	1. Paul's address. 2. Its effect.
10.—18: 1-17.	Paul at Corinth.	I am with thee—Acts 18: 10.	1. The faithful missionary. 2. Divine encouragement. 3. Human opposition.
11.—1 Thess. 4: 13-5: 8.	The Coming of the Lord.	For if we believe—1 Thess. 4: 14.	1. The comfort of his coming. 2. The suddenness of his coming. 3. Preparation for his coming.
12.—2 Thess. 3: 1-18.	Christian Diligence.	Be not weary—2 Thess. 3: 13.	1. Prayer and watching. 2. Orderly walking. 3. Benediction and salutation.
13.—	Review.	I am not ashamed—Rom. 1: 16.	

REVIEW OUTLINE.

In the first lesson we have the settlement of an unhappy controversy which disturbed the peace of the church in Antioch and threatened disastrous results.

Lessons II., III., IV. are taken from the Epistle of James, which was written about A. D. 62, by the James who presided at the conference at Jerusalem. They treat of practical duties.

In Lesson V. we resume the history. Paul proposes to Barnabas to make a journey of visitation to the churches they had formed during their first missionary tour. Differing about their associate, they separate. Barnabas sails with Mark to Cyprus. Paul and Silas pass through Cilicia confirming the churches. At Lystra, Paul took with him Timothy, a young disciple, who had been converted during his first visit to that city. Then they went throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia. They were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia. They attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not. Finally these hindrances were all explained by the vision at Troas of the Macedonian saying to Paul, "Come over and help us." Here they are joined by Luke, and crossing the Hellespont they come to Philippi. Then follow, the conversion of Lydia and the planting of the first European Church; the imprisonment of Paul and Silas; the conversion of the jailer. Leaving Luke to minister to the Philippian Church, Paul and his company proceed to Thessalonica. Persecution drives them to Berea. The Bereans show great willingness to receive the gospel. From Berea, Paul proceeds to Athens, thence to Corinth. Here he remained for eighteen months. From this city he wrote the two Epistles to the Thessalonians.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

We are agreed that no Sabbath's lesson is more important than the review, and that there is scarcely a possibility of making a success of the Quarterly Review unless we have faithfully reviewed our work frequently during the three months, and that neither the superintendent nor the teacher ought to have all the time on Review Sabbath, but that the time should be equally divided between them.

There are several purposes of a review. One

is, to *test* the scholar's knowledge of what he has passed over. Yet this is not the most important design. Our teaching is not yet thorough enough to justify us in making our reviews chiefly *examinations*, as they are in day schools.

Another design of a review is, to gain the emphasis of *repetition*, to stamp anew and indelibly every truth in the last twelve lessons upon the scholars' souls. Repeated blows will do this. Still another design of the review is, by combining the lessons into unity and harmonious relation to exhibit new and fresh views of truth. We may well confine ourselves in this review to the accomplishment of these last two purposes—repeating and giving a new view.

I. REVIEW DRILL.—Patiently recall *the titles* of the twelve lessons:

The C. at J.	The C. of the J.
H. and D.	T. and B
The P. of the T.	P. at A.
L. as in G. S.	P. at C.
P. S. M. J.	The C. of the L.
The C. of L.	C. D.

Do not disdain to go over these again and again. So also the *golden texts:*

We believe—	Believe on the—
Be ye doers—	These were more—
By thy words—	In him we live—
Humble yourselves—	I am with thee—
Come over into—	For if we believe—
Whose heart—	Be not weary—

The repetition of these should be an invariable element in every true review.

II. REVIEW GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY.—A map of Paul's journeys is needful. You might provide yourself with a sufficient number of *very* small flags to mark all the places referred to in the Quarter's lessons. As each of the following places is named, let a scholar come forward and pin one of the flags upon the location: Jerusalem, Phenice, Samaria, Antioch, Pamphylia, Cyprus, Syria and Cilicia, Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, Phrygia, Galatia, Asia, Mysia, Bithynia, Troas, Macedonia, Samothracia, Neapolis, Philippi, Amphipolis, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth, Achaia. As each place is thus flagged call for the persons associated with it in the narrative, and the principal events which occurred there. This will in an interesting manner combine geography, biography and history.

III. REVIEW DOCTRINES.—As each of the following doctrines is mentioned, let the scholars name the title of the lesson or lessons in which it was taught, and the form of the teaching:

1. God guides his workmen. 2. God alone enables us to receive Christ. 3. Salvation is by grace alone. 4. Salvation is through faith in Christ. 5. Christians are not bound to keep the ceremonial law. 6. God delivers his persecuted servants. 7. Christ's death was necessary for our salvation. 8. The gospel is the word of God. 9. Christ is coming again. 10. The time of Christ's second advent is unknown. 11. The righteous dead shall rise first. 12. God is the Creator, Preserver and Governor of all. 13. All nations are made of one blood. 14. God reveals himself in his word. 15. God will judge the world by Jesus.

IV. REVIEW DUTIES.—In a similar way ask for the lesson in which each of the following *duties* is taught, and the way it is taught:

1. We ought to be careful of our words. 2. We ought not to criticize or judge others. 3. We ought to rejoice when we are persecuted for Christ. 4. We must obey God's word as well as hear it. 5. We ought to do good to the suffering. 6. We should ever live as "in the great Taskmaster's eye." 7. At the right time and way we ought to stand up for our civil rights. 8. We ought to read the Scriptures daily. 9. We ought not to sorrow for our Christian dead, as do unbelievers for theirs. 10. We ought to watch for, love and long for Christ's second advent. 11. We ought to show our faith by our works.

V. A FRESH VIEW.—These twelve lessons give us a vision of the gospel carried into Europe by Paul.

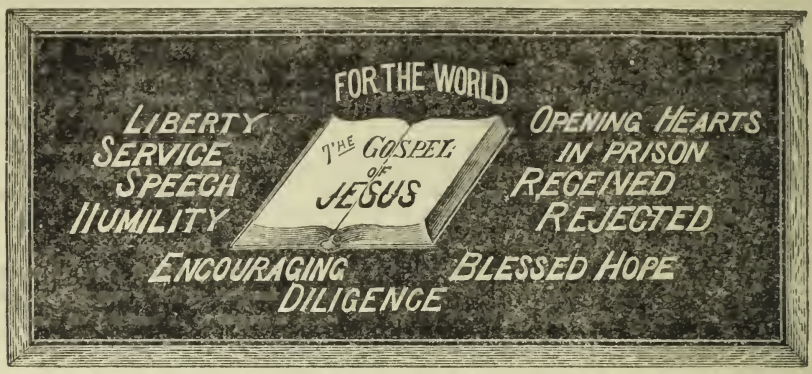
The lessons V., VI., VII., VIII., IX., X., are clearly taken up with this great theme—the planting by Paul of Christianity on the then "dark continent" of Europe. I would treat in this view Lessons I., II., III., IV., as a preparation of the gospel for its triumphs in Europe. It had to be freed from the bondage of the ceremonial law. The people in Europe would care little for the narrow prejudices and rigid ceremonialism of the Jews. Christianity must be stripped of Old Testament bandages before it could conquer Europe. This was done in Lesson I. It must be made plain also that Christians while saved by faith must maintain good works. This was done in Lessons II., III., IV.

Lessons XI. and XII. are selected from the first epistles of Paul written in Europe. Thus the second missionary journey and its epistles can be made to centre in the gospel for Europe.

Special points in Lesson for April 6th:

1. What do you know of Apollos?
2. What do you know of Aquila and Priscilla?
3. What is meant by "the baptism of John?"
4. In what did John's baptism differ from baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus?
5. What were some of the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost?" See 1 Cor. 12.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



SUGGESTIONS.—The method of reviewing the lessons for the Quarter, here suggested, is one which the writer has found the most practical and profitable in his experience. Around the golden text, as a centre, the lessons may be grouped. They may be presented as follows:

1. The gospel of Jesus in its relation to *liberty*, *i. e.*, freedom from old Jewish ritualism. Circumcision not essential to salvation. Faith in Christ the only condition required. 2. Its relation to *service*. Not only to be heard, but to be acted. 3. Its relation to *speech*. The proper use of the tongue. 4. Its relation to our living in God's sight. *Humility* is enjoined. 5. It is *for the world*. 6. Its power to *open hearts*. 7. Its power to sustain and comfort in times of persecution. It brings joy even *in prison*. 8. *Received* in Berea. 9. *Rejected* at Athens. 10. *Encouraging* the conscientious worker. 11. Its *blessed hope*. 12. Its counsel regarding *diligence*. The golden text may thus be set forth in its relation to all the lessons briefly, and pointing to the lesson words on the board, the title and golden text of each may be drawn from the school, with the practical lessons suggested by them. Now, are we in the enjoyment of the *liberty* of the gospel of Jesus? Are we *doing* as well as hearing? Is our *speech* always as it becometh that gospel? Are we living *humbly* in God's sight? Are we helping to send that gospel throughout the world? Has it yet opened our hearts? etc. In this way a great deal of practical work can be done in the few minutes allotted to the review by the superintendent, if he is thoroughly up in his study and filled with the spirit.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Dear teachers, the Quarter's lessons cover a great deal of ground, giving directions for almost every phase of Christian work. A good way to prepare a general review would be to outline on the board a large heart, making a little star in the centre, named "FAITH."

This embodies the first lesson: "In every nation"—he that believeth shall be saved. *Heart* belief in Jesus is the first step. From this star of Faith rays of light diverge in every direction, reaching outside the heart into the life. Name all these rays—"WORK," that is, print the word at the centre. This suggests the second lesson: "Be ye doers." On one of the rays print the word "TONGUE." God wants to control that. Other rays may be marked "FEET" and "HANDS." Paul heard the call, "Come over and help us," and he went. Children have the same call. The direction to the jailer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus," etc., is embodied in the star word, "FAITH."

One ray may be named "STUDY," to recall the story of the Bereans, and the contrast between them and the Thessalonians. Above the heart make blue arches, to recall the several lessons whose central thoughts are God's promises. Let the rays which represent work reach up to and touch these arches, because the promises are all conditional, and one who is unfaithful has no right to claim them.

A circle in bright yellow crayon, with the word "FOREVER" printed within, on a blue arch, will recall the lesson which promises, "So shall we be forever with the Lord." As there is no end to the circle, so there is no end to for ever.

FINAL THOUGHT.—Are my feet and hands and tongue at work for Jesus? Not unless the star of faith shines in my heart.

Shall I ask him to-day to make me his own? Can I truthfully use this prayer—

"Take *myself*, and I will be
Ever, only, ALL for thee."

REVIEW EXERCISE.*

Usual signal for silence.

Reading of the Beatitudes.

Superintendent.—And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

Pastor.—Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

School.—Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Supt.—Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Teachers.—Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

School.—Blessed *are* the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Pastor.—Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

All.—Blessed *are* the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Singing.—No. 47, *Westminster S. S. Hymnal:*

Oh, sometimes the shadows are deep,
And rough seems the path to the goal;
And sorrows, sometimes how they sweep
Like tempests down over the soul!

REF.—Oh, then, to the Rock let me fly, let me fly—
To the Rock that is higher than I;
Oh, then, to the Rock let me fly, let me fly—
To the Rock that is higher than I.

Oh, sometimes how long seems the day,
And sometimes how weary my feet!
But, toiling in life's dusty way,
The Rock's blesséd shadow how sweet!
REF.—Oh, then, to the Rock, etc.

Oh, near to the Rock let me keep,
If blessings or sorrows prevail,
Or climbing the mountain-way steep,
Or walking the shadowy vale.
REF.—Then, quick to the Rock, etc.

Prayer; closing with the Lord's Prayer.

Recitation of the Apostle's Creed or Ten Commandments.

Singing.—*Westminster S. S. Hymnal*, No. 43:

All glory to Jesus be given
That life and salvation are free;
And all may be washed and forgiven,
And Jesus can save even me.

REF.—Yes, Jesus is mighty to save,
And all his salvation may know;
On his bosom I lean,
And his blood makes me clean,
For his blood can wash whiter than snow.

From the darkness of sin and despair,
Out into the light of his love,
He has brought me and made me an heir
To kingdoms and mansions above.
REF.—Yes, Jesus is mighty, etc.

REVIEW QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

LESSON I. **Superintendent.**—What caused dissension in the church at Antioch?

School.—Certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.

Supt.—What did the conference at Jerusalem decide?

School.—That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication.

II. **Supt.**—How are we commanded to receive the word?

School.—Receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

III. **Supt.**—What power has one who can control his tongue?

School.—If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.

IV. **Supt.**—What should we remember when we are taught what is right?

School.—To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

Singing.—*Westminster S. S. Hymnal*, No. 49:

Thou my everlasting portion,
More than friend or life to me,
All along my pilgrim journey,
Saviour, let me walk with thee.

REF.—Close to thee, close to thee,
Close to thee, close to thee!
All along my pilgrim journey,
Saviour, let me walk with thee.

Not for ease or worldly pleasure,
Nor for fame, my prayer shall be;
Gladly will I toil and suffer:
Only let me walk with thee.

REF.—Close to thee, close to thee,
Close to thee, close to thee,
Gladly will I toil and suffer:
Only let me walk with thee.

V. **Supt.**—In what direction did Paul go on his second missionary journey?

School.—He went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches. Then came he to Derbe and Lystra.

Supt.—What vision had Paul at Troas?

School.—There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia and help us.

VI. **Supt.**—In what city of Macedonia did Paul first preach?

School.—In Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony.

Supt.—Who was the first convert there?

School.—A certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshiped God.

* Extra copies of this Review Exercise furnished at 50 cents a hundred, on application to the Board.

Supt.—What did the magistrates of Philippi do with Paul and Silas?

School.—When they had laid many stripes upon them they cast them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely.

VII. **Supt.**—What great wonders took place?

School.—There was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and every one's bands were loosed.

Supt.—What did the converted jailer do?

School.—He took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

VIII. **Supt.**—Where did the missionaries next go?

School.—When they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews.

Supt.—What was done when the unbelieving Jews made an uproar?

School.—The brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea.

Supt.—What success followed their preaching there?

School.—Many of them believed; also of honorable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.

Singing.—*Westminster S. S. Hymnal*, No. 186:

Oh, what, if we are Christ's,
Is earthly shame or loss?
Bright shall the crown of glory be
When we have borne the cross.

Keen was the trial once,
Bitter the cup of woe,
When martyred saints, baptized in blood,
Christ's sufferings shared below.

Bright is their glory now,
Boundless their joy above,
Where, on the bosom of their God,
They rest in perfect love.

Lord, may that grace be ours—
Like them, in faith, to bear
All that of sorrow, grief or pain
May be our portion here.

IX. **Supt.**—What did Paul say to the Athenians on Mars' Hill?

School.—As I passed by and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, "TO THE UNKNOWN GOD." Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you.

X. **Supt.**—How was Paul encouraged at Corinth?

School.—Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace.

XI. **Supt.**—What did Paul write to the Thessalonians about the coming of the Lord?

School.—The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first.

Supt.—What shall then follow?

School.—Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

XII. **Supt.**—What prayer did Paul offer for the Thessalonians?

School.—The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patient waiting for Christ.

Singing.—*Westminster S. S. Hymnal*, No. 51:

A crown of glory bright
By faith's clear eye I see
In yonder realms of light,
Prepared for me.

REF.—I'm nearer my home, nearer my home,
Nearer my home to-day—
Yes, nearer my home in heaven to-day—
Than ever I was before.

Oh, may I faithful prove,
And keep the crown in view,
And through the storms of life
My way pursue.
REF.—I'm nearer, etc.

Review-drill on Titles, Golden Texts, Lesson Plans, Review Questions and Catechism Questions.

Singing.—*Westminster S. S. Hymnal*, No. 46:

Do not faint when tribulation
Darkens, like a cloud, thy sky—
When the storms of desolation
On thee beat and o'er thee fly.

REF.—Though in darkness, God will never
Cease to love, or thee forsake;
In thy sorrow he will ever
Be thy stay for Jesus' sake.

Should thy way be rough and dreary,
With a gloomy shade o'ercast,
Should thy feet be sore and weary,
Thou shalt reach thy home at last.—REF.

Secretary's and Librarian's Distribution.

CLOSING SENTENCES.

Part of Psalm 19.

Supt.—The law of the Lord *is* perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord *is* sure, making wise the simple.

Pastor.—The statutes of the Lord *are* right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord *is* pure, enlightening the eyes.

Teachers.—The fear of the Lord *is* clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord *are* true *and* righteous altogether.

Boys.—More to be desired *are they* than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

Girls.—Moreover by them is thy servant warned: *and* in keeping of them *there is* great reward.

All.—Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer.

THE WESTMINSTER TEACHER.

VOL. XII. APRIL, 1884. NO. 4.

—Ofttimes duties that seem very hard, involving personal sacrifices, causing us at first to shrink from them, when taken up and performed in love and fidelity, yield great blessing and joy. Experiences which appear to be full of pain and loss, and which we shudder to enter upon, when we have passed into them and through them, prove to be full of God's presence and grace. The crosses that are laid in our path, and which seem heavy and shame-covered, when taken up, lift rather than crush us, and shine in radiance where at first we saw only ignominy. We may set it down as a safe rule that God is giving us his best blessings when the things he offers seem to us least desirable. When we accept them in faith they change into forms of beauty and glory.

—When the English General Wolseley was setting out for his final battle in Egypt, he took an intelligent young Scotchman for his guide. Before the army started he charged the young man most solemnly: "See that you guide me straight; guide me by the star." The guide was mortally wounded in the battle that followed. When the commander heard this he visited him, and when the dying man saw him his eye brightened, and he said in broken words: "Didn't I guide you straight, general? Didn't I guide you straight?" And the general was glad to answer "Yes." We are set as the guides of souls across this world to God's bar, and the prayer of every one in our class or church is, "Guide me straight." When at the end we meet these souls, can we appeal to them and say, "Didn't I guide you straight?" We must guide them by the cross if we would have this satisfaction at the last.

A Common Failing.

BY RUTH OGDEN.

HERE and there in the world, you often find sincere and honest souls, willing, almost glad, to learn unpleasant truths concerning self, if character may profit by the knowledge. From these same honest souls that which follows may possibly gain a kindly hearing, since the forbidding title, "A Common Failing," is not likely to repel them.

Two native forces, power and sincerity, exist in every life of even average nobility and usefulness; but side by side with power and sincerity you are likely to find conceit, and most unfortunately, this side by side arrangement is seldom of long duration. Power sets the unlovely trait on its feet in the first place, and so for a while it may rest content to trudge along unobtrusively, but sooner or later it gains an exaggerated notion of its own importance, borrows seven-league boots of self-love and self-satisfaction, and power is left far behind. As for sincerity, it frequently drops out of the unequal race altogether, or, continuing to hold its own, is lost sight of in the whirl of dust conceit creates with every pompous stride. Now, have you not noticed that conceited people are invariably blind to this common failing? so there is a chance, you see, remote or otherwise that you and I—well; let us be frank about it—are more or less conceited. It will do no harm surely to make a calm investigation, premising that we are both sincere and in possession of some degree of power. We simply amount to nothing if we cannot do something well, be it ever so trite and commonplace. Then, a certain consciousness of this power is essential to self-respect, but there is just one step between honest self-respect and dishonest self-conceit, and the danger of taking that step increases in alarming ratio with the actual superiority of the power that prompts it.

Conceit as a rule springs from a real something back of it. Presumably, a conceited man actually possesses some gift over which he allows himself to become conceited, and the fact suggests a thoughtful question: Is conceit under any circumstances justifiable? It is interesting to note how language accommodates itself to conditions which must be described. Originally, to be conceited, was to be endowed with imagination, but the good, old fashioned meaning is obsolete, and to have too high an opinion of one's self is the modern interpretation. If power is the inspiration of conceit, publicity is its opportunity. Ability naturally finds its way to the front. All grades of society acknowledge the law. It is as apparent in the banding together of street urchins, as in the choicest coterie of congenial, cultivated spirits.

Every association of individuals entertaining a definite purpose, singles out one of their num-

ber as most capable of leading, or rather he singles himself out, and they readily admit his supremacy.

Sometimes men are found at the front, who are not there by their own choosing. Occasionally ability betrays a downright preference for hiding its light under a bushel, and the honor crowning that ability is thrust upon it. Under such conditions it would seem improbable that conceit should gain so much as a footing. The man did not say, "Look, I am able to do this thing;" others said it. Yes, and there is such a delightful satisfaction in having others say it, that conceit is likely to assume wonderful proportions with amazing rapidity.

Attainment, of some description, is always a component part of the most influential characters, and religion ought to be, and is, of those whose influence is of the highest order, but unfortunately both attainment and religion offer freest ingress to this "common failing."

Consciousness of personal attractions may seem to afford still freer entrance, but mere consciousness will not involve conceit in a character of exalted standard. One may know himself the fortunate possessor of advantages, whether of person, style or manner, but ease and refinement are its legitimate outcome. The intellectual dandy is an anomaly. Weakness, betraying itself in complacency over physical endowment, is worse than conceit and a hundred fold more pitiful.

The greatest barrier against the entrance of conceit through the gate-way of attainment, is studied realization of one's actual insignificance, let the attainment be what it will. "Try to understand," as Ruskin puts it, "somewhat of the nothingness of the proportion, which that little world in which you live and love, bears to the world in which God lives and loves." But take care not to transcend the "*somewhat*," for discouragement lies just beyond its border. This, once learned and remembered, lays conceit low at your feet for ever.

As for religion, it is sad enough that aught so spiritual should be haunted by a trait so carnal, but every one has noticed its presence there. Particularly, in these days does it seem to flourish, when so many are called into prominence through systematic religious effort. Often it apparently springs full-fledged from the simple fact that a man knows he is conspicuously engaged in active Christian work. Each and all of us have need to be well guarded against this insidious traitor dogging the steps of every sort of success every where.

Emersion asserts, "In our barbarous society the influence of character is in its infancy." If true, these words are very solemn, for what must the maturity be of a babyhood so powerful. Morning, noon and night, we members of this same barbarous society are weighing each other in each other's mental balances, admiring or blaming, justly or unjustly, according to our standards.

We misjudge often, often in turn we are misjudged, but on every side we touch honest lives, which weigh us honestly, and sometimes arrive at estimates we would hardly care to contemplate.

This intangible something we call character is a very substantial reality to one's friend, and he reads between the lines. It is worth while then to look closely to it that the pages do not betray the busy hand of self-conceit.

It were well for you and me, could we bring to bear, each for ourselves, upon our individual lives, such determined perseverance to know their true trend and tendency as is compassed in these words of Edwin Arnold's,

"For this night take I horse to find the truth,
And where my quest shall end, yet know I not,
Save that it shall not end, until I find."

With this more perfect self-knowledge we should run a better chance of foiling *self-conceit*.

---

*Dr. Trumbull's Kadesh-Barnea.**

BY THE REV. D. W. POOR, D.D.

DR. H. C. TRUMBULL has fairly earned for himself a name among Biblical Geographers. He has re-discovered the long-lost Kadesh-Barnea, and, what is more, demonstrated the correctness of his discovery beyond reasonable question. For ancient Jewish history the identification of this place is next in importance to the identification of Mount Sinai. It was to this spot that the children of Israel were led on their direct route from Sinai to the Holy Land, and here they rested before entering upon its possession. It was from this spot that the twelve spies were sent. It was a little to the north of this that the wilful Israelites were defeated in their attack upon the Amorites. Here the rock was smitten with guilty petulance by Moses. Here Miriam died. This was the rendezvous of the thirty-eight years of wandering, and this the final starting-point of their march around Edom to the conquest of Canaan. For these and other reasons the discovery of Kadesh has particularly enlisted the search of all students of the Pentateuch for many years, and many

*KADESH-BARNEA: Its Importance and Probable Site, with the Story of a Hunt for it, including Studies of the Route of the Exodus and the Southern Boundary of the Holy Land. By H. Clay Trumbull, D.D. Charles Scribner's Sons, Publishers.

have been the sites selected for it, but none that have proved satisfactory, none that have fairly answered all the conditions of the problem. The chief difficulty in the way of finding it has arisen from the craftiness of the Arabs generally in guarding their wells, and also from the peculiarly savage character of the Azazimeh tribes, who hold the region where the place was to be sought. Hence its location has been uncertain, and from this uncertainty some critics have taken occasion to question the historic verity of the Mosaic narrative. The bearing, therefore, of Dr. Trumbull's explorations upon the discussions now going on in regard to the Pentateuch and its authorship, will be seen to be of great moment.

In endeavoring to establish his point, Dr. Trumbull has carefully reviewed all accessible literature on the subject. No available source of information has been left unexamined. Over four hundred volumes have been consulted, and the results have been methodically arranged with great skill. First, we have the "Biblical indications of the site," and under these many valuable comments on texts are furnished. Then come the "Ancient references to it outside the Bible." Following these is an account of the "Later attempts at its identification." Thus the way is prepared for relating the author's discovery of it, and ensuring confidence in its correctness. "The story of a hunt for it," is a delicious bit of narrative, fully equal to, if not surpassing, anything we have read in the volumes of Robinson or Palmer or Stanley or Bartlett. It is an account of dangers boldly faced, of opportunities skilfully seized, of men cleverly managed, and of a prize at last fairly won and borne off in triumph. After a long morning's toil up the dangerous wady, at a sharp turn in the hill-range, the vision burst upon the explorers, "an oasis of verdure and beauty," lying around the foot of the "rock that had been smitten," which unmistakably asserted its claim to be long-sought Kadesh. The reader exults with the finder.

Thus a basis is laid for comparing this with the other sites mentioned, and drawing conclusions in favor of it. Appended to the whole is a special study of the route of the Exodus from its starting point in Egypt; and here many original and striking explanations are offered of various passages in the Bible which will awaken the interest, if not command the assent, of commentators. Among these is the interpretation given of what was meant by "Shur," and the "wilderness of Shur," and "the way of Shur," proving the name to be synonymous with Khetam and Etham, all meaning the wall which was anciently built from the Mediterranean to the Red Seas as a defence of Egypt on the east, and thus giving the true reason why the children of Israel had to be led *through* the Red Sea in order to get out of the land. It was the only way to flank the wall which kept them in.

The book is a great work. There is a good deal in it. It will mark an epoch in Biblical geography.

Total Abstinence for the Sake of Others.

BY THE REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER, D.D.

PAUL, as a teacher, inspired with wisdom from above, was frequently called upon to answer questions of casuistry, and to give advice to the early churches. The church at Corinth asked his opinion as to the lawfulness of eating of the sacrifices offered to heathen idols. The apostle's answer is based on the principle of brotherly love. "Love edifieth." The specific points of that answer are succintly put by my beloved theological instructor, the late Dr. Charles Hodge. Paul's declaration is, that "if our doing what is in itself innocent be the occasion of leading others into sin, it is for that reason sinful for us. (Chap. 8: 9.) If, therefore, a weak brother should be led, against the convictions of his own mind, to join his stronger brethren in eating such sacrifices, he would bring himself into condemnation. It was, therefore, a breach of brotherly love, and so it was a sin against Christ to eat of the heathen sacrifices under circumstances which emboldened others to sin." Paul, therefore, declares that if meat causes his weak brethren to fall into sin, he will never consent to eat of it while the world standeth.

In this emphatic language does the grand old apostle lay down what is commonly called the Christian principle, or rule, of expediency. This rule makes it morally obligatory to abstain from indulgences which may be the occasion of temptation to others. Paul in his subsequent epistle to the church at Rome, re-affirms this important principle in the following words: "It is good (*i. e.*, it is *kalon*, it is fair, comely, commendable,) neither to eat flesh, nor to *drink wine*, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak." Rom. 14: 21. Here, again, we see that Paul affirms the moral obligation of abstaining from flesh, wine, or anything else that is injurious to our brethren. These passages, from two different epistles, bear a very direct and deadly aim at certain practices in which Christians are frequently tempted to indulge. They put certain kinds and places of amusement under the ban; for if my feet go thither, then I, as a minister of Christ, may lead others after me, who would get no

small moral damage by following my footsteps. This is a sufficient reason for me to keep away from the theatre, as it is managed in these days. Sabbath-school teachers cannot be too careful in regard to the examples which they set before their classes. "Do *you* go there?" "Do *you* do it?" are sometimes very embarrassing questions when put by a class to their spiritual instructor.

This great principle of expediency has a very clear and close application to the use of alcoholic beverages. Paul's two utterances are a sort of double-barrelled revolver, aimed at the bottles which are seen quite too often on the tables of those who profess to call themselves Christians. It is a legitimate argument against those bottles that they may, and frequently do, allure the Christians who tamper with them, into disgrace and ruin. The sad warnings of those church-members, yes, and of ministers of the gospel also, who have been overcome by the wine that is "a mocker," speak in trumpet tones to us all, and bid us beware how we play with an adder.

The real reason why alcoholic beverages should not be set before others as a temptation, is just this—that such beverages are *inherently dangerous*. There are certain qualities which belong to alcoholic stimulants which do not belong to meat or milk; and not in any strong degree even to tea or coffee. Those qualities are, a tendency to kindle an increasing appetite; a tendency towards the *brain*, which is the very throne of the reason and the conscience; a tendency to enslave the user under a most debasing and destructive habit. In short, alcoholic drinks have a *tendency* towards a sin which hath power to cast both body and soul into hell.

Such being the inherent qualities of intoxicating beverages, we "take the bull by the horns" and affirm that their indiscriminate use is *not* an "innocent" thing, as many Christians thoughtlessly claim it to be. Now, if Paul declares that a thing which is inherently *innocent* (like the eating of meat under certain circumstances) should be cheerfully surrendered for the sake of the "weak" and the "stumblers," how much *more* should we feel the obligation to surrender a *dangerous* indulgence. Putting it, therefore, on the apostolic ground of "brotherly love," the practice of setting alcoholic beverages before others is to be condemned. For we deliberately offer them that which has a tendency to create an evil appetite, or to inflame one already existing. We place the stumbling-block in their path. If they stumble, we are to a great degree responsible for their fall. Christians are commanded to be "witnesses" for their Master; a tempter into sin bears false witness, and makes his or her influence a lure and not a light.

He must be blind, indeed, who does not see that the chief peril to the young arises from what are called the *drinking usages* of society. These feed the drinking-saloons, and support them. Abolish these, and the saloons soon lose their chief patronage. An immense percentage of drunkenness is bred and maintained outside of the tippling-houses. The radical reform, and the only radical reform, is that which removes the drinking-customs of society. Until this is accomplished, all "prohibitory laws" are ineffectual. Right here, then, at this vital point, comes in the practical benefit of this grand principle which Paul sets forth in his twice repeated injunction, to *abstain from what is hurtful to others*. If this apostolic precept were carried out, it would clear the skirts of all good people from any complicity with these fatal drink-usages. Our business now is with Christians, to whom the Bible is a law and brotherly love a commandment.

Does it cost you a self-denial, a sacrifice, to put away a glass of wine or brandy? Then, be careful for yourself; you are dangerously wedded to it. Does it cost you no sacrifice? Then surely you ought to be ready, yea, happy, to reiterate the noble utterance of the apostle of love: "If wine or strong drink make my brother to offend, I will use no wine or strong drink while the world standeth."

"The Burning of the Books."

BY THE REV. JAMES R. DANFORTH.

THE apostle Paul preached two years at Ephesus, and the city was stirred by his doctrine. As Dr. Arnot writes: "A whole nest of fortune-tellers and sorcerers, who were burrowing under the shadow of Diana's temple, and preying upon the dissipated multitudes of Ephesus, were disturbed." Repenting of their wickedness, they brought their evil stock in trade and publicly burnt it. The value of the parchments, amulets and other magical trumpery was about $8,000 of our money at the present time. Into the flames went the dark sayings, the mysterious figures and signs of the magical art. What had caused the flesh to creep and the hair to stand on end through fear, were whisked into gas and ashes by the quick tongue of flame. This was the best use to which the "books" could be put.

The day of magic and incantation has passed from any who are likely to read this paper, so we will turn from such books to those that are read, and deserve to be burned.

Very few among the millions of readers have

thought deeply upon what a book really is. Caution is used in the choice of a companion, if we are wise. We are quite likely to learn who a person is before trusting him, or committing our children to his influence. Less care should not be taken with the companionship of books. A book read is henceforth part of the reader's mind. It will go wherever he goes. Its influence will affect every action, though the mind may not be conscious of it.

So many ounces of paper and so many impressions of type do not represent a book. Thought has been captured and imprisoned within the covers, to be kept there until the reader cares to release it. When the boy or girl takes up the juvenile paper, and the man or woman holds up the book, some effect is to be produced. A new relation is to be opened. A companionship of thought is to be established.

A book contains not merely thought, but thought put in the strongest form the author can command to produce the effect he desires. In conversation and oral discourse things may be said that will put the hearer on his guard, or even excite hostility, when that effect is not designed. Time is taken, in the book, for maturing the most adroit method and presenting the thought in its most attractive form. If the book is bad, then the evil is so spiced and sugared and suited to the taste as to make it very palatable; if good, then the good is presented in what the author deems the most effective manner. This is the aim and effort of every writer. The author is usually at his best in vigor, skill, versatility and effectiveness. He is clad in complete panoply of arms, and advances with sword and spear and battle-axe. What is the condition of the average reader? He is always willing to listen—or, what is the same—is willing to read. If a person approaches you, whom you do not care to meet, it is easy to turn a convenient corner and thus escape "the blessing in disguise." No book rears itself from the table and places itself in your hands. No book begins to read itself to you, whether you will or not. Reading is always a *voluntary* act. You read because you *will* to do so. This is a great advantage to the author; it may be a great disadvantage to the reader. Where a book is suspected, and is read in a critical spirit, it is likely to do but little harm, and can usually do but little good. But the majority of readers are not suspicious or critical. They want to be entertained, amused, interested. Their mind is passive in reading. It must pay attention and be willing to receive, in order to read. And this attitude of *willingness* to *receive* often advances another step, and becomes *readiness* to *accept*. What is printed seems, to many people, to have more weight and worth than what is spoken. A person will sometimes have a respect for his own opinions, when seen in print, which they did not command when merely spoken. As the writer is usually at his strongest, so the reader is usually at his weakest. The latter has laid aside his sword and spear and battle-axe. If in any armor, he is clad only in defensive. For the most part he stands unarmed to learn the purpose and manner of the author's approach. Before he is aware of it he may be wounded.

Teachers should emphasize this fact of the power of books to impress themselves upon the readers in this life-long way. Understanding the true relation between authors and readers, it is an easy matter to lay down the general principle that should govern in the reading or in the "burning" of a book. Admit into your minds only those characters, whom as persons in real life you would admit into your houses. Boys should not keep company, in papers, with boys whom their parents would turn over to the police. Books, pure in tone, elevating in aim, ennobling in purpose, and improving to mind and heart, should be read. Such books are to be had in abundance; if the taste is once formed for them, they will be found. No excuse can be made for reading a bad book. As the faithful teacher cautions the scholars against the perils of evil companions, so will the warning be raised against the dreadful influence of evil reading. Juvenile papers and books, which are fit only for burning, are issued by the ton from the press. I refrain from mentioning them by name, as I desire not to advertise them. But they are so many that their number, as their character, is "legion." Sin is treated in them as smartness. Disobedience is applauded as courage. Lying and deceit are paraded as brightness. God is mentioned only in dashes, to give piquancy to the thickly interlarded oaths. Their effect is "evil, and only evil, and that continually."

Sensational books, giving false views of life, breeding discontent with one's lot, poisoning the mind with low maxims and grovelling precepts, should be burned, not read. Whatever will strengthen the mind, leaving a "good taste," so that we are readier to do good to men and to serve God more faithfully, is a book worth reading. The principle is a trite one; it cannot be put in a startling form, nor is it needed, to command our assent. It is plain, homely and well-known. *Read only those books that will in some way improve you.* This simple rule will save from much evil and add much good. Whether paper or book, if it stands not this test, it should be to us as stuff to be "burnt."

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

SECOND QUARTER.

1. April 6.—**Paul's Third Missionary Journey.** Acts 18 : 23–28 and 19 : 1–7.
2. April 13.—**Paul at Ephesus.** Acts 19 : 8–22.
3. April 20.—**Paul's Preaching.** 1 Cor. 1 : 17–31.
4. April 27.—**Abstinence for the Sake of Others.** 1 Cor. 8 : 1–13.
5. May 4.—Christian Love. 1 Cor. 13 : 1–13.
6. May 11.—Victory over Death. 1 Cor. 15 : 50–58.
7. May 18.—The Uproar at Ephesus. Acts 19 : 23–41 and 20 : 1, 2.
8. May 25.—Liberal Giving. 2 Cor. 9 : 1–15.
9. June 1.—Christian Liberty. Gal. 4 : 1–16.
10. June 8.—Justification by Faith. Rom. 3 : 19–31.
11. June 15.—The Blessedness of Believers. Rom. 8 : 28–39.
12. June 22.—Obedience to Law. Rom. 13 : 1–10.
13. June 29.—Review.

Lesson I. PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY. April 6th, 1884.

Acts 18 : 23–28 ; 19 : 1–7. Memorize vs. 24–26.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them."—Acts 19 : 6.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 18 : 23–19 : 8. *Paul's Third Missionary Journey.*
T. Matt. 3 : 1–12..... *John's Baptism.*
W. Acts 2 : 1–21..... *The Baptism of the Spirit.*
Th. John 1 : 35–51 .... *Faith in Jesus Christ.*
F. Gal. 3 : 22–29 ..... *Baptized into Christ.*
S. Eph. 3 : 14–21 .... *Growth in Grace and Knowledge.*
S. Eph. 6 : 1–24 ..... *Strong in the Lord.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. Apollos of Alexandria. 2. John's Disciples.

Time.—A. D. 54, 55.

Place.—Ephesus.

Catechism.—Q. 65. *What is forbidden in the fifth commandment?* A. The fifth commandment forbiddeth the neglecting of, or doing anything against, the honor and duty which belongeth to every one in their several places and relations.

Q. 66. *What is the reason annexed to the fifth commandment?* A. The reason annexed to the fifth commandment is, a promise of long life and prosperity (as far as it shall serve for God's glory and their own good), to all such as keep this commandment.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

INTRODUCTORY.—Our last lesson in the Acts (March 9th) left Paul at Corinth. He remained there a year and a half. Thence he went to Antioch in Syria, stopping for a brief time at Ephesus, then sailing to Cæsarea, whence he went up to Jerusalem to salute the church, and thence down to Antioch, the starting point of all his tours. Thus closed the second missionary journey, which had occupied about three years. He now entered on his third great journey, on which he was gone about four years, A. D. 54–58.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

23 And after he had spent some time *there*, he departed, and went over *all* the country of Ga-la'ti-a and Phryg'i-a in order, strengthening all the disciples. [Gal. 1 : 2 ; 4 : 14.]

24 ¶ And a certain Jew named A-pol'los, born at Al-ex-an'dria, an eloquent man, *and* mighty in the scriptures, came to Eph'e-sus. [1 Cor. 1 : 12 ; 3 : 5, 6 ; Tit. 3 : 13.]

25 This man was instructed in the way of the Lord ; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.

26 And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue : whom when Aq'ui-la and Pris-cil'la had heard, they took him unto *them*, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.

27 And when he was disposed to pass into A-cha'ia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him : who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace : [1 Cor. 3 : 6.]

28 For he mightily convinced the Jews, *and that* publicly, showing by the scriptures that Je'sus was Christ. [Acts 9 : 22.]

Ch. 19 : 1. And it came to pass, that, while A-pol'los was at Cor'inth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Eph'e-sus : and finding certain disciples, [1 Cor. 1 : 12.]

2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed ? And they

said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. [1 Sam. 3 : 7.]

3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. [Acts 18 : 25.]

4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Je'sus. [Matt. 3 : 11.]

5 When they heard *this* they were baptized in the name of the Lord Je'sus. [Matt. 28 : 19; Acts 8 : 16.]

6 And when Paul had laid *his* hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. [Acts 6 : 6; 8 : 17; 2 : 4; 10 : 46.]

7 And all the men were about twelve.

REVISED VERSION.

23 And having spent some time *there*, he departed, and went through the region of Galatia and Phrygia in order, stablishing all the disciples.

24 Now a certain Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by race, a learned man, came to Ephesus; and he was mighty in the 25 scriptures. This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spake and taught carefully the things concerning Jesus, knowing only the baptism 26 of John: and he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more 27 carefully. And when he was minded to pass over into Achaia, the brethren encouraged him, and wrote to the disciples to receive him: and when he was come, he helped them much which had believed through 28 grace: for he powerfully confuted the Jews, *and that* publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.

1 And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus, and 2 found certain disciples: and he said unto them, Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed? And they *said* unto him, Nay, we did not so much as hear whether the 3 Holy Ghost was *given*. And he said, Into what then were ye baptized? And they said, 4 Into John's baptism. And Paul said, John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, 5 that is, on Jesus. And when they heard this, they were baptized into the name of 6 the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and 7 prophesied. And they were in all about twelve men.

23 *After he had spent some time there.* That is, at Antioch in Syria. (See Introductory.) *He departed.* On his third missionary journey. His course in the early part of this journey is not definitely recorded, but it is supposed that he went over very much the same route as on former tours, as this was a revisitation of the churches already established. *Galatia and Phrygia.* Districts in Asia Minor. Paul passed

through these districts during his second missionary journey. Chap. 16: 6. *Strengthening all the disciples.* That is, visiting all the churches established during the former journeys, for the purpose of encouraging and strengthening the disciples in their Christian life. This he did both by his presence and personal influence, and also by teaching them and preaching at the different places.

24 *A certain Jew named Apollos.* The facts here given are all that we learn of this man, except the allusions to him in Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians. 1 Cor. 3 : 6; 16 : 12. *Born at Alexandria.* In Egypt. This city was founded by Alexander the Great, B. C. 332. There were many Jews there. It was in Alexandria that the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, was made. It was a great literary centre. *An eloquent man.* Or, as Revised Version, "Learned." The original word implies not only eloquence as an orator, but also the possession of large stores of knowledge. He had probably been trained in the schools of Alexandria, and was full of learning, and able by means of his eloquence to use it. *Mighty in the scriptures.* The Old Testament Scriptures. The word "mighty" indicates not only knowledge of the Scriptures, but skill and power in using them, that is, in expounding to others their meaning.

25 *This man was instructed in the way of the Lord.* That is, the doctrine of Christ. The expression was applied to the ministry of the Baptist. Apollos had been taught many things about the Messiah, but not all that was necessary to fit him to be a Christian teacher. He knew that Jesus was the Christ, fulfilling the Old Testament prophecies, but the true nature of his work and his kingdom he did not understand. *Fervent in the*

spirit. Warm and zealous in disposition. Rom. 12: 11. *Spake and taught diligently.* Revised Version, "Carefully," that is, accurately. So far as he had been instructed he was an accurate teacher. *Knowing only the baptism of John.* The expression is used in contrast to the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Apollos had been baptized by John's baptism, and instructed in many things relating to the life and teaching of Christ, but he knew nothing of that baptism which on the day of Pentecost brought power to the disciples of Christ. He was very much such a believer in Christ as were the apostles themselves before they received the outpouring of the Holy Ghost.

26 *Began to speak boldly.* Though knowing only a part of the truth he was yet zealous in proclaiming the Messiahship of Jesus. *Aquila and Priscilla.* See lesson of March 9th for some account of this godly couple. Paul met them first at Corinth, but when he left there he took them with him to Ephesus, where they remained, while he went on to Syria. See vs. 18–21. In Revised Version the name of Priscilla stands first, as in several other places. This may indicate that she surpassed her husband in Christian activity and influence. *They took him unto them.* Into their house, as they had taken Paul. This shows their spirit of hospitality. *Expounded . . . more perfectly.* They heard him speak in the synagogue, and observing that he had not learned the whole of Christian truth, they took him into their own house and gave him whatever further instruction he needed. It is an interesting fact that this layman and his wife in private became the instructors of this learned and eloquent preacher, and that a Christian woman seems to have done even more than her husband in this work.

27 *Disposed to pass unto Achaia.* Revised Version, "Minded." Achaia corresponded to modern Greece, and Corinth was its capital. It was to Corinth that Apollos wished to go. See chap. 19: 1. *The brethren wrote.* According to the Revised Version the brethren at Ephesus encouraged Apollos, and also wrote to the disciples at Corinth, exhorting them to receive him. This is the first recorded instance of such a letter of commendation. Afterward it became very common throughout the Church to give to Christians traveling from place to place letters which certified to their character, and insured them a kindly reception. A letter from Aquila and Priscilla to believers in Corinth, where they had lived and labored so long, would have great influence. *Helped them much . . . through grace.* The last two words refer to the help rendered by Apollos. It was through the grace in him that he helped the other believers. His work there seems to have been either the confirming and strengthening of the Christians he found there, or, help rendered in advancing the work. Verse 28 would indicate that it was in the latter way his aid was principally given. Paul speaks of him (1 Cor. 3: 6) as *watering* what he himself had *planted.*

28 *He mightily convinced the Jews.* Revised Version, "Powerfully confuted." He met their opposition to Christ as the Messiah, and by their own Scriptures confuted them. For this work his peculiar powers eminently fitted him. *And that publicly.* In the synagogues, in public disputations. We have no further mention in the Acts of the eloquent Apollos. We know, however, that his work at Corinth was very successful. Paul speaks of it with warm commendation. 1 Cor. 3: 6–10. There seems to have gathered about him a party in Corinth, while another party in the church called themselves the disciples of Paul. The apostle condemns this sectarian tendency, but displays no envy of Apollos. He even pressed him to return to Corinth (1 Cor. 16: 12), but Apollos declined for the time. We have one other loving mention of him (Titus 3: 13) by the apostle, and then his name vanishes.

Chap. 19: 1 *While Apollos was at Corinth.* The narrative returns to Paul's journey. Chap. 18: 23. *Through the upper coasts.* Revised Version, "Country," referring to the eastern parts of Asia Minor. *Ephesus.* He had promised to return here (chap. 18: 21), and hasted to keep his promise. *Finding certain disciples.* Christian disciples, but like Apollos, before his fuller instruction, not knowing the whole Christian truth, particularly that referring to the Holy Spirit.

2 *Have ye received . . . since ye believed?* Revised Version, "Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed?" The question refers to the giving of the Spirit at conversion. We are not informed what led Paul to ask this question; perhaps he noticed a lack of spirituality in them. *We have not so much as heard.* Notice again the correct reading of the Revised Version. No Jew could say that he had never heard that there was a Holy Ghost. John the Baptist spoke of him. What they meant was that they had not heard that the Holy Spirit was yet given. They knew nothing of the day of Pentecost and its gifts and powers. The same words are used in John 7: 39. These disciples were in much the same condition as Apollos.

3 *Unto what then were ye baptized? . . . Unto John's baptism?* The baptism of John

was with water only, while that of Christ was with the Holy Ghost. Possibly these disciples had been instructed and baptized by Apollos before he himself had learned the full Christian truth.

4 *Then said Paul.* He here defines John's baptism. Compare Matt. 3 : 11. John's baptism was preparatory, and his disciples were to believe on the Messiah when he appeared. The proclamation of the *Christian* preacher, since the day of Pentecost, is, "Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. See Acts 2 : 38. These Ephesian disciples had not heard this proclamation till they now heard it from Paul's lips.

5 *When they heard this.* No doubt taught them at length and fully. Verse 4 is but the substance of his teaching. *They were baptized.* They had been baptized into the baptism of repentance (vs. 3, 4), which was only preparatory; now they are baptized into the name of Christ, that is, into covenant relations as believers. This was not really a re-baptism, since these disciples never had received Christian baptism until now.

6, 7 *The Holy Ghost came on them.* In special power, so that the men at once began to speak in new tongues. *Prophesied.* They received new illumination by which the Scriptures were made plain to them, and they were able to explain them. The word does not necessarily mean that they foretold future events. *The men.* There appear to have been no women.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

I. Apollos of Alexandria. vs. 23–28.

1. **One may know much and yet be ignorant of the vital truth.** *Mighty in the Scriptures . . . instructed in the way of the Lord.* No doubt Apollos was a scholarly man, having been trained in the schools of Alexandria. Nor was his knowledge secular only; he was also mighty in the Scriptures, familiar with their teachings, and able to expound them with persuasive power. Yet he wanted further knowledge to make him a qualified teacher. We are all in danger of stopping in our knowledge just where Apollos did. We are studying our Bibles a great deal, and we know most of the facts about the life of Christ and about his death and resurrection. But there is a deeper spiritual knowledge that is necessary—the knowledge of Christ as our personal Saviour, and of the Holy Spirit as Sanctifier, Helper, Teacher and Guide. Are we any further on than was Apollos?

2. **One may be fervent in spirit and yet lack the Holy Spirit.** *Fervent in spirit . . . knowing only the baptism of John.* He had a warm heart, with glowing emotions. He was a zealous believer in the Messiahship of Jesus, and as far as he had been instructed was an earnest preacher. But he had not received the baptism of the Holy Ghost. One may have natural warmth, enthusiasm and fervor, and yet not have the power that cometh down from heaven. We are not made Christians merely by repenting and accepting Christ, and being baptized and beginning to live right. We must be born again, born of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit must enter us, giving us new life, and must dwell in us, maintaining this new spiritual life. Warmth of nature is not spirituality. Mere heart-power is not Holy Ghost power. Let us not stop where Apollos had stopped. Without the spark of fire the most perfect artillery loaded and ready will avail nothing in war. One may accept Christ and be baptized, and unite with the Church and be busy in Christian work; but without the heavenly fire all will amount to nothing.

3. **Learned men may sometimes be taught much by very plain people.** *Priscilla and Aquila . . . expounded unto him the way of God more carefully.* We do not hear that Aquila ever preached in public himself; perhaps he had no gift for that kind of work. Priscilla certainly did not speak in the synagogue. Yet when they heard Apollos, and discovered that he knew only a part of the Christian truth, they took him into their own lodgings and taught him the things he needed further to know, so that he became a far more effective worker. If we cannot all be eloquent preachers we may all find some work for Christ which we can do in private.

4. **One who teaches others should know the whole truth.** *He began to speak boldly in the synagogue.* We are not told, but it is probable that the Ephesian disciples whom Paul found had received their instruction from Apollos. If so, we see how his imperfect knowledge marred his work. A poor teacher in any kind of school may do immense injury to his pupils in all their after life. No doubt many men and women never reach the best possible for them in attainment and achievement, because their early teachers marred their development. This truth is far more important in those who train the spiritual nature. Teaching only a part of the truth about salvation may make dwarfed

disciples. Teaching error may utterly wreck immortal destinies.

II. John's Disciples. vs. 1–7.

1. **We should seek those who need help.** *Paul . . . found certain disciples.* They did not come to him to ask him to teach them. He was not a man who waited for people to send for him when they needed some work of grace; he went out and sought for people who needed spiritual help. He did not sit down and wait for opportunities of doing good; he made opportunities for himself. He looked up work, and then did it. We should learn a lesson from him right here. There are people all about us who need our help in some way, but who will never come to us and ask us to help them; we must go to them. Christ's mission was to seek and to save. He *went about* doing good. His command to his people is, "*Go* ye into all the world." There are too many people waiting for something to do for Christ. Let them go out and seek and they will find enough to fill their hearts and hands.

2. **No ignorance among Christians is sadder than ignorance of the Holy Spirit.** *We did not so much as hear whether the Holy Ghost was given.* A great many Christians seem no further on yet than were these Ephesian disciples. They know all about Christ's dying on the cross for sin, and speak of that act as the whole of the divine work in saving sinners. They do not seem to know that the Holy Spirit is in the world, and that it is only by his working *in* us that we are really saved. Christ's death was necessary for the removal of guilt; the Spirit is just as essential for the removal of enmity in the heart and all the work of grace in the life. But for the Spirit no one would ever come to Christ to be saved; none would ever be born again; none would ever be sanctified. Ignorance of the Holy Spirit cuts us off from much blessing that might be ours, and robs us of power which he would give.

3. **It matters greatly what we believe.** *When they heard this they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. And . . . the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues.* Some people say doctrines are of no account, and they decry all creeds. Here we see how ignorance of a great doctrine kept these disciples from high privileges; and how, as soon as they knew the doctrine, new blessing and power came. It is important what we believe. Our creeds shape our life. If we know the truth, the truth will make us free.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Every Christian needs frequent strengthening and renewing to keep his life at its best. v. 23.
2. One may know the Scriptures well and yet not be ready to teach others. v. 24.
3. One may know all the historical facts about Christ, yet not understand Christ. v. 25.
4. One may be fervent in spirit and yet not be spiritual. v. 25.
5. Imperfect knowledge in a teacher may cause him to make fatal mistakes in guiding others. These Ephesian disciples may have been instructed by Apollos. v. 26.
6. Plain, private Christians may teach great and learned men about Christ. v. 26.
7. There is something for every one to do in the work of the Lord. vs. 26, 27.
8. We should seek out those who need our help, and not wait till they come to us. v. 1.
9. Ignorance of the truth may keep us stunted and weak in our Christian life. vs. 2, 3
10. It *does* make a great deal of difference what we believe. vs. 4–6.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

BY JAMES A. WORDEN, D.D.

APPROACH.

1. Have in your hand a map of Paul's journeys.

2. Request your scholars to trace on the map the route of Paul on the second journey. You must use your judgment as to recalling any of the events which occurred at the places named.

3. It will be well to consider v. 23 in the introduction. Who accompanied Paul on this third journey? We know it was Timothy from references in Acts and in the Epistles. Acts 19: 22; 1 Cor. 4: 17; 16: 10; 2 Cor. 1: 1; Rom. 16: 21; Acts 20: 4.

DIVIDE.

The Eloquent Preacher.
The Baptism of the Holy Ghost.

APPLY BY QUESTIONING.

I. *The Eloquent Preacher.*—Draw out all that is known of Apollos. Where was he born? Call for a report on the topic, "Alexandria." What is the meaning here of this word "eloquent?" In what was Apollos specially powerful? What is it to be "mighty in the Scriptures?" 1. To have the mind and memory stored with a knowledge of its words, its doc-

trines, its laws. 2. To have the heart filled with a rich experience of its truths. 3. To have the power to speak and teach these truths. How can any one become mighty in the Scriptures? By prayer, study, meditation. To what place did Apollos come? How had he been taught concerning Christ? The word "instructed" here means "catechetically instructed." What are some advantages of being taught by questions and answers? What is said of Apollos' spirit? What is fervor of spirit? Literally, "a burning," a genuine earnestness of soul. How did Apollos show his fervor at Ephesus? Spake and taught diligently or accurately—"speak boldly in the synagogue." Why should Christians testify for Jesus? In what way? What is meant by Apollos "knowing only the baptism of John?" (See Dr. Miller's Notes.) Who were Aquila and Priscilla? What did they notice in Apollos? What did they do for Apollos? How could humble people like Aquila and Priscilla instruct a learned man like Apollos? What spirit did Apollos show in submitting to be taught by Priscilla and Aquila? *What lesson is there here for young men and women who think they have outgrown the Sabbath-school? What encouragement is there here for Christian women?* What was the way of God which they taught Apollos? To what great city did Apollos go from Ephesus? To whom did he take letters of commendation? What service did he render to the Corinthians? What arguments did he use? In what particulars was Apollos a model to all Christian workers? How had Aquila and Priscilla and Apollos prepared the way for Paul at Ephesus?

II. *The Baptism of the Holy Ghost.*—Whom did Paul find at Ephesus? What question did he ask them? (See Revised Version.) What is the meaning of this question? When ye trusted in Christ for your salvation, did you receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost? Did he come upon you in elevating, sanctifying and anointing power? What answer did these men give? What did this answer mean? (See Dr. Miller's Notes.) Unto what had they been baptized? What is the difference between John's baptism and that of Jesus? When Paul laid his hands on these men, what did they receive? How did the Holy Spirit manifest himself in them? In what sense are believers now to expect to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit? A special outpouring of God's Spirit, filling us with joy and peace in believing, enabling us to triumph over sin, and fitting us for service. Prove that this baptism is promised to all who seek it. Luke 3 : 16; Acts 1 : 4, 5, 8; John 14 : 16–26; 15 : 26; 16 : 7. Have a scholar turn to and read each of these references. What great examples have we of the baptism of the Holy Ghost? Acts 1 : 1–4; 4 : 31. What passages teach that this baptism of the Spirit is all that Christian workers indispensably need? 1 Cor. 12: 8–10; 1 John 2: 20. How is this baptism of the Holy Spirit to be sought? 1. With an appreciation of it as the greatest blessing. Acts 1 : 14. 2. With concentrated desire for it. Jer. 29 : 13. 3. This search for it must be accompanied by an earnest effort to put away all sin. Ps. 66: 18. 4. By persevering prayer. Eph. 6: 17, 18; Acts 4 : 31; Luke 11 : 11–13; Acts 1 : 14; Jude 20.

Points in Lesson for April 13th:

1. What do you know of Ephesus—its geography, history, public buildings, inhabitants, idolatry, etc.?
2. What special miracles did God work through Paul at Ephesus?
3. What terrible judgment fell on the Jewish exorcists?
4. Describe some of the curious arts practiced at Ephesus.
5. How did the converted magicians show their sincere repentance?
6. What are evidences of true repentance?

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

BY MRS. G. R. ALDEN—"PANSY."

The Teacher in Class.—Who is that grand missionary about whom we have talked so much? Yes, Paul. Now he is starting on another missionary journey. This dot on the board stands for Antioch, and from here he starts. Let us make a journey-line for him. Trace the journey, pointing out as many places as in your judgment will be profitable to your pupils. This red-lined spot is the city of Ephesus; and here I want to introduce you to a man whose name begins with A. Or, perhaps you can tell me his name? Oh, yes, Apollos. Now, what kind of a man was he? Johnny says he was "mighty in the Scriptures." That answer shows that Johnny has studied his lesson, but what does that mean? (Hold up a Bible.) What book is this? What name did Johnny give to it? How much of the Bible did Apollos have? If necessary, teach at this point how much had been written, and draw out from class their ideas as to what it means to be "mighty" in the Scriptures.

One thing this man did not know. He had not that part of the Bible which promises the

Holy Ghost to all who love Jesus; but there were some people in Ephesus who knew about him, and they did something for Apollos. What was it? Call from class the facts, and the story of Apollos going elsewhere to preach the good news.

Look, who is this coming to Ephesus? It is that man who started from Syria on a missionary journey. Oh, yes, it is Paul. See, some disciples are gathering around him. He is talking with them. He asks them a question. What was it? Katie has studied her lesson; she answered me in Bible words. Let George tell me how they answered Paul. Yes. They were just like Apollos before that good man and woman helped him. They did not understand about the great gift. Now, what is this red line for that I am making? Somebody prayed. That is it. Who? Yes, Paul laid his hands on them and asked God to do for them what he had done for him. Who can tell whether God answered? (Let the answer be given in the words of the golden text.)

Now we come to the part about this lesson which is for us. About this wonderful gift. Does God give it now, and if so, to whom? How do we know he does? Nellie says, because he promised to. That is a good answer, for it is true he promised, and he never breaks a promise.

"Jesus hath promised, therefore 'tis true,
The Holy Spirit abideth with you."

But why can we not see the Holy Spirit as people saw Jesus when he was on earth? Encourage free conversation about this, calling out the fact that Jesus had an earthly body like ourselves, but that we each have something within this body which we cannot see, and yet that we are sure of possessing, for when it goes away the person cannot hear, nor speak, nor move, and we say that he is dead, though the body is still there. It is the spirit, or the soul. We cannot see it any more than we can see the wind, yet we are sure there is wind. The Holy Ghost is a Spirit. He has come to this earth to take care of God's children. He has a home in every heart which belongs to God. Have your little children opened their hearts to him?

The lesson is a very difficult one to make plain to children, for the reason that no one fully comprehends the solemn truth. But the facts as taught by Jesus should be presented, and the unquestioning faith of childhood will often grasp what the older nature does not.

The blessed thought of a powerful friend, though unseen, always near, to guide, to protect, to help on all possible occasions, should be made as real as possible to the child-mind.

The lesson should close with a prayer to God to give the Holy Spirit to these children.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

BY J. HOWARD SEAL.

SUGGESTIONS.—The object of the lesson, as in diagram, is to show that the gospel of Jesus is not complete without the presence and power of the Holy Ghost. Have the school read Matt. 3: 11, 12; John 3: 26–36; 16: 7–15. Let only the upper and lower lines be exposed to view at the start. Print the rest as you teach the truths. The Holy Ghost is needful to guide us into all truth. How will he do it?

1. He shall not speak of himself.
2. He shall glorify Jesus.
3. He shall receive of the things of Jesus.
4. He shall show them unto us.

He cannot be left out of our teaching or preaching if we want real success. We need to be baptized with the Holy Ghost in order to have fire in our teaching.

Directions for Coloring.—"The Holy Ghost" and "Have you received him?" white shaded with orange. The rest, red shaded with yellow.

Lesson II. **PAUL AT EPHESUS.** April 13th, 1884.

Acts 19: 8–22. Memorize vs. 8–10.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And many that believed came, and confessed, and showed their deeds."—Acts 19: 18.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 19: 8–22.....*Paul at Ephesus.*
T. Deut. 18: 9–22 .....*Sorcery Denounced.*
W. Jer. 29: 8–19.....*False Prophets.*
Th. Isa. 55: 1–13.....*God's Word shall Prosper.*
F. Luke 14: 25–35.....*Conditions of Discipleship.*
S. Phil. 3: 1–14.....*All for Christ.*
S. 1 Tim. 6: 1–12.....*The Gain of Godliness.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Apostle's Work. 2. The Failure of the Exorcists. 3. The Power of Divine Grace. 4. Looking toward Rome.

Time.—A. D. 55, 56.

Place.—Ephesus.

Catechism.—Q. 67. *Which is the sixth commandment?* A. The sixth commandment is, *Thou shalt not kill.*

Q. 68. *What is required in the sixth commandment?* A. The sixth commandment requireth all lawful endeavors to preserve our own life, and the life of others.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—Our last lesson showed us the beginning of Paul's work in Ephesus. There he found the disciples who did not know anything of the Holy Ghost. Ephesus was the capital and also the most important city of the province of Asia. It was one of the great commercial centres of the world. It was built by Androclus the Athenian, and was the royal residence of the Ionian kings. Its public buildings were famous. One of these was the stadium or circus, in which occurred the races, fights of beasts and pugilistic combats. Another was the theatre, said to have been the largest edifice of the kind erected by the Greeks. But the most magnificent of all the public buildings was the great temple of Diana, one of the Seven Wonders of the world. Ephesus was laid waste in 262 A. D. by the Goths, and although rebuilt it never attained its former splendor. Its site is now an utter desolation, covered with ruins and overgrown with vegetation. In 1862 not even a hut could be found where once the glorious capital stood, and the only inhabitants were beasts of the field and fowls of the air.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

8 And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God. [Acts 1: 3.]

9 But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Ty-ran'nus. [2 Pet. 2: 2; Jude 10.]

10 And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in A'sia heard the word of the Lord Je'sus, both Jews and Greeks.

11 And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: [Mark 16: 20; Acts 14: 3.]

12 So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them. [2 Kings 4: 29.]

13 ¶ Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Je'sus, saying, We adjure you by Je'sus whom Paul preacheth. [Matt. 12: 27; Mark 9: 38; Luke 9: 49.]

14 And there were seven sons of *one* Sce'va, a Jew, *and* chief of the priests, which did so.

15 And the evil spirit answered and said, Je'sus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?

16 And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

17 And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Eph'e-sus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Je'sus was magnified. [Luke 1: 65; 7: 16.]

18 And many that believed came, and confessed, and showed their deeds. [Matt. 3: 6.]

19 Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all *men:* and they counted the price of them, and found *it* fifty thousand *pieces* of silver.

20 So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

21 ¶ After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Ma-ce-do'ni-a and A-cha'ia, to go to Je-ru'sa-lem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome. [Acts 15: 25; 20: 22; 23: 11.]

22 So he sent into Ma-ce-do'ni-a two of them that ministered unto him, Tim-o'the-us and E-ras'tus; but he himself stayed in A'sia for a season. [Rom. 16: 23; 2 Tim. 4: 20.]

REVISED VERSION.

8 And he entered into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, reasoning and persuading *as to* the things
9 concerning the kingdom of God. But when

some were hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Ty-
10 rannus. And this continued for the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both
11 Jews and Greeks. And God wrought special
12 miracles by the hand of Paul: insomuch that unto the sick were carried away from his body handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil
13 spirits went out. But certain also of the strolling Jews, exorcists, took upon them to name over them which had the evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, I adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.
14 And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a
15 Jew, a chief priest, which did this. And the evil spirit answered and said unto them, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who
16 are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and mastered both of them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked
17 and wounded. And this became known to all, both Jews and Greeks, that dwelt at Ephesus; and fear fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.
18 Many also of them that believed came, con-
19 fessing, and declaring their deeds. And not a few of them that practised curious arts brought their books together, and burned them in the sight of all: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand
20 pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed.
21 Now after these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there,
22 I must also see Rome. And having sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while.

8 *He went into the synagogue.* Probably the disciples referred to in vs. 1–7 were not Jews, since Paul's work among the Jews seems now to begin. *Spake boldly.* Without fear. His heart yearned for his own countrymen, and he grew intensely earnest when preaching to them. *Three months.* On all the Sabbaths at least, and possibly on other days when the people would be assembled in the synagogue. Meanwhile he still wrought daily at his trade. Chap. 20: 34. *Disputing* [reasoning] *and persuading.* The first word indicates his effort to convince the intellect of the truth of Christ's Messiahship, and the second, his pleading with his hearers to yield themselves to Christ. *Concerning the kingdom of God.* The kingdom of Messiah, for which the Jews were waiting.

9 *Divers* [some] *were hardened.* Instead of yielding to his persuasions they became less and less sensitive to his persuasions. *And believed not.* Revised Version, "Were disobedient." Refused to be persuaded and to yield to Christ. *Spake evil.* They were not content merely to reject the gospel, but rejection grew into enmity, and enmity into evil speaking. *The way.* The words are several times in the Acts applied to the gospel. Chap. 9: 2; 19: 23; 22: 4; 24: 14, 22. Jesus said (John 14: 6), "I am the way." *Before the multitude.* Trying to excite the people against the apostle and his work, and stir up persecution. *Departed from them.* He ceased attending the services in the synagogue, and gave up preaching to the Jews. *Separated the disciples.* Withdrew those who had accepted Christ, and with them formed a separate congregation. *In the school of one Tyrannus.* Probably a lecture room used by Tyrannus as a teacher of some kind of school. Who Tyrannus was, whether Jew or Greek, is not known. He may have sympathized with Paul, or may merely have rented his building to the Christians as halls are rented in all cities to societies, and even to congregations of worshipers.

10 *Two years.* For two years his work in this hall or building went on daily. He had preached three months in the synagogue previous to this, and was in the city some time before he began in the synagogue. His entire stay at Ephesus is put down by himself (Acts 20: 30) at three years. *All they which dwelt in Asia heard.* By Asia is meant not the continent which we now call by that name, but the western part of Asia Minor. Ephesus was a great commercial centre, and people from all the region about resorted there for business and other purposes. Thus Paul would have constant opportunities of preaching to strangers as well as Ephesians. Besides, he or his fellow-workers would go out on preaching tours to neighboring towns and cities. During this time the "seven churches" of Asia may have been planted. The work of Paul in Ephesus during these two years was very successful. See Acts 20: 17–35 for the apostle's own description of his ministry there.

11, 12 *God wrought . . . by the hands of Paul.* Notice that God is the Author, and Paul is but the instrument. *Handkerchiefs or aprons.* These were articles which Paul had used, and they were then carried away to the sick. It is not intimated that this was done at the apostle's own suggestion, but that so great was the reverence of the people for him that they eagerly took up even the handkerchiefs he had used to wipe the sweat from his face, and the aprons he had worn at his daily toil, and bore them to their friends who were sick, in the belief that they would be cured by the touch of these gar-

ments; and God honored the faith of these disciples. It is clearly intimated in v. 11, in the word "special," that these miracles were remarkable and unusual. It is not likely that many were healed in this way. It is also implied that there was peculiar faith in those who were healed or in their friends, for they sent for or came and carried away the handkerchiefs and aprons. A somewhat similar miracle is that referred to in Mark 5: 24–34, where a sufferer was healed by touching the border of Christ's garment.

13 *Certain of the vagabond Jews.* Revised Version, "Strolling." In the previous verse it is said that evil spirits went out of those to whom Paul's garments were carried. This aroused these professed exorcists to try to cast out evil spirits by the use of the same name that the apostle used. According to heathen writers there were many Jews who wandered about claiming to have power to heal and exorcise demons by the use of charms. *To call over them . . . the name of the Lord Jesus.* They supposed that Paul was only an exorcist like themselves, and that the name of Jesus was the charm by which he wrought. They thought that by using the same formula they could produce the same result.

14 *Seven sons of one Sceva.* The seven seem to have worked together. Sceva is said to have been "a chief priest," either a former high priest, or head of one of the twenty-four courses of the priests who served in turn, or possibly only a priest who was ruler of the synagogue at Ephesus. Some suppose, also, that the title was assumed as part of the imposture. *Which did so.* That is, they were professed exorcists, and used what they supposed to be Paul's secret of power.

15 *The evil spirit answered.* They had used the name of Jesus over this demoniac, and the spirit answered. *Jesus I know* [or, recognize], *and Paul I know.* The demon recognized Christ, whom they invoked, as having power and authority, and was acquainted with Paul, whom they named. *But who are ye?* The question implied contempt and defiance.

16 *The man in whom the evil spirit was.* The words certainly indicate that the evil spirit was not the man himself, but a demon possessing him and dwelling in him. The man was completely under the power and control of the demon, as this verse shows. *Leaped on them.* In anger and wild fury, and with more than natural power. *Overcame them.* Revised Version, "Mastered both of them," implying that but two of Sceva's seven sons were together at this time, or at least that only two were engaged in this struggle. *Prevailed.* Proved stronger than them both together, and in his fierce rage tore their outer garments to shreds, and bruised and wounded them.

17 *Fear fell on them all.* The effect of this ignominious discomfiture when the story leaked out was fear and a feeling of awe. This was the first effect; the next was, that *the name of Jesus was magnified.* It was evident that in that name there was more than ordinary power.

18 *Many that believed came.* This shows that many of those who had believed on Christ and united with the Church had not yet given up their old practices. Notice here again the fidelity of the Scripture record in chronicling this fact. *Confessed and showed their deeds.* Under the influence of the fear and awe produced by the defeat of Sceva's sons, they came, probably to the apostle, confessed that they had still been practicing magical arts, and declared their deeds.

19 *Many also of them.* This seems to refer not to the believers of v. 18, but to the wizards or jugglers themselves. *Curious arts.* Magic, jugglery; arts which pryed into the unseen and into the future. *Brought their books together and burned them.* These books probably contained descriptions of the various arts, with directions for performing all manner of incantations, charms and exorcisms. They brought out these books or parchment rolls, and burned them publicly, in the presence of the people. The scene must have been very exciting, and must have produced a deep impression in the city. *Fifty thousand pieces of silver.* From $8,000 to $10,000 in our money. We must remember that in those days books were made by hand, and were very costly. Besides, it is probable that on account of the secret character of these arts the books which described them were very rare and were valued at a high rate.

20 *So mightily grew the word.* With resistless power the gospel triumphed.

21 *After these things.* When he had completed his work in Ephesus. *Purposed in the spirit.* In his own spirit; he determined. *When he had passed through.* He intended to go to Jerusalem to carry a collection there for the poor (Rom. 15: 25; 1 Cor. 16: 1–3); but in making his way to Jerusalem he wished to visit the churches in Macedonia and Achaia, to strengthen and confirm them. *I must also see Rome.* He had for a long time a great desire to visit Rome. See Rom. 1: 13; 15: 23, 24, 28. He did finally go to Rome, but not as he ex-

pected; he was arrested and borne there as a prisoner.

22 *He sent . . . two.* Perhaps to gather contributions to be carried to Jerusalem. See 1 Cor. 16: 1–5; 2 Cor. 9: 5. *That ministered unto him.* That assisted him in his missionary work. *Stayed . . . for a season.* Continuing his work for a while in Ephesus.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

I. The Apostle's Work. vs. 8–12.

He entered into the synagogue and spake boldly. We never can speak boldly unless we believe strongly. It is one thing to have the truth and another for the truth to have us. Many people who have the truth have it by a very feeble grasp, merely hold it loosely in their hands or in their heads. They do not really love it. It does not grip their heart and conscience. They do not feel under any strong, masterful compulsion to speak it; and when its utterance would be disagreeable, or would involve cost or peril, they do not speak it. This was not the way Paul believed the truth. It possessed his very soul with a grip that swayed every power of his being. It was his master. He could not but speak it. His feeling was, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel!"

Some were hardened and disobedient. We hear a great deal about the "fearful responsibility" of those who preach and teach the word of God. No doubt it is a solemn thing to speak for God to men. Those who are called to this duty should be very faithful. But there is also a "fearful responsibility" attached to *hearing* the word. One of our Lord's most earnest words was: "Take heed *how* ye hear." When the teacher's work is done in the right way his responsibility ceases, and that of the scholar begins. He has heard the truth; what will he do with it? Will he believe it and accept it? Or, will he reject it? He cannot be again as if he had never heard it. It must be either a savor of life or of death to him. Not only must he account for the opportunity, but he is also affected by it in his own spirit. If he listens and yields to the influences of the truth, his heart grows softer; but if he rejects it, he is hardened by it. No lesson leaves a scholar as it finds him. It makes *some* impression—what, is determined by what he does with it.

Unto the sick were carried away from his body handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them. These sick people were not cured by the handkerchiefs and aprons; in the previous verse we read that "*God* wrought" these "miracles." He saw fit to use these garments which the apostle had worn as the instruments of healing. There is nothing in this to justify the belief in the miracle-working power of relics of saints which prevails in the Roman Catholic Church. No doubt if God desired to work miracles in these days he could use the garments good men have worn, or their bones when they have long been dead, with which to do wonders; but there is no power in these relics themselves. And since other miraculous gifts ceased with the apostles, it is not likely that this special power which, so far as we know, was given on only this one occasion, continues in the Church. . . . There is one suggestion here, however, which is allowable. From every truly good man there goes forth an influence of blessing. Everything he does seems to be hallowed by his touch. Even his most common-place words have a power that the words of other men have not. A portion of his own spirit appears to enter into whatever his hand touches.

II. The Failure of the Exorcists. vs. 13–16.

Certain . . . strolling Jews, exorcists, took upon them to name over them which had the evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus. It was a fair test. If these enemies of Christianity had been able to do the works which the servants of Christ were doing, they might justly have claimed equal power. When John the Baptist sent from his prison to know if Jesus were really the promised One, Jesus pointed the messengers to the works he was doing—the healing of the sick, the opening of the eyes of the blind, the cleansing of the lepers, the raising of the dead. These were the proofs of his Messiahship. Christianity still points to its works as its best evidences. Paul cast out evil spirits and healed the sick by naming over them the sacred name of Jesus Christ. Could these exorcists do the same thing? They tried, and were ignominiously defeated. Skeptics and atheists assail Christianity in these latter days, and it is fair again to point to the works of Christianity and ask its enemies if they can do the same things. Take the history of missions. Look at the nations and peoples lifted up from the degradation of heathenism. Can the enemies of Christianity do the same? Have they any records to show it? Look at individual cases—men saved from the most depraved vices and changed into nobleness, purity and saintliness. Can infidelity match these works. Look at the benevolent institutions which Christianity has established—hospitals, orphanages, asylums

and homes of all kinds. Where are the benevolent and philanthropic institutions erected by skepticism and atheism? "By their works ye shall know them."

The evil spirit answered . . . Jesus I know . . . but who are ye? That is the way evil spirits talk yet to men who attempt in their own strength to expel them. That is the way the evils in our own hearts—the wicked dispositions, the lusts, the unholy tempers—answer us when we try ourselves to cast them out. It is the same with the vices of society, with all the world's evils and corruptions. Human power alone is not able to drive them away. They look up and say: "Jesus I know . . . but who are ye?" Jesus is well known all over Satan's kingdom. He is recognized as the Almighty Conqueror, before whom all Satanic power has to yield. "But who are ye?" Here is where all pretended power fails; where all false religions are proved insufficient. Only Christ's power is strong enough to drive out Satan. If we would have our own hearts rid of the evil that is in them, we must give ourselves to Christ, for these evils will recognize no other Master.

III. The Power of Divine Grace. vs. 17–20.

Many also of them that had believed came, confessing, and declaring their deeds. As soon as Christians discover any sins that they have been cherishing they should at once make confession to God, and then instantly cast out the sins and cease to cherish or practice them. Sins kept in the heart poison the life, hide God's face, and shut away blessing. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." The right thing to do with such sins is to bring them to God. "He that hideth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall find mercy." "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." No matter what it may cost, our sins must be sacrificed or they will destroy us.

Not a few . . . brought their books together and burned them. There are many books in these days which ought to be burned. They carry in them Satan's poison. To read them is to debauch our own souls. To put them into the hands of others is to ruin them. In India a man took down a book and a viper came out of it and stung him to death. There are many books in which deadly vipers lie concealed. Young people should be most careful in choosing the books they read. A good book is a great blessing, but a bad book is a fearful curse.

IV. Looking Toward Rome. vs. 21, 22.

After I have been there, I must also see Rome. A great many people wanted in those days to see Rome, because of its splendors as the capital of the world. Even now many persons take long journeys to see Rome, to look upon the ruins of that ancient splendor. But it was not with any such desires as these that Paul longed to see Rome. He was not thinking of the great palaces and temples and architectural glories of the capital of the Cæsars; it was love for souls that burned in his heart and made him long to stand in that great city, that he might there preach the gospel. . . . It is interesting to remember also that Paul's wish was gratified, but not in the way he wished or expected. He went to Rome, but it was in chains. We do not know how God will answer our prayers. Many a deep desire of our hearts is given to us, but in pain and sorrow. We ask God to sanctify us and make us meet for heaven, and he makes it dark about us, or sends bereavements and trials, or lays a cross upon us. We get our prayer, but it is through great tribulation and earthly loss. We desire to see heaven and to enter its gates. We expect to go by smooth and pleasant ways. God takes us to heaven, but it is through tribulation and sorrow. Still we can always trust our Father to choose the way in which he will lead us, and rest assured that it will be the right way.

LESSON POINTS.

1. We should speak God's truth boldly, for it is the power of God unto salvation. v. 8.
2. Rejection of Christ hardens the heart. v. 9.
3. The gospel separates men even here, and in the other world it will make eternal separations. v. 9.
4. God honors the ministry of his faithful servants. v. 11.
5. The best evidence of Christianity is found in the works it does. v. 12.
6. Skepticism and infidelity cannot do the works of Christianity. vs. 13–15.
7. Only Christ can cast out evil. vs. 15, 16.
8. Sins when discovered should be instantly confessed and forsaken. v. 18.
9. Repentance must prove itself by its fruits. v. 19.
10. There are many books that ought to be burned. v. 19.
11. The love of Christ should fill us with desire to carry the gospel to the lost everywhere. v. 21.
12. God often gives us our desires in strange ways. v. 21.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

APPLY BY QUESTIONING.

A good line of approach to this lesson is to call for the report on Ephesus. Have every member of the class drilled on its geographical location, commercial importance, its idolatry, its public buildings, its theatre, and temple of Diana. What apostle first preached in Ephesus? How had the way been prepared for Paul's coming to Ephesus?

CHRISTIAN WORKERS—BE BOLD. v. 8.

Bring out by questions all the facts of Paul's labors in the synagogue. Then ask, How long did Paul labor in the synagogue? How is his manner described? To show how true boldness is regarded in the Bible, have the following references found and read: Acts 4: 13, 29, 31; 2 Cor. 7: 4; Phil. 1: 20; Eph. 6: 19, 20. Why should Christians be bold in working for Christ? How should they now manifest their boldness? What do we need to give us true boldness? The Holy Spirit, knowledge, readiness in using Scripture, love for souls, forgetfulness of self.

SINNERS—BEWARE OF A HARDENED HEART! v. 9.

Draw from the class the facts, then apply thus: Who preached? Yet divers were hardened. The fault was not in the preacher. How are sinners now trying to throw the blame on the *minister?* Why is this a vain excuse? What did Paul preach? The kingdom of God. "Yet divers were hardened." How are sinners now trying to throw the blame on the *preaching?* Show that this is not the trouble, but their own love of sin and hatred of God. Thus apply, by questioning, the points that sinners now have the best of opportunities, have years and years of preaching and teaching. "Yet divers are hardened." What is it to be hardened? How are sinners now hardened? Why did Paul withdraw the disciples from the synagogue? When should we separate ourselves and our work for Christ from sinners? What warning is there here for opposers of Christ? Where did Paul continue his earnest work? How often did he publicly work? What example is there here for Christian workers? Why should we work for souls week-days as well as Sabbaths?

PASTORAL VISITS—HOUSE TO HOUSE PREACHING.

Have a scholar read Acts 20: 19, 20. What is the advantage of speaking of Christ individually to persons? Who should make such Christian visits? Why should they not leave all such work to the minister? How can we make these visits most profitable?

EPHESUS BECOMES A GOSPEL CENTRE. v. 10.

Bring out by questioning that the very seat of idolatry in Asia was changed into a great fountain of gospel light. What great mission work do you know? In what ways has its influence extended? Illustrate by the history of Mission Sabbath-schools in your vicinity, and by incidents in the home and foreign field.

GOD YET WORKS SPIRITUAL MIRACLES. vs. 11, 12.

What miracles did God work through Paul at Ephesus? Why were these miracles specially adapted to impress Ephesians? What mighty signs and wonders now accompany the bold and faithful preaching of Christ? These miracles of grace are being wrought now in every revival. How can we secure God's presence in this wonder-working power? By repentance, prayer, willingness to work in God's way. Compare the moral changes and miracles wrought *now* by Christ with the pretended miracles of spiritualism.

PROVE BY YOUR WORKS THAT YOU REPENT. vs. 18, 19.

Bring out the confessions and the burning of the books by the Ephesian converts. Then ask, How can we show that we are sorry for our sins? Apply closely to the scholars the principle that the test of the reality of our sorrow for sin is our *turning from it unto God.*

BAD BOOKS HAD BETTER BE BURNED. v. 19.

Call for an explanation of the character of these Ephesian books of magic. What are some kinds of books and papers which are now ruining souls? Many of the dime novels, some of the illustrated papers. Many of these are not quite vile enough to be destroyed by the law, yet vile enough to destroy men. Take this opportunity of using all your influence over your scholars against evil reading. To do this you must be prepared to answer the questions, *What shall I read then? Where shall I get the right books?*

Points to be assigned on Lesson for April 20th:

1. What do you know of Corinth—its geography, history, vices, etc.?
2. Bring a short review of the lesson of March 9th.
3. Why cannot human learning save men?
4. What means has God chosen to lead men to salvation?
5. On what accounts is Christ's gospel thought by men to be foolishness?
6. In what should we glory?
7. Give the date and purpose of First Corinthians.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

SUGGESTIONS.—The theme of the lesson is, "The Power of the Word"—its strength, its success. The word preached, the word proved. Notice its effect upon the owners of costly manuscripts and curious arts. Changed their hearts and led them to take a course that was better than selling their books, even though the price had been given to the poor. "Confession is cheap, but reformation is often costly. A false penitence would have sold these books and kept both the money and the credit for piety." A good text this for booksellers and proprietors of circulating libraries. Some Sunday-school libraries would be the better for a fire. Show how Paul clung to the gospel of the kingdom. Impressing the lesson suggested by the diagram above, print on opposite side of the board, and have scholars read texts, as follows:

THE POWER OF THE WORD.

A FIRE . . . . *Burning.* Jer. 23: 25–29; Luke 24: 32.
A HAMMER . . *Breaking.* Jer. 23: 9, 10.
A SWORD . . . *Piercing.* Heb. 4: 12.

Or, if preferred—

THE GOSPEL
PREVAILING,
OPPOSING ERROR,
WORKING WONDERS,
ENCOURAGING BELIEVERS,
REVEALING GOD'S GRACE.

The following is also suggested—

ERROR AND TRUTH.

The BURNED BLESSED BOOKS BOOK *of* SIN, SALVATION.

Conviction. Conversion. Confession.

Directions for Coloring.—Upper line, white shaded with purple; the lower line, red shaded with orange; "The sword," white; "Of the Spirit," green shaded with yellow; the open book, white.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Some description of the great city with its magnificent heathen temple would be helpful here, if not dwelt upon at too great length.

The outline for teaching, which follows, is a method for those teachers whose children are unacquainted with the lesson, and who have no assistant teachers.

Inside of this square which I make on the board, you are to think of the great city of Ephesus. This outline made with yellow crayon is for the heathen temple where the goddess named Diana was worshiped. (Give a brief account of the image.) This steeple is for the church where those people went who believed in the true God. What missionary did we hear of last Sabbath who came to Ephesus? This letter P shall stand for him as he preaches in the church. These dots are for the people who sit listening. Day after day, for three months, Paul told them the story of Jesus. This square is for a school-room, where a man named Tyrannus taught. Now watch. I have erased the letter P from the synagogue and put it over here in the school-room. So many people became angry at Paul because he preached against the wrong things they did, that he left the church and preached in the school-house. Here are many marks for people. Crowds came to hear him. All these dots made with red are for sick people—blind and lame, and people with fevers and all sorts of diseases. See how they crowd around Paul. God gave him power to cure them. Why he even sent handkerchiefs and aprons that he had touched to sick ones who were too ill to come to him, and God would let them be cured by using those handkerchiefs. Look at these seven marks made in the sin-color. They stand for seven bad men. They tried to cure sick people as Paul did, by speaking the name of Jesus, but God would not

let them, for they did not truly believe in Jesus; and all the people looking on, saw that they failed. Once, when one of them tried to send an evil spirit out of a man, the spirit said: "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?" Then the man who had the evil spirit sprang on the bad men and fought with them, and hurt them so that they ran away wounded.

Now I am going to make a mark right through this crowd of people in the school-house; some of them are on the left side of it, and some on the right. That is to show you that some believed what Paul preached, and gave themselves to Jesus to be his servants for ever, and some did not. What have I made now? (Outline a closed book, then several others.) If I had time and room to make a great many books, I would like to pile them up here for you. Let us use dots instead. Think of each dot as a book. Why have I made them in the sin-color? Bad books? Yes, they were. They taught the people to do wrong things. Now what do you think these people on the right side of this line did with their bad books? (Encourage freedom of thought and speech.) I wish I knew how to make a picture of a fire. Can you imagine that these bright marks which I am making all around this pile of books are flames of fire curling up? That is just what was done. How does the golden text tell the story? There was once a little boy who stole a cent from another boy. At night he told his brother, and said he was very sorry, but he kept the penny and bought candy with it. Do you think he was truly sorry?

Suppose these people who said they were sorry had gone on reading their bad books, or had sold them for others to read, would they have been truly sorry?

Don't you see that our actions must match our words if we want people to believe in us? The boy who says he loves Jesus, and then acts all the time in a way that grieves Jesus, ought not to expect people to believe in him. What shall we all do with bad books and bad papers whenever we get a chance? It hardly seems necessary to me to enter into explanation of the fact that these books were not printed and bound like ours, as this has nothing to do with the practical lesson to be taught; though if questions should be asked, the teacher must be ready to explain.

The final application of such a lesson is obvious. We have all heard the story of Jesus from Paul, and from many another. Is there a line seen by God which divides us? Are there some here who belong to Jesus, and who show it by their words and their deeds?

Lesson III. **PAUL'S PREACHING.** April 20th, 1884.

1 Cor. 1: 17-31. Memorize vs. 17-19.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness."—1 Cor. 1: 23.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 1 Cor. 1: 17-31..*Paul's Preaching.*
T. Acts 9: 19-31....*His Early Ministry.*
W. 1 Cor. 3: 1-23...*Laborers together with God.*
Th. Rom. 1: 1-17....*The Power of God.*
F. Gal. 1: 24.....*The Gospel not of Man.*
S. 2 Tim. 4: 1-22...*Parting Charge to Timothy.*
S. Rev. 14: 1-7 ....*An Angel Preaching the Gospel.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. Foolishness to the World. 2. Salvation to Believers. 3. Glory to God.

Time.—A. D. 57 (spring).

Place.—Written from Ephesus during the third year of Paul's residence in that city.

Catechism.—Q. 69. *What is forbidden in the sixth commandment?* A. The sixth commandment forbiddeth the taking away of our own life, or the life of our neighbor unjustly, or whatsoever tendeth thereunto.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—This First Epistle to the Corinthians was written from Ephesus (chap. 16: 8) in the spring of 57 A. D., shortly before the apostle left that city. In our lesson for March 9th (Acts 18: 1-17), we learned of Paul's coming to Corinth and of his work there. The apostle had heard, while at Ephesus, through some of the family or friends of Chloe (chap. 1: 11), that divisions or dissensions were troubling the church at Corinth, and he wrote this letter, in which he gave many exhortations and counsels, touching upon many other things besides that of the partisan dissensions in the church.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

17 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. [ch. 2: 1, 4, 13; 2 Pet. 1: 16.]

18 For the preaching of the cross is to

them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. [2 Cor. 2 : 15; Acts 17: 18; ch. 2 : 14; 15 : 2; Rom. 1 : 16.]

19 For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. [Job 5 : 12, 13; Isa. 29 : 14; Jer. 8 : 9.]

20 Where *is* the wise? where *is* the scribe? where *is* the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? [Isa. 32 : 18; Job 12 : 17, 20, 24; Isa. 44 : 25.]

21 For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. [Matt. 11 : 25; Rom. 1 : 20, 21.]

22 For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: [Matt. 12 : 38; 16 : 1; John 4 : 48.]

23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; [Isa. 8 : 14; Matt. 11 : 6; 13 : 57; Luke 2 : 34; Rom. 9 : 32.]

24 But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. [Rom. 1 : 4, 16; Col. 2 : 3.]

25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called:* [John 7 : 48.]

27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; [Matt. 11 : 25; James 2 : 5; Ps. 8 : 2.]

28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea,* and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are: [Rom. 4 : 17; ch. 2 : 6.]

29 That no flesh should glory in his presence. [Rom. 3 : 27.]

30 But of him are ye in Christ Je'sus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: [Jer. 23 : 5, 6; Rom. 4 : 25; 2 Cor. 5 : 21.]

31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. [Jer. 9 : 23, 24; 2 Cor. 10 : 17.]

REVISED VERSION.

17 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not in wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made void.
18 For the word of the cross is to them that are perishing foolishness; but unto us which
19 are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written,

I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
And the prudence of the prudent will I reject.

20 Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of the
21 world? For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them
22 that believe. Seeing that Jews ask for signs,
23 and Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto Jews a stumbling-
24 block, and unto Gentiles foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the
25 wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.
26 For behold your calling, brethren, how that not many wise after the flesh, not many
27 mighty, not many noble, *are called:* but God chose the foolish things of the world, that he might put to shame them that are wise; and God chose the weak things of the world, that he might put to shame the things
28 that are strong; and the base things of the world, and the things that are despised, did God choose, *yea* and the things that are not, that he might bring to nought the things
29 that are: that no flesh should glory before
30 God. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who was made unto us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and re-
31 demption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

17 In vs. 14, 15 Paul thanked God that he had himself baptized but very few persons. If he had baptized many it might have been said that he was making disciples to himself. *Christ sent me not to baptize.* He does not mean to say that baptism was unimportant, but that its administration was not so important a part of ministerial work as preaching the gospel. Nor does he mean to say that he had no commission to baptize, for he did sometimes perform the rite. Nor is it to be inferred that those who were converted under Paul's preaching were not baptized; but the apostle left this to his helpers, while he gave himself to the work of preaching. *Not with wisdom of words.* Not using philosophical arguments, not depending on human wisdom, to set forth the gospel, but presenting the doctrine of the cross in the plainest and simplest manner. *Lest the cross.* The one central aim in preaching is to lift up Christ crucified, and the danger which Paul dreaded was that if human philosophy were used in preaching, the cross itself might be hidden, and the people might not see it.

18 *The preaching of the cross.* The doctrine of salvation by the death of Christ on the cross. *To them that perish.* Revised Version, "That are perishing," rejecting this offered salvation. To them the cross is *foolishness;* they see no wisdom it. There is no place left in the doctrine of the cross for human wisdom. *Unto us which are saved.* Who have accepted the cross of Christ as salvation; such are already being saved. *The power of God.* All God's power is in this salvation by the cross, because it is the way he appointed. See Rom. 1 : 16.

19 *It is written.* See Isa. 29: 14.

20 *Where is the wise?* The three words here used—the "wise," the "scribe," the "disputer," include the different classes of those who claimed to represent this world's wisdom. The words, "of this world," belong to all three of the classes. The apostle's question is a challenge to all wise men, and implies that none of them have been able to do anything to save the lost. All the world's wisdom has not revealed God to men. *Hath not God made foolish?* Shown or proved to be foolish. The divine way of salvation utterly sets aside all the suggestions of worldly wisdom. See v. 21.

21 *For after that.* Revised Version, "Seeing that." *In the wisdom of God.* The words seem to mean that it was part of God's wise plan to let men try to find him and fail, thus proving the weakness and inadequacy of human wisdom. *The world by wisdom knew not God.* This is a statement of the final result of all intellectual efforts to know God. The same is just as true to-day as it was then. *It pleased God.* After men had confessed their inability by their own wisdom to know God, or find a way to save the world, God was ready to declare *his* way of saving the lost. *The foolishness of preaching.* It seemed foolish to the world's wisdom.

22, 23 *The Jews require a sign.* Revised Version, "Signs." Signs from heaven to attest and accredit Christ's Messiahship. It was so when our Lord was on the earth in person. See Matt. 12: 39; 16: 4; Mark 8: 11; John 6: 30. They were not satisfied with the miraculous works which he wrought, but demanded other and different signs. When he was dying they asked him to leave the cross and come down, and they would believe in him. *The Greeks seek after wisdom.* Philosophical proofs, rational evidence. *But we preach.* Instead of listening to either demand, the apostles simply preached the doctrine of the cross. *A stumbling-block.* The Jews misunderstanding their own prophecies had expected a Messiah seated in royalty, and stumbled at the doctrine of a Messiah on a cross (Rom. 9: 33; 1 Pet. 2: 8); and the Greeks, looking for worldly wisdom, considered the Christian plan of redemption *foolishness.*

24 *Them which are called.* Effectually called; those who obey the call. Many hear the external call of the gospel who are not called by the internal call of the Spirit. *Both Jews and Greeks.* The Jews sought for manifestations of power, and while to the nation as a body the doctrine of the cross was a stumbling-block, yet such Jews as received Christ saw in redemption by his crucifixion *the power of God.* The Greeks sought for wisdom, and while to them, as a class, the cross was an absurdity, to such of them as listened to the call of the Spirit and accepted of Christ, there appeared to be in the gospel the very highest wisdom, "*the wisdom of God.*"

25 *The foolishness of God.* The most foolish, that is, the least wise thing that comes from God is wiser than the highest wisdom of men; and the weakest thing of God's is stronger than man's greatest power. Or the reference may be specific, *the foolishness of God*, and *the weakness of God* may mean the gospel, which has more both of wisdom and power than ever came from men.

26 *Ye see your calling.* Referring to their call by the Spirit to be Christians. The apostle is illustrating what he has just said about God's disregarding human wisdom. If he had needed the world's wisdom to carry on his work he would have chosen the world's wise men. But the fact was, that *not many wise men* were among those whom he had called into his Church. *After the flesh.* Considered wise in this world. *Mighty.* Occupying positions of secular power. *Noble.* Of high rank.

27, 28 *Foolish things.* Things which the world regards as foolish, that is, lacking in wisdom. *To confound the wise.* Put to shame those who boast of their wisdom. All through the history of the Church this statement has been verified. With a few fishermen Christ laid the foundations of Christianity, and ever since he has passed by the elements that men of the world would have chosen, choosing the weak and despised things, and yet what marvels has he wrought? *Which are not.* Regarded by the world as nonentities.

29 *That no flesh should glory.* This is the reason why God sets aside all that the world calls great, and works with such despised instruments.

30 *But of him are ye.* He is pointing to the source of the wisdom and power of believers. It is not of this world, but of God. He chooses the men and the things that the world despises, and then supplies them with all needed qualifications from his own divine fulness. This he does through Christ. *In Christ Jesus.* Jesus is the great Vine through whom God sends all blessings and all gifts to those who believe, who are branches in him. *Who of God is made.* God is the Author of all that we receive, but it comes to us through Christ, the one Mediator. *Wisdom.* Christ has all wisdom, and he becomes wisdom to all who are in him by faith. This

wisdom flows from him to his people through the Holy Spirit who dwells in them. *Righteousness.* We have no righteousness of our own, but the righteousness of God becomes ours when we receive Christ, who satisfied the demands of the law for us. See 2 Cor. 5: 21; Rom. 3: 21, 22; 5: 19; Phil. 3: 9. *Sanctification.* The making holy, the cleansing and purification of the soul. Christ also becomes our sanctification by imparting to us the Spirit of holiness, who, by his indwelling, transforms us into the divine likeness. *Redemption.* In its final completeness, including all the benefits and blessings which belong to the finished salvation. This will not be fully realized until "the day of redemption," when the body shall be raised, and body and soul re-united in eternal blessedness. See Rom. 8: 23; Eph. 1: 14; 4: 30.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

Christ sent me . . . to preach the gospel: not in wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made void. As if one should prepare a fountain of pure, fresh water by a great dusty highway, to give drink to the weary pilgrims who pass by, but should plant so many lovely trees and flowers about the fountain as to hide it from the eyes of those whom it was designed to refresh. That is the danger when men use the wisdom of this world in preaching the gospel; the perishing ones who listen are too often charmed by the beautiful flowers of rhetoric or poetry or science with which the cross is ornamented, and fail to see the cross itself. The story is familiar of the artist who had painted his picture of the Last Supper, and then called his friends to look at it. He had tried to make the Master's face the central object of attraction, and was pained to hear his friends praise this and that subordinate feature in the picture, while they did not speak of the Blessed Face. Taking his brush he erased from the canvas the features that had won the beholders, that nothing might keep any eye from the Saviour himself. Those of us who teach and preach need to learn this lesson well, lest in our desire to make our lessons and sermons attractive we hide the Redeemer and the cross which we desire all to see.

The word of the cross is to them that are perishing foolishness. There is nothing grand or noble about this way of salvation to proud human wisdom. Men have nothing to do themselves, no chance to display their own power or wealth or skill. If heaven could be gotten by philosophical or scientific research, or won in battle by brave deeds, or achieved by power, or bought with money, the world would have been far readier to accept it. The very simplicity of the gospel makes it appear foolishness to the world's wise men; then its ignominy adds to the impression. What makes it all the sadder is that it is to *perishing* souls the cross seems foolishness. If it were to some unfallen race it would not matter so much; but here it leads the lost to reject the only way of salvation that ever has been or will be offered to them. It is as if starving men were to refuse bread because it was not offered in dainty forms on delicate plates; or, as if drowning men were to reject rescue because the life-boat was not decorated in an artistic way, or was rowed by rough, weather-beaten sailors, and not by kid-gloved gentlemen. Surely the "foolishness" is not in the gospel, but in the rejecters.

Unto us which are being saved it is the power of God. Naaman first scorned the idea of washing in Jordan to be healed of leprosy; it was foolishness to him. Afterwards, however, he found this washing "the power of God"—that is, being God's appointed way, God used it to work a cure. The sprinkling of a lamb's blood on the door-post seemed a foolish thing to do, yet it was God's way, and it became the power of God in saving from death the first-born of a nation. The gospel way of salvation seems foolishness to proud human wisdom, but to those who accept it it proves to have in it all the power of God, by which lost souls are forgiven, renewed, lifted up to life and saved eternally. God does not present his blessings in forms to attract worldly eyes. They often appear to such unlovely, undesirable. But when they are once accepted, their beauty and worth appear.

Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? We need only to run our eyes over the history of the world to see that this is true. Wise men have been doing their best for ages, but what have they accomplished to bless mankind? They have discovered no way of salvation. With all their philosophies they have failed to make men any better. The days when mere human wisdom had reached its highest achievements, the days of the glory of ancient Greece and Rome, saw the world at its worst, morally. All that boasted wisdom God has proved to be only foolishness. The gospel light proves all the world's philosophies and systems of religion utter folly. The history of human science is full also of illustrations. Men have announced discovery after discovery, and theory after theory, only to have them swept away by the discoveries and theories of the next genera-

tion. The history of the progress of the natural sciences would furnish a splendid commentary on this verse.

Seeing that . . . the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe. God gave men a chance to know him, and to find out the way to him. He gave them four thousand years for their wisdom to do its best. But at the end of that time they had not brought the world to God. Then he revealed *his* way. The cross was set up, and Jesus died upon it. Then the disciples were sent out to tell men of this way. Human wisdom was altogether ignored. Instead of great philosophers, a few humble men, fishermen and others, were appointed to do the preaching. Instead of teaching systems of worldly philosophy, they were to go and tell the simple story of the cross, and tell it, too, not in dress of human wisdom, but in simple words that would not hide the cross itself. And by this men were to be saved; not merely instructed, or refined, or cultured, but *saved*, lifted up out of condemnation, made children of God and heirs of heaven, transformed into Christ's likeness, and exalted to glory.

Not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. It is not not *any* wise, mighty or noble are called, but not *many*. Lady Huntingdon thanked God for this one letter *m*, because it told her she was not excluded by her rank; not *many* noble are found among the called, but there are some, showing that if they will only accept of Christ crucified, the highest in rank will be saved.

God chose the foolish things . . . the weak things . . . base things . . . that are despised . . . that no flesh should glory before God. God has chosen to build up his spiritual kingdom without calling in the aid of the world's wise men. Macaulay tells of a stained-glass window in a cathedral, made by an apprentice from pieces of glass which had been rejected and thrown away as unfit to be used, and yet when it was finished it was the finest window in all the splendid building. So God is building his spiritual kingdom from materials which the world's wisdom and skill reject and refuse to use; yet when it is completed it will far outshine the greatest kingdoms ever reared on this earth. The reason why human power and skill are so ignored in God's work is, that no flesh should glory before God. That is, the work of redemption is altogether a divine work; there is no place in it for any human part; there is nothing left for human hands to do. We are saved by grace, entirely by grace. All the glory of salvation must be given to God. The wisest man the world ever saw, if saved must be saved altogether through the favor and mercy of God. So of the mightiest; so of the noblest in rank. There is only one way of salvation, and that is by the crucified Christ, and the salvation must be received by faith as a free gift, unmerited.

Christ Jesus who was made unto us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption. We are nothing in ourselves, and all the blessings that become ours when we are saved come from Christ. His *wisdom* becomes ours, as we receive his Spirit and learn of him through his word. His treasures of wisdom are put so freely at our hand that we are told if we lack wisdom we have only to ask of him in faith. We ought never to act foolishly when we have such a promise. His wisdom is not like the world's; the maxims of the world are often very foolish in God's sight. Then we have no *righteousness* of our own. Our best moralities are only filthy rags. Our holiest deeds are unclean. Wash as we may in the purest water, we shall still be vile before God. We need Christ's righteousness, and he becomes righteousness to us. This he does in two ways. By his atonement he made merit for us, and thus our standing in law before God is made right. This is *justification*. Then by his Spirit and word he renews us and makes us righteous in heart and character. This is *sanctification*. So all our *redemption* is from Christ; that is, until the work of redemption is completed in glory it is all Christ's work, and every blessing comes from him. At the end, when we shall stand before his throne, with white robes and palms and crowns, it will be found that it is all of Christ. Nothing will be our own.

LESSON POINTS.

1. The cross should not be hidden by human attractions when we teach or preach. v. 17.

2. The same gospel which is foolishness to the world is radiant with glory to the saved. v. 18.

3. All the divine power is exerted through the gospel for the saving of men.

4. The revelation of Christ shows all mere human wisdom to have been but foolishness. v. 20.

5. The world's best wisdom never has been able to find God or the way to life. v. 21.

6. God passes by human greatness and wisdom in setting up his kingdom, and uses what men despise. vs. 27, 28.

7. There is no place in redemption for human glory. v. 29.

8. All the blessings of salvation come from Christ. v. 30.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

APPROACH.

1. Call for the report on Corinth—its geography, history, vices, etc. Also bring out the report upon the topic—short review of the lesson of March 9th, on Paul at Corinth.

2. Call for the report on the date and purpose of the first Epistle to the Corinthians.

3. Ask a scholar to read v. 12 of this chapter. Ask, How many parties were there in the Corinthian church? What were they?

4. Explain that our lesson is Paul's answer to the men who criticized his preaching as not philosophic, scientific and literary.

Do you want to save souls? Present Christ's cross. vs. 17, 18.

What is baptism? Why is it more important to preach the gospel than to baptize? How did Paul say he would not preach? What is meant by "not with wisdom of words?" What would Paul preach? What is the meaning here of the words "the cross?" To whom is the preaching of this truth foolishness? Why do those who perish think Christ's cross foolishness? 1 Cor. 2: 14. What is Christ's cross to them which are saved? How is God's power shown in Jesus' cross? What power does a sight of the atoning death of Christ have on the sinner? How does this sight make him feel toward sin? How does it assure him of forgiveness? How does Christ's cross make the sinner feel toward God? Read Gal. 6: 14. What is then the great truth which saves souls?

Do you want to save souls? Don't preach human philosophy or science to them. vs. 19–21.

Where is the quotation in v. 19 found? What is meant by "the wisdom of this world?" In what ways has God made foolish the wisdom of this world? Bring out the reference of the terms "the wise," "the scribe," "the disputer of this world." Why cannot philosophy and science save men? Man is a lost sinner. He first needs *pardon.* He needs a new heart. He needs grace to overcome sin. Human wisdom cannot give these.

The only way is to keep on preaching Christ crucified. vs. 21–25.

By what has God chosen to save them that believe? What is meant by "the foolishness of preaching?" What kind of signs did the Jews ask in order to believe in Christ? Matt. 12: 38. Why will not God give miraculous signs to those who doubt him and demand them? Enough of signs, wonders and mighty deeds have been already granted. If men will not accept them, it is because of their unbelief and hardness of heart. To the Greeks what did Christ crucified appear? Why? The Greeks demanded that everything in Christianity should be demonstrated to their reason. What is meant by the words, "Unto them which are called?" In what light does Christ crucified appear to the called? How does Christ crucified appear to us? Is he to us the power of God and the wisdom of God? How are we affected by the fact that Christ died for us when we were yet sinners? If we want to change men's hearts, what must we preach?

God's Strange Choice. vs. 26–29.

Of what classes of people were most of the early Christians? (Only a few great in this world.) What did God accomplish by such foolish and weak things? Illustrate the answer to this question from the history of the successes of Christianity. What was the result of God's strange choice? v. 29. The cause of Christ was proven to be of God, or with such followers it could not have succeeded.

Christ is all in all to us. vs. 30, 31.

What is it to be "in Christ Jesus?" Who places our souls in Christ Jesus? What does Christ Jesus become to all who are in him? Meaning of wisdom? Righteousness? Sanctification? Redemption?

NOTE.—This will be a difficult lesson to make clear and simple to the young. Choose out from it those points specially adapted to your class. Then meditate on these questions: How shall I illustrate and apply these truths? "Christ crucified" is here. How can I bring him to my class?

Topics in Lesson for April 27th:

1. Ask each scholar to read the next six chapters. 1 Cor. 2–7.

2. What was the question in relation to eating meat offered to idols?

3. What were the idolatrous feasts of the heathen?

4. By what is Christian liberty to be limited?

5. To what difficult questions of conscience does this principle apply?

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Dear teachers, I propose to give you the lesson to-day somewhat as I should teach it in a sub-divided class, the time divided into three portions; the leader introducing the lesson, the teachers developing and explaining it, the leader reviewing and applying.

The Lesson Introduced.—1. Hold an envelope before the class. What have I here? What do

you think is in it? What do we generally get enclosed in envelopes? Our lesson to-day is taken from a letter which Paul wrote to the people at Corinth. What is the title of the lesson? (Class respond: "Paul's Preaching.") Well, in this letter he told them what he wanted to preach about, and what it would do for people. Now watch while I make on the board something that Paul talked about in his letter. Make an outline of the world as large as your blackboard will admit, then down at one side, within the circle, make a small red cross, using block crayon. What did Paul say he meant to preach? Let the answer be given in the words of the golden text.

Those words about "stumbling-blocks" remind me of a story. There was once a great stone placed just in front of a foot-bridge. It was to show the people that the bridge was unsafe and must not be used. But a boy came up one morning and looked at the great stone, and said: "I guess that stone is strong enough to hold those planks steady; I am going over." So he started, but one of the boards tipped and let him into the stream. You see the very thing that had been put there to help him he let get him into danger. Ask your teachers what Paul meant by saying that the cross of Jesus was a stumbling-block to some.

Watch me. I am going to divide this world into parts, and make a great many dots in different colors. See if you can tell what I mean by them after you have had a talk with your teachers.

2. *The Work of the Division Teachers.*—It is supposed, dear leader, that you have had, on Saturday evening, or some other evening, a full teachers' meeting, and have carefully mapped out your work, in which case each worker will know that she is first to review what you have said, to see if it is distinctly understood, and to supply such information as shall be found necessary. She is then to explain that those division lines on the great circle stand for different kinds of people, of whom there are many millions. For instance, those brown dots are for the people who think that the stone and wooden images set up in their homes or on the streets are gods, and pray to them. The red dots are for the people who worship the sun, fire, and wind. The green dots are for those who think that confessing their sins to men, and paying them money, will save their souls. The purple dots, those who think it foolish to suppose that the death of one man could save them. The blue dots are for those who say that Jesus died to save everybody, therefore they shall be saved, whatever they do, *i. e.*, they make the cross a "stumbling-block." Paul said all these belonged to the foolish world. But here are a few yellow dots gathered about the cross; they represent the people who have learned that there is no other way to be saved.

3. *The Personal Application.*—I am now supposing that you, the leader, have rung your bell. Having sung a verse about Jesus as a Saviour, proceed to call from the class the meaning of all those dividing lines and dots. This done, with what additional help you perceive the children to need, you are ready for the important application. To which class do your scholars belong? Are they idol worshipers? That is, do they love themselves better than Jesus? Do they think he will save them anyway, whether they ask him or not? Or, can you put golden dots for them as belonging to the army of Jesus' decided friends?

What is the duty of all those represented by the yellow dots? To impress the answer to this question, make rays of light from the cross, reaching up and out in every direction toward all these foolish people. The soldiers of Jesus must spread the story; let the light shine, at home, abroad, everywhere, until the rays from the cross touch all lands, and the world comes to Jesus.

That was the one thing which Paul preached, and wrote, and talked about—helping people to be saved. How many want to work with Paul for Jesus?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

SUGGESTIONS.—If apt in printing while speaking, place only upon the board, before the desk lesson, "Christ the Power of God." Christ crucified is the wisdom and power of God, and is the theme of the lesson. Dean Stanley remarks: "It is God's powerful instrument of salvation; the highest exhibition of God's power." Rom. 1: 16. In Christ "are all the sources of power by which sin can be overcome." Conviction of sin, forgiveness of sin, and sanctification of the believer, are centred in him. He is made unto us Wisdom, and where the unbeliever sees only folly, the believer sees wisdom. "Standing us," as Dean Alford says, "instead of all earthly wisdom, and raising us above it by being *from* God; wisdom in his incarnation, in his life of obedience, in his teaching, in his death of atonement, in his glorification and sending of the Spirit, and not only wisdom, but all that we can want to purify us from guilt, to give us righteousness before God, to sanctify us after

his likeness." Illustrating these thoughts, print them as in diagram, and emphasize that Christ is *everything* to the believer. "Having him we have a key which unlocks the mysteries of God's eternal purpose of mercy and of the present life; and knowing this eternal purpose and the eternal realities, we are able to choose aright our steps in life."

The illustration may be made more effective by printing the name of Christ in the centre of a cross, and surrounding it with the precious truths which are the outcome of it.

Directions for Coloring.—"Christ," in bold letters, white shaded with yellow (this gives a brilliant effect if well done); "The Power of God," red shaded with yellow; the rest in white.

Lesson IV. ABSTINENCE FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS. April 27th, 1884.

1 Cor. 8: 1-13. Memorize vs. 10-13.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth."—1 Cor. 8: 13.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 1 Cor. 8: 1-13..*Abstinence for the Sake of Others.*
T. 1 Cor. 9: 16-27.."*To the Weak as Weak.*"
W. 1 Cor. 10: 14-33.*Lawful, but not Expedient.*
Th. Rom. 14: 1-23.."*None Liveth to Himself.*"
F. Rom. 15: 1-11.."*Christ pleased not Himself.*"
S. Gal. 6: 1-18....*Bear One Another's Burden.*
S. Eph. 5: 1-21....*The Fruits of the Spirit.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. Christian Liberty. 2. Christian Love.

Time.—A. D. 57 (Spring).

Place.—Written from Ephesus.

Catechism.—Q. 70. *Which is the seventh commandment?* A. The seventh commandment is, *Thou shalt not commit adultery.*

Q. 71. *What is required in the seventh commandment?* A. The seventh commandment requireth the preservation of our own and our neighbor's chastity, in heart, speech, and behavior.

Q. 72. *What is forbidden in the seventh commandment?* A. The seventh commandment forbiddeth all unchaste thoughts, words, and actions.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—The church at Corinth had asked Paul to give an answer to this question: "Is it right for Christians to eat of the flesh of animals sacrificed to idols?" Only a part of the animal slain was required for religious rites, a part was consumed as food by the priests, and a part was the property of him who offered it. This was either eaten by him at home, or exposed for sale in the public markets. Entertainments were sometimes given in places more or less closely connected with the idolatrous worship, and these meats were offered to the guests. Was it right to partake of such food? The apostle answers this question, and gives a rule of great importance for the regulation of our conduct.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

1 Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth. [Acts 15: 20-29; 1 Cor. 10: 19.]

2 And if any man think that he knoweth

any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. [Gal. 6: 3.]

3 But if any man love God, the same is known of him. [Ex. 33: 12, 17; Gal. 4: 9; 2 Tim. 2: 19.]

4 As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol *is* nothing in the world, and that *there is* none other God but one. [Isa. 41: 24; ch. 10: 19; Deut. 4: 39; 6: 4; Isa. 44: 8.]

5 For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) [John 10: 34.]

6 But to us *there is but* one God, the Father, of whom *are* all things, and we in him; and one Lord Je'sus Christ, by whom *are* all things, and we by him. [Mal. 2: 10; Eph. 4: 6; Acts 17: 28; Rom. 11: 36; John 13: 13; Eph. 4: 5.]

7 Howbeit *there is* not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat *it* as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled. [1 Cor. 10: 28, 29; Rom. 14: 14, 23.]

8 But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better, neither, if we eat not, are we the worse. [Rom. 14: 17.]

9 But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to them that are weak.

10 For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; [1 Cor. 10: 28, 32.]

11 And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? [Rom. 14: 13–20.]

12 But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. [Matt. 25: 40, 45.]

13 Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend. [Rom. 14: 21; 2 Cor. 11: 29.]

REVISED VERSION.

1 Now concerning things sacrificed to idols:
We know that we all have knowledge.
Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth.
2 If any man thinketh that he knoweth any
thing, he knoweth not yet as he ought to
3 know; but if any man loveth God, the same
4 is known of him. Concerning therefore the
eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know
that no idol is *anything* in the world, and
5 that there is no God but one. For though
there be that are called gods, whether in
heaven or on earth; as there are gods many,
6 and lords many; yet to us there is one God,
the Father, of whom are all things, and we
unto him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ,
through whom are all things, and we through
7 him. Howbeit in all men there is not that
knowledge: but some, being used until now
to the idol, eat as *of* a thing sacrificed to an
idol; and their conscience being weak is de-
8 filed. But meat will not commend us to
God; neither, if we eat not, are we the
worse; nor, if we eat, are we the better.
9 But take heed lest by any means this liberty
of yours become a stumbling-block to the
10 weak. For if a man see thee which hast
knowledge sitting at meat in an idol's tem-
ple, will not his conscience, if he is weak,
be emboldened to eat things sacrificed to
11 idols? For through thy knowledge he that
is weak perisheth, the brother for whose sake
12 Christ died. And thus, sinning against the
brethren, and wounding their conscience
when it is weak, ye sin against Christ.
13 Wherefore, if meat maketh my brother to
stumble, I will eat no flesh for evermore,
that I make not my brother to stumble.

1 *As touching things offered unto idols.* Among the heathen when they sacrificed to their idols, parts of the animal were burnt on the altar, part was given to the priest, and what remained the offerers took away, either to eat themselves, to give to their presents, or to have sold in the market. So it came that a considerable portion of the meat offered in the markets for sale had come from the altars of the heathen idols. The question raised was, Should Christian people eat of such food? There were two questions involved in the one. The first concerned the mere abstract right or wrong in eating such food. It might be decided that there was no sin whatever in using meat that had been offered to an idol. But then another question arose. What effect would my eating of it have on others about me, especially my Christian companions? This must be taken also into the account in making up the right answer. These questions are answered here. *We all have knowledge.* The Corinthians had written to the apostle on the subject, and those who wrote claimed that there was no sin in eating meats that had been offered to idols, since the idol was nothing, and since meat commended no one to God. This was the true view, and to this the apostle here refers when he says, "We all have knowledge." He endorses what they have said on the subject; as a bare, cold, abstract theory, this is true. *Knowledge puffeth up.* Knowledge unmixed with love makes one vain, arrogant, conceited. The word translated, *puffeth up*, means to inflate, to blow up. It is used frequently in this epistle. Knowledge alone only makes men conceited and proud. *Charity edifieth.* The word *charity* does not convey the true sense; *love* is better, a regard for others, and a desire to do others good. See chap. 13. To *edify* is to *build up*. The thought here is very plain. One man *knows* that there is no sin in eating meats that have been offered to idols, and he goes right on eating such meats without regard to the feelings or scruples of others; another man believes and *knows* the same thing, but there are some weak

members of the church who think that it is a sin to use such meat, and his *love* comes in qualifying his *knowledge* and causing him to deny himself the privilege that otherwise he would have taken.

2 *If any man think that he knoweth any thing.* Referring to knowledge as used in v. 1, mere knowledge, making a man conceited and vain. *He knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.* That is, knowledge without love is really no knowledge at all. Knowledge is true only when it thinks of others and seeks their good.

3 *If any man love God.* See 1 Jonh 4: 7, 8. Love is the source of true knowledge. If a man really loves God he knows God, and *is known of him*, that is, in a special sense, implying love, thought, care, and all spiritual blessing. The inference is, that a child of God ought to be so pervaded by love that his knowledge would never be merely speculative. The Speaker's Commentary reads the latter clause of this verse, "He (God) is known by him."

4 *As concerning therefore.* He comes back to the subject of meats offered to idols (v. 1), and proceeds to apply the principle he has been stating. *We know that an idol is nothing.* An idol is regarded by its worshipers as a symbol of a superhuman being, and we know that there are no such beings as these heathen idols are supposed to represent. Therefore they stand for nothing. Really such a thing as an idol, in the sense claimed by the heathen, does not exist. *None other God but one.* The gods of the heathen are therefore no gods at all.

5, 6 *Gods many.* Referring to the imaginary gods of the heathen. There are plenty of these. *But to us . . . one God.* One, contrasted with the *gods many* of v. 5. *The Father. Our* Father, referring to his relation to believers. *Of whom are all things.* He is the source of all the things in the universe. *We in him.* Revised Version, *Unto* him. We were created for him, for his glory, and should live to and for him. *One Lord.* Contrasted with *lords many* of v. 5. Jesus Christ is Lord of all. *By whom are all things.* Revised Version, *Through* whom. All things are *of* the Father, *through* Jesus Christ. See Eph. 3: 9; Col. 1: 16; Heb. 1: 2. *We by him. Through* him. Referring to the redemption of Christians.

7 *Not in every man that knowledge.* Referring to the knowledge that an idol is nothing. He hadsaid (v. 1) that *all* had this knowledge. This was a general statement; the apostle and those to whom he wrote had this knowledge. But there were some weaker Christians, who had not such clear discernment. *With conscience of the idol.* Revised Version, "Being used until now to the idol." These were converts from the heathen who, until the time of their conversion, had worshiped idols as gods, and who could not yet shake off their former notions. *Their conscience being weak is defiled.* Weak, in contrast with the conscience of the apostle and other more enlightened Christians; they could not see that an idol was nothing, and that there was no sin in eating meats that had been offered to idols. Therefore it defiled their consciences to eat such meats, for whatever one does without the approval of his conscience, to him it is sin, whether wrong or not in itself.

8 *But meat commendeth us not to God.* In this verse the apostle presents the matter in its true aspect, as the stronger and more enlightened Christians understood it. Whether they did or did not eat meats was a question that did not affect their standing in God's presence. He estimates us by our moral qualities and conduct.

9 *But take heed.* Here the apostle presents the other side of the matter. Their *privilege* was to eat these meats, but they must think of the weaker Christians, and beware lest the exercise of their liberty becomes a stumbling-block to these.

10 *If any man.* Any of the weaker Christians. *Sit at meat in the idol's temple.* Some even went so far as to eat in the temples of idols. In chap. 10: 14–22 the apostle condemns this; here he does not pause to rebuke it, as he is speaking of another point. *Emboldened to eat.* The example of the other would lead him to violate his own conscience, and thus sin.

11 *Through thy knowledge.* Through the exercise of the liberty which thy higher knowledge gives. *Shall the weak brother perish.* This is not a question, as in the Authorized Version, but a statement. Led to violate his conscience, he enters on the road whose end is death. *For whom Christ.* Christ *died* for his sake, giving up all to save him; and you, rather than give up a mere privilege, become the occasion of his perishing.

12 *But when ye sin so against the brethren.* We sin against the weak brethren when we, by our example, even in indifferent things, lead them to violate their consciences, and perhaps when this barrier is once broken down, to rush down to ruin. *Ye sin against Christ.* Christ makes himself so one with his people, so identifies himself with them, that every wrong inflicted in any way upon one of them Christ regards as inflicted upon himself. See Matt. 25: 40–45.

13 *If meat make my brother to offend.* Re-

vised Version, *To stumble.* The word meat stands here for food in general, while in the latter part of the sentence flesh is meant. *I will eat no meat.* To avoid the danger of eating meat that had been offered to idols, and therefore causing spiritual detriment to his brother, he would refrain altogether, if necessary, from eating flesh of any kind, as long as he lived. He would make the greatest sacrifice of personal liberty rather than be the means of causing a weaker Christian to commit sin. *Lest I make my brother to offend.* The Greek word translated *to offend*, or *to stumble*, properly refers to a trap set with baited stick to ensnare some animal. Christ frequently used the expression. See Matt. 5 : 29; 17 : 29; 18 : 6. The last reference shows how terrible a sin it is to lead even the weakest Christian into sin.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth. Knowledge alone makes a man cold, haughty and proud. He stalks through the world, thinking only of himself, without regard to any others. To apply the principle to the case here discussed, he knows that there is no sin in eating meats that have been offered to idols, and he thinks no further. He says it is no business of his if some weaker Christians are hurt. They ought not to be so weak; it is all nonsense for them to keep their old superstitious notions. They can't expect him to limit his privileges by their narrow scruples. He is going to exercise his liberty without regard to any such childish whims. Or, we may apply the principle to the matter of temperance. A man claims a right to take his glass of wine at dinner; he has always done it, and it has never harmed him. All about him there are those who are not as strong as he is. His example may lead them into a course which will be ruinous in the end. But he *knows* he has a right to his wine, and that it will do *him* no harm; and he refuses to think of others. They have no right to be "weak" in this intelligent age. They must not think that he will abridge his "liberty," merely because they have not strength to resist. Thus mere "knowledge" puffs up, makes one haughty, vain, and coldly selfish.

Now what does *love* do? Love *knows* just as much as knowledge does. The man who has love says there is no harm in eating these meats. But he knows also that there are weak Christians, only lately out of heathenism, who feel differently. If he asserts his privilege he knows that it will grieve them, and also may lead them to violate their conscience, and thus begin a course of sin which will end in the loss of their souls. This man, with love as well as knowledge, thinks of these people, and denies himself his "liberty" rather than harm them in any way. In the case of the wine, this same man feels just as confident as the other of the harmlessness to himself of his glass at dinner; but he knows all are not fortified as he is against the dangers of the wine-cup, and he believes that in love he ought to deny himself rather than put the smallest danger before any weaker person. He does not talk haughtily about his "rights" and "liberties." He believes that it *is* his business to limit his privileges for the sake of his weaker brethren. Knowledge alone stands always for its exact rights, and cares not who else may be harmed; it is cold selfishness. Love rarely ever talks about its rights; it denies itself, and thinks always of the influence of each act on others, shaping its own course so as to do good to others rather than seek its own comfort.

Some, being used until now to the idol, eat as of a thing sacrificed to an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled. These are the weak ones who have not the bold, clear knowledge of the more intelligent Christians. They think that meat which has been offered to idols ought not to be eaten by Christians. To them, therefore, it is a sin to eat such meat. But they see other older Christians about them eat it, and by their example they are led to do the same, though against their own conscience. Thus "their conscience being weak is defiled." This meat question will never come up in the case of any of us, but there are many other applications of the same principle which all of us will meet. It touches all personal liberty in matters involving no moral wrong. May a man drink wine at dinner? How richly may a Christian woman dress at church? How fine a residence may a wealthy Christian man build and live in? What games or amusements may Christian people enjoy? How far may a man by honest methods enlarge his business in a community where others also are struggling for success? The teaching here is, that the weak, or the poor, or the ignorant, must not be overlooked in considering our own rights.

Meat will not commend us to God; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse; nor, if we eat, are we the better. There are some things which we must never yield. We must never violate a moral principle because some other one does. We must not, if we happen to be with Roman Catholics, pray to the Virgin Mary, lest our neglect to do so might offend them. We have no right to break any commandment of God for anybody's sake. It is only in matters involving

no moral principle that we are to be ready to yield our "liberty." It is no commendation in God's sight that we do or do not eat meat; and there are many other things of the same kind that have no effect on our standing before God. The giving up therefore of these things is no sin on our part.

But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to the weak. In what way, he explains in the following verse. The example of the stronger emboldens the weak brother to do that which he himself thinks to be wrong; and when a man once violates his conscience he has broken down the fence and started on a course whose end may be destruction. It is a terrible thing to lead others to do even the slightest wrong. Christ said of those who cause others to stumble: "Whoso shall cause one of these little ones which believe on me to stumble, it is profitable for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be sunk in the depth of the sea." Such startling words from the Master's own lips should make us tremble at the very thought of causing another to stumble.

Through thy knowledge he that is weak perisheth, the brother for whose sake Christ died. It is not by putting any great temptation before him that we may thus lead him to ruin; it is only by the influence of our example. Then it is not an example that is in itself sinful; it is purely a liberty which by our knowledge we have attained. We assert our right to do certain things and do them, and the final result is that some other one, influenced by our example, perishes. It is a fearful sin to tempt another to violate his conscience, even though his conscience may be narrow, ignorant and ruled by prejudice; the end may be his ruin. The one wrong step may be the first in the path to hell.

Wherefore, if meat maketh my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh for evermore, that I make not my brother to stumble. In another place Paul said also: "It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything whereby thy brother stumbleth." This is the way Paul applied the law of love. He would rather forego as long as he lived the exercise of a personal right than run the risk of causing another to sin. The quotation from the Epistle to the Romans gives a hint of the wideness of the application which Paul himself gave to the principle. It is good not to *drink wine* if it may make another stumble. Here we have a great temperance motive. Suppose a man is well satisfied that he has a right to drink moderately, and can do so safely to himself and without sin; but suppose also that his example may cause others who are weaker to drink, and drink to the destruction of their own souls. What does this principle of Paul's say to him? Clearly that he should forego his "liberty" for ever, that he do not cause his brother to stumble. The application is still wider: "It is not good . . . to do *anything* whereby thy brother stumbleth." All conduct comes under this law.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Knowledge alone without love cannot guide us safely in duty. v. 1.
2. The best knowledge here is partial and incomplete. v. 2.
3. Those who have come out of the world's sinful ways cannot be expected to have as clear knowledge as those who have grown up amid Christian influences. v. 7.
4. When we are confident that a certain thing is not wrong we must ask further whether our doing it will harm any weaker one. vs. 8, 9.
5. It is a great sin to influence another to do wrong; it may destroy his soul. vs. 9–11.
6. We should never lead any one to violate his conscience, even though he be a bigot; we cannot foretell the end. v. 11.
7. The safe rule is the rule of love, to make any self-denial rather than endanger another's soul. v. 13.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

Approach.

Enlist the class in picturing in words a scene in Corinth. Describe the streets, the dress of the thronging people. The crowd comes into the temple of Jupiter. Describe one of them bringing an ox to be sacrificed to that god. The priest comes forth, receives the animal, slays him, flays him. He cuts up the meat into three parts. One part he offers on the altar of burnt-offering; the second part the priest keeps for himself; the third part he gives to the man who offered the ox. Describe this man making a feast for his friends with this meat. Some of his friends among the Corinthians are Christians. He invites them to the feast at his house. Some of these come. Part of them eat without hesitation; the others say in a low tone of voice, "We cannot eat this meat, for it comes from the temple where it was sacrificed to Jupiter." "Well," the others who eat say, "what of that?" "Why the decree of the Jerusalem council was that we should not eat things offered to idols. Then our conscience will not allow us to eat it." After these Christians come away they keep on arguing the point. At last one says, "Let us write over to

Ephesus and ask the apostle Paul about it." "Yes," says another, "and let us ask him also about buying and eating those meats offered to idols, when they are offered for sale along with other meats in the markets." This lesson is Paul's answer to such a question.

Beware of conceit. vs. 1, 2. What does Paul say of knowledge? What kind of knowledge is it that puffs up? How does such knowledge puff men up? It makes them conceited, vain of their superiority over those who know less. What does Paul say of a conceited man? v. 2. Why is conceit a certain sign of ignorance? How would a conceited, puffed up man decide the question of eating things sacrificed to idols? He would not care for others weaker than himself, but would eat regardless of their conscience. How does the conceited man act in relation to intoxicating liquors? He says, "I have a right to drink, and will drink; if any are such brutes as to get drunk, I can't stop for them." He rushes on without care for others' welfare. On what accounts is such a course uncharitable?

Love is the safe guide. v. 3. What is meant by the words, "Is known of him?" Read 1 John 4: 7, 8. "The *heart* makes the theologian."

There may be no wrong in the act itself of eating idol sacrifices. vs. 4–6. What is an idol? Are there more Gods than one? If, then, an idol is nothing, what harm can there be in eating meat sacrificed to nothing? There may be no wrong in the act itself of drinking intoxicating liquor, in costly dresses, in some gay amusements, etc. It is possible that these things in themselves are innocent.

But there is often wrong in their consequences. vs. 7–11. This is a great opportunity to press home the duty of *total abstinence* from *all that intoxicates.* What are the dangers of moderate drinking? Danger to the person himself who drinks? Danger to others who may be led by his example to drink? Bring out the terrible peril that every moderate drinker is in of forming a *habit* of drinking. Illustrate how one man, who can control himself in drinking, by his example leads many who cannot control themselves to try moderate drinking, to their temporal and eternal destruction. No one can stand before this argument for total abstinence. It alone is safe for ourselves, safe for others. Shall we for the pleasure of drinking destroy souls for whom Christ died? If Christ gave up heaven, gave up ease, happiness and life itself for men, what ought we to give up for them? Repeat the golden text. If Paul was willing to give up meat if eating it led others into sin, what ought we to do with intoxicating liquors, which drown thousands in perdition? Here array your figures, showing how many thousands are annually destroyed by drunkenness, how many thousands more are made miserable. Who is there that does not see that drinking intoxicating liquors causes countless thousands to sin? Who is there, then, that on this account will refuse to sign the pledge of total abstinence? Who is there who is not willing that his liberty to drink shall be limited by his love for souls?

Topics for Sabbath, May 4th:

1. What is the meaning of charity in 1 Cor. 13?
2. On what accounts is love more important than the gift of tongues?
3. Why is love more important than knowledge or the gift of prophecy?
4. Why is love more important than almsgiving or martyrdom?
5. Why is love greater than faith?
6. By what means can we attain this love to God and man?

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The Lesson Explained to Very Little Children.—Look! This is the letter I showed you last Sabbath. Our lesson to-day is about some more of Paul's letter to the Christians at Corinth.

Here is a picture of an idol, such as some of the heathen in Corinth prayed to. Think of this bit of paper as a piece of meat, and I will lay it down before the idol to help you understand what was done. The heathen used to offer pieces of meat to their idols, that is, lay them down before them. After awhile they were taken away and sold. Now I will lay this bit of paper over here. You are to think of it as meat that has been offered to an idol and then sold.

Let these pencils lying here stand for men—Christian men. Some of them think it is dreadful to buy meat that has been offered to an idol. They fear the heathen will think that they too are worshiping the idol, and they hate to touch anything that has been so used. But here are other men, who say: "Why an idol is nothing but a piece of wood or stone. It doesn't hurt the meat to offer it to a block of wood! So they argued, and were troubled.

By-and-bye Paul heard of the trouble and wrote them this letter. He agreed with the men who thought that an idol was nothing in the world, and he owned that he would just as soon eat the meat that had been offered to it, but then he said that some people did not feel so, and as it certainly was not wrong *not* to eat it, what right had they to hurt the feelings of others by doing what they thought wrong?

Then he gave his own rule of life in the words of the golden text. (Call for its repetition.)

That was Paul's pledge. Let us make a frame for it with this yellow crayon. I will print the first word, and then dashes for the other words. (Print "IF" in large letters.)

The Lesson Applied.—We live in a country where no wooden or stone idols are worshiped, yet there is something in this lesson for us. Do you know of anything which people drink that does a great deal of harm in the world? Did you ever hear a boy say, "I can drink cider; it doesn't hurt me, and I am not afraid of becoming a drunkard?" Did anybody ever become a drunkard by beginning with nothing but cider? It is to be hoped, dear primary teacher, that you will give no uncertain sound on this point. Facts so well authenticated as to admit of no denial are numerous, as to the direct downward tendency of this beverage, once considered harmless. Well, then, suppose this boy does drink cider all his life and never becomes a drunkard (there are such people); and suppose a boy watching him, follows his example and becomes a drunkard, had he any right to do what would tempt that boy astray? How does a boy or girl who drinks cider know how many are watching who may "perish" by following that example? What was Paul's rule? That must be the rule of everybody who wants to follow not only Paul, but Jesus.

Another thing: Has that boy any right to say that he is not afraid of ever being a drunkard? He ought to be afraid. There is just one class of boys and girls who have a right to hold up their heads and say, "I am sure I will never be a drunkard," and those are the ones who never touch a drop of the stuff in any shape.

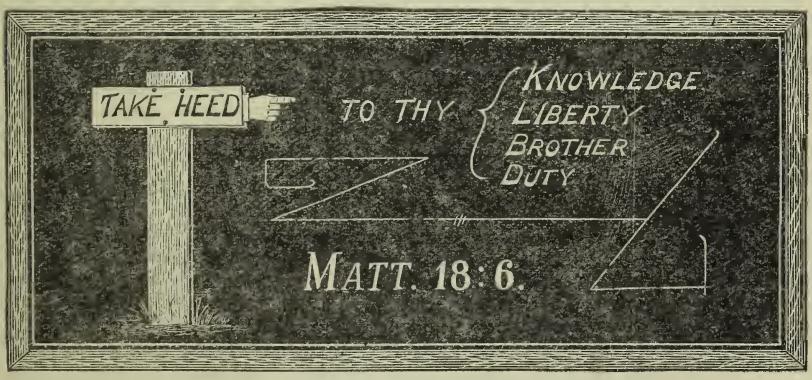
Mrs. W. F. Crafts, in her notes on this lesson, suggests an admirable little device for the pledge, viz., that it be printed on the board in the form of a wine-glass. Would that all wine-glasses were stamped with the suggestive words.

It may be of interest to some teachers to know that cards in the shape of a wine-glass, containing the pledge as given below, and the golden text on the reverse side, can be had of Harry Angell, 304 Fourth Avenue, New York. Sample package, 10 cents.

I WILL TAKE NO
STRONG DRINK TO
HARM MYSELF
OR
TO
LEAD
OTHERS ASTRAY.

Mrs. Crafts' Pledge.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



SUGGESTIONS.—This lesson is a sign-post in our Christian journey. It directs attention to (1) our *knowledge*, the kind it ought to be; (2) our *liberty*, the use we are to make of it; (3) our *brother*, the love we are to bear him; (4) our *duty*, the self-denial it involves. An excess of knowledge without love to God and to our fellow-man is a dangerous thing. An improper use of our liberty or rights is to be avoided. Have a scholar read aloud Rom. 14: 13–23; 1 Pet. 2: 15, 16. The weak conscience of our weaker brethren is to be considered. Our duty in regard to all is clearly stated in the last verse of the present lesson. Take heed, then, to thy knowledge, to thy liberty, to thy brother, and to thy duty.

Directions for Coloring.—Sign-post, brown; "Take heed," yellow; "Knowledge," white; "Liberty," orange; "Brother," light blue; "Duty," white; "Matt. 18: 6," green shaded with red.

ABOUT NEW BOOKS.

..Among the Alaskans, a fresh book, by Mrs. Julia McNair Wright, will be sure to find its way into all the Sunday-school libraries, as it is interesting and full of pictures; but it is a work that is worthy of the study of our men as well as of our young people, treating as it does fully of so little known a part of our country. Price, $1.25.

..Presbyterianism for the People. By the Rev. Robert P. Kerr. A statement of what Presbyterianism is, put in plain, simple and compact form, for busy, earnest people, who have neither time nor taste for an elaborate study of the subject, but who ought to understand it. Presbyterian Board of Publication. Price, 50 cents.

..Six Years on the Border; or, Sketches of Frontier Life. By Mrs. J. B. Rideout. This is a series of vivid pictures of home missionary work on our Western frontiers, showing some of the hardships and discouragements of home missionaries in those fields. It will open the eyes of some of our comfortable Christian people at home to read these unvarnished sketches. Presbyterian Board of Publication. 85 cts.

..Michal Ellis's Text. A Story for Girls. By Margaret E. Winslow. Michal, it will be noticed, is a girl. They called her Mike for nick-name. She began quite low down in the matter both of secular and religious culture, but was an apt pupil, and grew into a noble woman. Michal's "Text" was, "Even Christ pleased not himself." This was the copy at the top of the page which all her life she was trying to learn to write. The story is very interesting, and full of help and inspiration for all who really want to attain the Christlike life. Presbyterian Board of Publication. Price, $1.15.

..Ecce Terra. By the Rev. E. F. Burr, D.D., author of "Ecce Cœlum," etc. The author, in his popular work, "Ecce Cœlum," found and traced the workings of a Divine Hand in the skies; in "Ecce Terra" he finds the same Divine Hand in the earth. Assuming that there is a personal God, who has given us the Christian Scriptures, he shows that this *Hand of God is active in every event*. He sets aside the chief objections to this doctrine, brings forward the points of harmony between the doctrine and the constitution and course of nature, and adduces most striking and decisive examples of divine action in the affairs of this earth. The style of the book is tonic, exhilarating and stimulating, both intellectually and spiritually. Many of its chapters are brilliant, all are interesting. It will make good reading for those who tremble before the boastings of the unbelieving Goliaths of modern science, and will prove attractive as well as instructive to all persons of intelligence. It will certainly be a marked and popular book—for it has the best elements of popularity, in its theme and in the treatment of the theme. Presbyterian Board of Publication. 12mo, pp. 322. Price, $1.25.

..How to Build a Church. By the Rev. C. L. Goodell, D.D. The author has been a most successful pastor, and the chapters that compose this little book are written out of his own experience. They were originally prepared by request of the editor of *The Advance*, in which journal they first appeared. The seven chapters treat of the pastor saving souls; in the pulpit; in the parish; among the youth; in the prayer-meeting: dealing with skepticism; in revivals. There are three additional chapters by Mrs. Goodell on the privilege of teaching God's word; ministers' wives, and woman's work in home evangelization. We most heartily commend the book to all pastors Boston: Congregational S. S and Publishing Society. 75c.

..The Sunday-school Library. By the Rev A. E. Dunning. The author is the Sunday-school Secretary of the Congregational Church. His book treats of the history, object, authorship, selection, use, distribution and power of the Sunday-school library. Every librarian and library committee should have it, as its suggestions will prove invaluable. Boston: Congregational S. S. and Publishing Society. Price, 60c.

..The Autobiography of the Rev Enoch Pond, D.D. A memorial of his character, work and last years. With an Introduction by the Rev. Edwin Pond Parker, D.D For fifty years Dr. Pond was professor in Bangor Theological Seminary. His influence was very great throughout all New England. His character was Christlike, and his work vigorous and lasting. The story of his life is well told by himself in this volume. Boston: Congregational S. S. and Publishing Society.

..Jewish Artisan-Life, in the time of Jesus; depicted after the most ancient sources. By Prof. Franz Delitzsch, D.D. Translated from the German by the Rev. P. C. Croll, A.M. This little volume is intensely interesting, and throws much light on the story of Christ's life as "the carpenter." Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society. 16mo, pp. 116. Price, 40 cents.

..Robert of Marseilles; or, The Crusade of the Children. From the German of H. Kletke. Translated by Rebecca H. Schively. The story of the Crusade of the Children has been told in many forms in recent days, and is familiar to most readers. This is a story founded on that strange piece of history, which follows one of the unfortunate child-crusaders from Marseilles to the slave-market in Alexandria and back home again. The translator adds a number of short historical chapters under the title "Pilgrims and Wearers of the Cross." Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society. (Fatherland Series.) 16mo, pp. 213. Price, $1.00.

..Maggie Pollard's Sacrifice. By Miriam K. Davis. The book opens with this expression, "Oh, if I could only do something." The minister had preached about doing something for Christ, and Maggie determines at last that she ought to be a missionary. The book tells how her plan works out, and what comes of it, and the title of the closing chapter is, "A Missionary at Last." Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society. 16mo, illustrated, pp. 222. $1.00.

..Martin Luther, the Reformer. By Julius Köstlin. Translated from the German by Elizabeth P. Weir. This is an abridgement of Köstlin's great work already noticed It is brief, and well adapted to boys and girls. It contains the full story of his life to the close. New York: Cassell & Company. 16mo, illustrated, pp. 145. 50 cents.

..Kathleen: The Story of a Home. By Agnes Giberne. We are fairly sure at once when we see this author's name appended to any volume that the book will be worth reading. This is a story of home life.

THE WESTMINSTER TEACHER.

VOL. XII. MAY, 1884. No. 5.

—We give in this number the Lessons and Golden Texts for 1885.

—"Children's Day" will come in June. Look ahead, think of it, talk about it, prepare for it.

—The more we know of Christ the more can we teach others of him. Indeed, it is only what we know by personal experience that we can teach at all. How can we guide another's feet where our own have never gone? How can we give to another any blessing which we have never received for ourselves?

—The editorial on the next page on "Life in Perspective" has a practical bearing upon one of the lessons of the month. Whatever may be said of the value of doctrines in general as related to life, and the smallest is not unimportant, this doctrine of immortality, when truly received, becomes one of the mightiest motives to noble and holy living, and gives to all duty and all personal self-denial and suffering a new meaning.

—Dr. Pierson's article should set a great many teachers on the quest, if not for Michael Faradays, yet for boys hidden away in their classes who have in them the elements of power and usefulness, or girls who may become women of nobleness and holy influence. The duty of the discoverer is one of great importance. But for Humphry Davy it is possible that the world would never have had Michael Faraday. If we cannot do grand things ourselves, perhaps we can discover and bring out to the light one who can and will, and that is the next best thing to do.

—This is the month the General Assembly will meet. No doubt the interests of the Sabbath-school will occupy an important place in the deliberations of that distinguished body. Plans for wider and better work among the young to-day will result in fuller and stronger churches ten or twenty years hence. It is here and now that we must sow the seed if we are to reap a harvest farther on. Nothing good done for a little child is lost. Whatever our General Assembly can do, therefore, to increase the efficiency of our Sabbath-school work will prove a blessing for all future generations.

—In every town or city of any considerable size there is a part of the population without religious privileges; there are families with no church connection, and children growing up without instruction in the Scriptures which are able to make them wise unto salvation. Here are fields which should be occupied by mission Sabbath-schools, and there are young people in every church who will find in such work opportunities for doing incalculable good. Look about you while you are reading this paragraph. Is there no such destitute spot in your vicinity? Perhaps the Master wants you to start a work there.

—"One of the younger teachers" writes: "Many of our younger teachers depend too much on the food they get at the teachers' meeting. All their strength comes from some older teacher, whose words are meat and drink to the inexperienced, it may be half taught, younger ones. They go to their classes prepared to teach from the results of some one else's prayerful study or painful experience. As long as the older teacher feeds them from week to week, they feel strengthened for the Master's work. They may have been hungry, starving for a helpful word, but where did the older teacher get that word? If the teacher is in the habit of eating at second table herself, will her class be led close to the Master?"

A WANDERER BROUGHT BACK.—A colporteur of the Board of Publication, in Northern Nebraska, called some months ago on a man who was ploughing near the roadside. He said he was a sheep strayed from the fold, and was admonished to return and unite himself again with the people of God. Some suitable tracts were given to him. These he first read, then sent to his praying mother. His wife and himself are now both rejoicing in the hope of the gospel, and have united themselves with the Church. Among the tracts given him were some on family prayer. After reading these he said: "I am going to start family worship to-night." And he did. He afterwards said: "I am now happy in trying to do my duty." We appeal to all who read these lines for more money, so that the Board may send out more colporteurs to hunt out and gather back the many, many wanderers who may be found all over our vast Western country.

Life in Perspective.

TO learn to live our lives worthily we need to look at them in perspective, not as mere fragments, cut sharply off at the grave, but as running through and stretching away into eternity. A man who sees but a few bits of rock chipped from El Capitan, and a few dried leaves and faded flowers plucked from the trees and plants in that wondrous valley, has no true conception of the grandeur of the Yosemite; and no more just conception has he of human existence in its fullness, largeness and grandeur, who sees only the little fragment of his life shattered, broken and marred, which is fulfilled on this earth. Yet, that is all most of us see. We are like men living in a deep gorge among the mountains and knowing nothing of the great world and its teeming life. Now and then we have intimations of a life outside. There are glimmerings as if of memory, like the flitting visions of a past and forgotten experience, which flash before us in our higher and intenser moods. It appears, then, as if we had been born amid splendors, the children of a king, and had been stolen away in infancy from our lovely home, by cruel hands, to live amid degrading things, with repulsive scenes all about us. And now and then there seem to float before our memory dim recollections, like fairy, far-away pictures of something far more pure and beautiful. In these rare moments we seem to realize the meaning of Wordsworth's sublime thought:

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God who is our home."

But to most of us in life's hardness and sternness these are only merest intimations. We believe in immortality—at least we say so in creed and hymn and prayer; but for the most part we go on living, just as if there were to be no hereafter. If we could get the truth of immortality into our personal consciousness, it would add a new power and intensity to all our life here.

Many of the truest and best of God's children know only defeat in this world. They are evermore beaten back and thrust down. The burdens are too heavy for them. They are over-matched by sorrows. The world's enmity treads them down. They are not worldly-wise, and while others outvie them and march past them to earthly success, they live obscurely, oppressed, cheated, wronged, and lie buried away in the darkness of failure. If the vista did not reach beyond the bare and cold room in which these unsuccessful ones breathe their last, we might drop a tear of pity over their sad story of defeat.

But when the curtain is lifted and we see millions of years of existence for them still on the other side, we dry our tears. There will be time enough for them to retrieve the failure of earth. Through the love of Christ, the defeated Christian life that goes out in the darkness here, may be restored to beauty and power, and in the long ages beyond death may realize all the sweet and holy hopes that seemed utterly wrecked in this world. Who knows but many who seem to have utterly failed here, may stand among the first in the after life?

There are some who die young, with hopes unfulfilled, and sorrow weeps over the keen disappointment, and thinks of what they might have become had not death come so early; yet with all the warmth of immortality pressing up close against the gates, what matters it that the tender life did not open on earth and unfold its beauties this side the grave! There will be time enough in the summer of heaven for every bud to blossom out. No hopes are blighted that are only carried forward into the immortal years. The translation of a Christian's life from earth to heaven is but like the removal of a tender plant from a cold northern garden, where it is stunted and dying, into a tropical field, where it puts out most luxuriant growths and covers itself with splendor.

Much of the work we do for Christ and for other souls seems to be lost. There is no apparent result when we toil and sacrifice. The earnest words we speak seem to float away into the air, like idle breath. The impression we seek to make on other lives fades out while we gaze, as the sunlight fades from field and water when the day declines. If death ends all, we may as well write failure over much of our Christian work. But the truth of immortality corrects this judgment. Somewhere in the long years to come we shall find that not the smallest deed done for Christ, not the feeblest word spoken, not the faintest touch given, has been in vain.

In frescoing, when the artist lays on his colors, they sink away at first and leave no trace; but they re-appear by-and-bye in beauty. So we touch lives to-day, and there is no impression that we can see. The very memory seems to fade out. But the touches will re-appear, if not in this life, then in the next. What material to work upon is an immortal life, that shall carry for ever every impression made upon it! How intensely earnest it should make us in trying to do good! Then how careful it should make

us to do our work well, since every blemish also will appear, ages hence, where men and angels shall see it! No wonder our Lord looked with so much reverence upon human lives, since he saw in each one, under all its earthliness and sin, an undying existence—a soul that must live for ever, either saved or lost!

So, on all sides, this wondrous truth presses as a motive upon our lives. It ought to make sorrow seem light, since it reveals the weight of glory in store. It ought to lift us out of all grovelling and unworthiness, since it discloses such an inheritance of life beyond. It ought to inspire in us the loftiest purity, the grandest aspiration, the strongest faith, the noblest courage. It ought to purge all our ambitions, and cleanse all our employments and recreations.

Richter says, beautifully: "The wish falls often warm upon my heart, that I may learn nothing here that I cannot continue in the other world; that I may do nothing here but deeds that will bear fruit in heaven." How such a motive, ever regnant, would cleanse our occupations!

Shall we not let this fact of our own immortality into our personal consciousness? It will make all trial seem infinitesimally small. It will cause the most austere duties to glow with the light of eternity. It will charge the smallest acts with an infinite importance. It will sanctify all our friendships. It will glorify all our life.

Sir Humphry Davy's Greatest Discovery.

BY THE REV. ARTHUR T. PIERSON, D.D.

WHEN this foremost English chemist was asked as to the number and series of his discoveries in his favorite science, he supplemented the long list with the significant remark: "But, of all my discoveries, *the greatest is Michael Faraday!*"

It is necessary to do no more than recall the familiar facts of Faraday's early history to understand the deep meaning that underlay that emphatic declaration.

Michael Faraday was the son of a blacksmith, and born in London in 1794. Comparatively untaught in youth, he was apprenticed to a bookbinder. He had an inquiring mind, that, like a caged bird beating its wings against its prison bars, yearned for more freedom to study and learn. Human history has shown us that no unfavorable surroundings can permanently restrain a growing intellect or an aspiring soul. An encyclopædia was put into young Faraday's hands to be bound. His eye was arrested by the article "Electricity," and he could not be kept from reading it and then experimenting, though his only electric machine was an old bottle. A gentleman, member of the Royal Institution, calling at the shop where Michael was at work, found him poring over the article, and gave him tickets of admission to Sir Humphry Davy's course of four lectures at the Institution. He was then eighteen years old; he took notes of the lectures and showed them to the lecturer, who saw in them marks of a scientific turn of mind, accuracy of observation, and aptness to learn, which indicated a quality of intellect quite above his position as an apprentice.

Faraday expressed a desire to give himself to the study of chemistry; and Sir Humphry, detecting the young man's fitness for such pursuits, but knowing nothing of the slumbering powers of invention never yet aroused to activity, admitted him into the Royal Institution as an assistant; and it was while Faraday was employed in the menial services of that laboratory, where the master chemist revolutionized the science of chemistry by his magnificent discoveries, that Davy made his "greatest discovery," that the lad whom he was employing contained within himself the germ of a greater chemist and natural philosopher than the master at whose feet he so humbly sat. With characteristic unselfishness and magnanimity, this noble teacher and patron encouraged, educated, unfolded the germ he had discovered. In the autumn of the same year in which he gave him the place of assistant, he took him with him on an eighteen months tour of travel as secretary and scientific helper, and so expanded his noble powers till he took the place of professor of chemistry at the age of thirty-nine.

How great a "discovery" Michael Faraday was, his brilliant career as a chemist abundantly proves. As early as 1827, he published his work on "Chemical Manipulation," which contained a full description of the apparatus and guided all the work of the laboratory. By intense cold and pressure he liquefied and even solidified carbonic acid gas, and other gases hitherto considered permanent in form. He introduced a new variety of glass for optical purposes. He, for the first time, performed the startling experiment which showed the close connection of electricity and magnetism, causing a magnet and a conductor to produce, each, a rotation of the other. No one contests with Michael Faraday the glory of his original researches into electro-chemical decomposition, the discovery of magneto-electricity, of the actual identity of the nature of electricity, whether developed from the battery, the frictional machine, thermal or magnetic action, or animal bodies; and the probable identity of electricity and chemical affinity.

This "discovery" of Faraday by Sir Humphry Davy suggests a most valuable moral and spiritual lesson. What germs lie in the conscience and the heart, enfolding within themselves infinite possibilities of growth, beauty and service, only awaiting development! How many a "discovery" has been made in the Sunday-school by the spiritually-minded teacher who can, behind and beneath a most unpromising exterior, a dirty face and a ragged coat, discern a young immortal soul, needing only to be taught and trained! What discoveries may be made, let a leading bishop of the Episcopal Church, another of the Methodist Church, seven of the most prominent Presbyterian "bishops" of our pulpit, a score of our most gifted lawyers and judges, testify and exemplify, and as many more noble Christian physicians, not to speak of countless others in every walk of life, who have been brought into or found in the Sabbath-school, ignorant, ragged, uncouth, unkempt; precious gems, indeed, but with a lustre hidden behind a rough, unpolished surface.

Teachers, keep your eyes open! Look beneath the clothes and the dirt, to the boy and girl—the mind, the heart, the soul, awaiting the chisel to develop the angel; awaiting the polishing wheel to grind into radiant and brilliant faces that reflect the very light of God. Who knows what a "great discovery" you may make!

Primary Lesson Preparation.

BY ISRAEL P. BLACK.

EVERY primary teacher should make diligent and systematic preparation of each lesson. In doing this there are three questions to be answered—For whom? What? How?

First. The minds for which we are to prepare are the youngest. They can hold but little. We can throw more water *at* a bottle than it will receive when carefully poured in. Put yourself in the place of the little one, and do not have any child saying to you, as the boy said to the minister, "Fire lower, so as to hit the little fellows." If you are familiar with the wants of your scholars, and have seen them in their homes, and know their daily trials and temptations, you will know all the better how to prepare to meet their wants. Know all you can of their faults and temptations. Prepare for the boy who has told a lie; for the girl who is proud; for the disobedient one; for the one who has had sickness and death at home; in other words, let Mary and John know that you have a message for them—some part of the lesson that just suits their case. If you prepare for the scholar seven years old, you will most likely suit the one ten years old; but should your preparation be adapted to the one ten years old you will fail to interest either the seven or the four year old child. Do not prepare "too high."

Second. *What* to prepare. Of course the truths from the Bible. Your difficulty will be not with the quality, but the quantity. With an average of only twenty minutes in which to teach, you cannot of course exhaust your subject. It is decidedly the better way to take one thought from the many, than to try to teach all of our usually long lessons. Just what one thought to teach to advantage, your scholars' needs must determine. Always teach Jesus; every lesson can be made to lead to him. Prepare much more than you expect to teach.

Third. *How* to prepare. 1. By careful study of God's word—not only one week in advance, but one month or one quarter. Know what is to come, and be preparing every day for the approaching lessons. If you prepare elaborate or simple blackboard work, or mottoes, or cards, that will recall the lessons, to do this you must of necessity look ahead.

2. By culling the best thought adapted to your class from the best writers for primary teachers, and using just what you need. Never teach a lesson that another has prepared, unless it is in every way adapted to your class.

3. By illustrations from your daily reading, or observations among children, or from your books of anecdotes. Every primary teacher should have some good book of illustrations. The best is one you make yourself. It may take years to do this, but you can cull them carefully from papers. Primary Teachers' Unions in every large city for the study of the lesson, are very helpful, and even in a place where only two or three teachers can be found, the meeting together to study the lesson would be very helpful. Let all your reading bear on your work as a primary teacher—then you are constantly preparing.

You will know how great has been your care, upon the preparation of the lesson, by the information you receive after the teaching from the children or their parents. If you teach so well that your scholars talk about it at home, you may know your preparation has not been in vain. Every systematic lesson has the following divisions:

1. Review of last lesson.
2. Introduction—something to awaken attention.
3. Bible story.
4. The one truth from the lesson we want to study to our own.

5. Individual application.

Every primary teacher needs much of God's Spirit, which our Saviour said should "guide into all truth."

My Boys.

BY PSYCHE.

"YOU have the worst class in the school," was the cheering speech addressed to me by one of the teachers, as I arrived to take charge of my class. As I took my place amongst them for the first time I perceived that the boys would be by no means easy to manage. The superintendent introduced me with a few kind words, and when he left the boys surveyed me coolly, and smiled at each other with a smile which seemed to say they would soon get rid of me! I was the first lady teacher who had taught them. The boys told me they had "tormented" their other teachers. I naturally felt that a woman might fail where men had been "tormented." However, I determined to try. I quietly studied each boy as well as I could.

I opened my Bible and said we would proceed with the lesson, but none of the class had a book, and while I sent one to the library for Bibles, the others amused themselves by teasing the boys in the next class. I tried to stop them, but might as well have talked to pieces of marble, as they never pretended even to hear me. When the boy came back from the library with the Bibles, I told them where the lesson was, and instantly they all pretended they could not find the place, so I found it for them. Some of them read their verses, while others amused themselves by tearing the leaves out of the books. I remonstrated with them, and they replied: "I don't care." "I will do as I like." When the lesson ended, and the bell rang, I could see written upon the boys' faces a determination to get rid of me as soon as possible. I found they had not been learning any Catechism, and during the week I bought a copy for each of them. The next Sabbath I went early and there sat every boy, and what a look of surprise rested upon each face as I took my seat again. I shook hands with each one, and asked him how he did. This was evidently more than they expected, and they seemed a good deal astonished; however, in a few moments they regained their usual composure, and each boy looked straight into my face as if either to read me or frighten me. When the exercises were finished I drew my chair closer and told them I had something to say to them. Instantly a circle of critical, curious faces looked into mine. I said I had been told that this was the worst class in the school; that they had chased their other teachers away, and that no lady could stay with them. I asked them if this was true. One looked at the other, and at last one said in an injured tone: "We are not the worst boys at all." I asked them if they had behaved badly to their former teachers, and to my surprise every one quickly answered "Yes." They did not like the other teachers, they said, and thereupon followed a recital of how "we tormented them." Then addressing them, I told them I was going to stay with them, and that I was determined to make "our class" the best class in school. As they were all clever boys, I would expect them to do their very best to take away the bad name they had acquired. I appealed to each of them, and told them I wanted every boy in my class to be a good man. I asked them if they would try, and they said they would. I told them that as I did not know what they could do in the way of learning lessons I would leave it to their own honor to learn what they could. I told them that I required perfect obedience from each boy, and, as a reward, I would give them a handsome monthly paper. This promise brought a bright smile to every face. After that my boys were not so formidable. True, there are some restless ones in every large class, and I found that the habits of years are not easily broken; but I never despaired, and treated each boy as though he were a gentleman. I gave them praise for lessons well learned, or for good conduct.

Now, after a year and a half, I would not give up my class for any other. I love each boy in it, and they all love me. I have not all the boys I had when I first took the class, as the parents of some of them removed from the city. There are still some restless ones, but I make allowances for them. I give each boy a pleasant welcome at coming in, and a kind hand shake and good-bye at going out. At first I felt that I had made a great sacrifice for them. My quiet afternoon's Bible-study was given up, only to teach a class of very troublesome boys, and come home wearied out with them, and sometimes disheartened. But I kept on, and to the question, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" came the gentle answer, "Feed my lambs." Now I rejoice that I have given them my care and time. And what is the result? Lessons well learned, a respect for God's day and house, and much improved conduct; and, best of all, precious sacred truths engraven upon their minds and hearts never to be erased, and treasures stored up for manhood, to comfort and strengthen them amid the trials and temptations of daily life.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

SECOND QUARTER.

1. April 6.—Paul's Third Missionary Journey. Acts 18 : 23–28 and 19 : 1–7.
2. April 13.—Paul at Ephesus. Acts 19 : 8–22.
3. April 20.—Paul's Preaching. 1 Cor. 1 : 17–31.
4. April 27.—Abstinence for the Sake of Others. 1 Cor. 8 : 1–13.
5. May 4.—**Christian Love.** 1 Cor. 13 : 1–13.
6. May 11.—**Victory over Death.** 1 Cor. 15 : 50–58.
7. May 18.—**The Uproar at Ephesus.** Acts 19 : 23–41 and 20 : 1, 2.
8. May 25.—**Liberal Giving.** 2 Cor. 9 : 1–15.
9. June 1.—Christian Liberty. Gal. 4 : 1–16.
10. June 8.—Justification by Faith. Rom. 3 : 19–31.
11. June 15.—The Blessedness of Believers. Rom. 8 : 28–39.
12. June 22.—Obedience to Law. Rom. 13 : 1–10.
13. June 29.—Review.

Lesson V. **CHRISTIAN LOVE.** May 4th, 1884.

1 Cor. 13 : 1–13. Memorize vs. 11–13.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Love is the fulfilling of the law."—Rom. 13 : 10.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 1 Cor. 13 : 1–13...*Christian Love.*
T. Rom. 13 : 1–14....*Love the Fulfilling of the Law.*
W. John 13 : 31–38...*A New Commandment.*
Th. Matt. 22 : 34–46...*The Great Commandment.*
F. 1 John 3 : 9–24...."*In Deed and in Truth.*"
S. 1 John 4 : 7–21....*Brotherly Love.*
S. Ps. 133 : 1–3.....*Brethren in Unity.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Importance of Love. 2. The Character of Love. 3. The Immortality of Love.

Time.—A. D. 57.

Place.—Written from Ephesus.

Catechism.—Q. 73. *Which is the eighth commandment?* A. The eighth commandment is, *Thou shalt not steal.*

Q. 74. *What is required in the eighth commandment?* A. The eighth commandment requireth the lawful procuring and furthering the wealth and outward estate of ourselves and others.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

INTRODUCTORY.—This chapter is one of the richest passages in all Paul's Epistles. Coming here in the midst of argument and remonstrance, it is like a lovely garden spot with sweet flowers and playing fountains, in a wide stretch of rugged country. The apostle was led to speak of love, by what he had been saying in the previous chapter of the various gifts dispensed by the Holy Spirit to the Church. "Desire earnestly the greater gifts." v. 31. But as he thought of these gifts which were only official or temporary, there flashed upon his mind a vision of something far better than any mere power of healing, or working miracles, or teaching or speaking with tongues, something permanent and enduring, something that gives Christlikeness to the soul. "A still more excellent way shew I unto you." The praises of this more excellent way he sings in this chapter, which has been aptly called "a song of love."

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become *as* sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

2 And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. [Matt. 7: 22; 17: 20; Mark 11 : 23; Luke 17 : 6.]

3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor,* and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. [Matt. 6: 1, 2.]

4 Charity suffereth long, *and* is kind; charity envieth not: charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, [Prov. 10 : 12.]

5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; [ch. 10 : 24; Phil. 2 : 4.]

6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; [Ps. 10 : 3; Rom. 1 : 32; 2 John 4.]

7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. [Rom. 15 : 1; Gal. 6 : 2; 2 Tim. 2 : 24.]

8 Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away.

9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. [ch. 8: 2.]
10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.
11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.
12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. [2 Cor. 3: 18; 5: 7; 1 John 3: 2.]
13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these *is* charity.

REVISED VERSION.

1 If I speak with the tongues of men and of
angels, but have not love, I am become
2 sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. And
if I have *the gift of* prophecy, and know all
mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have
all faith, so as to remove mountains, but
3 have not love, I am nothing. And if I be-
stow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and if I
give my body to be burned, but have not
4 love, it profiteth me nothing. Love suffereth
long, *and* is kind; love envieth not; love
5 vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth
not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its
own, is not provoked, taketh not account of
6 evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but
7 rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things,
believeth all things, hopeth all things, en-
8 dureth all things. Love never faileth: but
whether *there be* prophecies, they shall be
done away; whether *there be* tongues, they
shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it
9 shall be done away. For we know in part,
10 and we prophesy in part: but when that
which is perfect is come, that which is in
11 part shall be done away. When I was a
child, I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I
thought as a child: now that I am become
a man, I have put away childish things.
12 For now we see in a mirror, darkly; but then
face to face: now I know in part; but then
shall I know even as also I have been known.
13 But now abideth faith, hope, love, these
three; and the greatest of these is love.

1 *Though I speak with the tongues.* The gift of "tongues" was regarded among the Corinthians as among the greatest and most valuable of the gifts bestowed upon the Church. The apostle had been speaking of it in chap. 12: 10, 28, 29. By the "tongues of men" we are to understand the languages which men speak; and by the "tongues . . . of angels" the languages used by the angels. He supposes himself able to speak in any language of earth or heaven. *And have not charity.* All through this chapter the Revised Version substitutes *love* for *charity.* As the latter word is now used it implies benevolence to the needy, or toleration toward those who have done us wrong. These are but fragments of the apostle's meaning here; hence *love* is the better word, love in the Christian sense, not love of kindred, nor love as a mere earthly affection, but that love for others of which Christ spoke so much, and which he illustrated in the parable of the Good Samaritan. It embraces a great many elements, such as patience, meekness, gentleness, forgiveness, sympathy, humility, unselfishness, desire to help and to do good; indeed, it is the sum of all good qualities, for "love is the fulfilling of the law." *Sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.* All his eloquence, though it were the highest possible on earth or in heaven, if he had not love would be only like the clanging of a piece of brass when struck by a hammer, or the clattering of cymbals. That is, he would be "a mere instrument of sound without sense, dead, mechanical, devoid of all moral worth."

2 *Prophecy.* Not confined to the foretelling of future events, but referring in general to all inspired teaching. *All mysteries.* All secret things, whether in God's purposes, his providences, his word or his world. *All knowledge.* All that there is to be known, the whole range of possible knowledge. *All faith.* See chap. 12: 9. It is not ordinary faith that is here meant, that which brings the soul into union with Christ, and that by which the spiritual life is maintained, but that faith by which miracles were wrought. *Remove mountains.* See Matt. 17: 20; 21: 21. The expression denoted the highest kind of faith. *I am nothing.* Though he had all knowledge and all power, and yet lacked love, he would be nothing, that is, in God's sight. He does not say that one could have all these spiritual gifts and lack love; he is showing by the strongest possible suppositions that it is love that gives true moral worth. Yet the point must not be lost, that neither knowledge nor power avails without love in the heart.

3 *Though I bestow all my goods.* This shows that "charity" to the poor is not what is implied in the word in this chapter. It is possible for one to dole out all his substance to the needy and yet not have this "charity." *Though I give my body to be burned.* That is, as a martyr. There was a tomb at Athens, which Paul may have seen, in memory of an Indian fanatic, who, with smiling face, had leaped upon the funeral pyre, thus devoting himself to death. It may be also that men suffered martyrdom as Christians, without any real love for Christ or for their fellow-men, merely through pride or self-love. Such self-immolation without love avails nothing.

4 Here the apostle begins to define love, by telling what it does and what it does not.

Suffereth long. Is slow to grow angry when tried or unjustly treated. *Kind.* Full of good deeds. *Envieth not.* Is not vexed, but rejoices rather, at the success of others. *Vaunteth not itself.* Is not boastful; does not try to show off its qualities. *Not puffed up.* Conceited, vain. The man who has love shrinks instinctively from all bluster and pompous show.

5 *Behave itself unseemly.* Rudely, unmannerly. The spirit of Christ makes one a perfect gentleman or lady, with refined manners and gentle courtesy. *Seeketh not her own.* Is not selfish, but disinterested, thinking before every act how it will affect others as well as one's self. *Not easily provoked.* The Revised Version omits *easily.* Keeps the temper under control; does not fly into a passion. *Thinketh no evil.* Revised Version, "Taketh not account of evil." That is, does not treasure it up, does not cherish the memory of injuries, does not bear malice and resentment, but is forgiving.

6 *Rejoiceth not in iniquity.* Is not made glad by the sight of wickedness in others. See Ps. 5: 4, 5; Hos. 7: 3; Rom. 1: 32; 2 Thess. 2: 12. *In* [with] *the truth.* Is made glad by every triumph of the right and of truth.

7 *Beareth all things.* Probably the reference is to the bearing of reproaches, provocations, personal injuries and indignities; bears them in silence, as Jesus did. *Believeth all things.* Is unsuspecting; perfect truth itself does not suspect others of untruth. *Hopeth all things.* That is, of others; ever sees the best side of men's character, and hopes for the reformation and salvation even of the worst. *Endureth all things.* All sacrifices, hardships, persecutions, toils, losses and trials; never yielding, but heroically enduring to the end.

8 *Never faileth.* It is not like a flower that fadeth and falleth away, but is permanent, lasting, eternal. The apostle has in his mind the contrast between love and the temporary gifts spoken of in the previous chapter, which he now proceeds to illustrate. *Prophecies . . . shall fail.* Revised Version, "Be done away." The gift of prophecy (v. 2) was but a special power, imparted for a temporary purpose. It was nothing added to the character, that became part of the man himself; it was merely something put in his hand for a time, to be withdrawn when its purpose was fulfilled. *Tongues . . . shall cease.* The gift of tongues was likewise but a temporary endowment, not adding any line of growth to the character. *Knowledge . . . shall vanish away.* Revised Version, "Shall be done away." The best and most perfect knowledge we can obtain here is so incomplete that it will be done away before the full revelation and perfect light of heaven; as the morning dawn fades away before the rising of the sun.

9 *We know in part, and we prophesy in part.* This is given as the reason why knowledge and prophecy, as we have these gifts here on the earth, shall be done away. Our knowledge is only partial. This is true in the largest sense. We know only part of *anything.* Take the sciences, and we are but like the philosopher on the seashore, picking up a few pebbles and shells, while the vast deep lies beyond us. Apply it to divine revelation, and we have but the merest beginnings of glorious truths.

10 *When that which is perfect is come.* Referring to the second coming of Christ, when redemption shall be complete and the redeemed shall be for ever with the Lord. *That which is in part.* All this partial knowledge and incomplete revelation. *Shall be done away.* They shall be of no further use in the brightness of that which is perfect; just as candles and gas jets and street lamps are done away in the morning when the sun has risen.

11 *When I was a child.* He illustrates the transient and temporary character of all earthly knowledge by comparing the knowledge of an infant with that of the full-grown man. *I spake as a child.* When an infant I talked or chattered as an infant. *When I became a man I put away childish things.* That which was regarded as important knowledge in a little child, in manhood is seen to be of no importance at all. The man has passed far beyond the knowledge of the infant. In like manner, the apostle says, our present knowledge is but that of infants, and when we reach our spiritual manhood we shall leave it all far behind.

12 *Now we see through a glass, darkly.* Revised Version, "In a mirror." The ancient mirrors were smooth, flat pieces of highly polished metal, and the images seen in them were not clear and distinct as in modern mirrors, but dim and imperfect. The sense seems to be that in this world we do not get full and distinct views of truth and of spiritual things. Our plainest words are only dim mirrors in which we see shadowy reflections of things. *Then face to face.* In the life to come, when we shall stand in the presence of Christ. See Num. 12: 8; 1 John 3: 2; Rev. 22: 4. *Then shall I know even as also I am known.* He refers to God's knowledge of him. God had known him thoroughly, perfectly. In like manner, thoroughly, completely, fully, shall he himself know the things of God in the after-life.

This does not mean that the redeemed shall be omniscient, as God is, but that their knowledge shall be full and unobstructed.

13 *Now abideth faith, hope, charity.* The apostle names these three graces as abiding and permanent, in contrast with the temporary gifts of tongues and knowledge. All of these belong to the character, are parts of the life, and not mere decorations that fall off, and shall not vanish away in the full light and life of heaven. These are all imperishable. *Faith* will abide in the heavenly life, for we shall never cease to believe in God, to trust him, to depend upon him, and to draw life and blessing from him. *Hope* will abide also, for there will ever be still better things to receive. *Love* will abide, for we shall never cease to cling to Christ and to each other. *The greatest of these is charity.* Greatest of the three abiding things, greater than either faith or hope. Therefore, in all this world there is nothing so well worth living for as love, love in the heart, and love wrought into all the life. All earthly gifts and attainments are temporary; but he that gets love gets an eternal possession; and even among all *Christian* graces love is the greatest and the best.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

I. The Importance of Love. vs. 1–3.

It is more important than eloquence. *If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass.* To master a foreign language and be able to speak in it is considered a great acquisition. One who can talk in a number of different languages is looked upon as a most accomplished man. Men spend years with the best teachers in mastering the art of eloquence, and those who can speak well have great power. But love is better than eloquence, or than the ability to speak in many languages. Not that learning and eloquence are to be despised, but that love is better, and that learning and eloquence are nothing in God's sight unless there be love also in the heart and life. In Christian life great stress is usually laid on "testifying" for Christ, that is, in speaking for Christ. Young men are urged to speak in the meetings as if talking were about the only way of witnessing for Christ. In the light of this word it is evident that love in the character is better witnessing than any amount of talking; that if love be wanting, the most and the best talking is really of no account, and that one may witness for Christ by a silent life of love better than by the most abundant loveless eloquence.

It is more important than knowledge. *If I have . . . all knowledge . . . but have not love, I am nothing.* Men take great pride in knowledge. It is thought learning makes one great. "Knowledge is power," we say. We take great pains with the education of the young. The training of the mind is regarded as of the highest importance. But here we see that knowledge is not the principal thing. One may be a most learned scientist, a profound philosopher, may even be a brilliant theologian, knowing the Bible and all sacred literature and Christian doctrine, and yet be nothing, as God rates men. We are not to despise true learning; indeed, we are to covet the best things in education and culture, but the vital thing in character lies deeper. God measures us by the love he finds in us. Christian loving-kindness, which spreads warmth all about it, like the soft light or the sweet fragrance of flowers, is more excellent than the brilliance of learning. The lesson for young people is, that while earnestly acquiring knowledge in every way they should seek also to grow in the spirit and exercise of love. Mental culture is important, but heart-culture is still more important.

It is more important than good deeds. *If I bestow all my goods to feed the poor . . . but have not love, it profiteth me nothing.* We generally think that gifts made to the poor are proofs of love, but from this we see that it is possible to be very "benevolent" and yet not have love. And deeds of kindness, no matter how great or costly, amount to nothing unless they are prompted by love. Men may give to get a reputation for generosity, but such giving lays up no treasures in heaven.

It is more important than heroic devotion to a cause. *If I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing.* Martyrdom for the cause of Christ has always been considered the highest test of Christian life, but it is possible even to walk into the flames for a doctrine and yet not have the love that weighs with God. For example, there is a story of an early martyr who went to the stake to be burned, and went gladly, too, who even on his way would not forgive one who had been his enemy. The sight of the blazing fagots could not quench his courage, but into the flames he bore in his breast the burning hatred of a fellow-man. He had not love. It is good to be brave defenders of the truth, and to be ready to make any sacrifice for the truth's

sake; but if beneath our devotion to creeds and doctrines we have the spirit of strife, of resentment, our loyalty to truth counts for nothing.

II. The Character of Love. vs. 4–7.

Love suffereth long and is kind. The first touoh of the pencil presents love as suffering. One of the first things to be learned in a Christian life is to endure wrong and injustice, and to endure patiently, returning kindness for unkindness. That is the meaning of this double description. It is not enough to bear wrong for a day or two—love suffereth *long*. Not seven times, but seventy times seven is the insult or injustice to be endured. Nor is it enough to bear in cold silence the injuries inflicted. There is a passive bearing of wrongs which is worse than active resistance. Love suffers long, and *is kind*—continues to do good for evil, to return blessing for cursing, to bathe with fragrant love the hand that smites.

Love . . . doth not behave itself unseemly. Religion does not merely condemn actual sins, but says a Christian should not be coarse or rude, should not behave himself in an unseemly way. It is not enough to be true and right; we must seek also to live and act beautifully and gracefully. Paul elsewhere (Phil. 4: 8) summed up the things that belong to a true Christian character in these words: "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, *whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report.*" Truth, honesty, justice and purity are not enough; there must also be loveliness and amiableness. So here he condemns whatever is coarse or offensive. A heart of love is truly refined; it is gentle, courteous, graceful. It is easy to be seen that Paul is here describing the highest style of gentleman or lady. Religion is winning, and not repulsive, if it be true; and we dishonor Christ when we behave ourselves unseemly in any circumstances.

Love . . . seeketh not its own. The very essence of love is unselfishness. Just in the measure that we are truly loving will we cease to think of ourselves, and think of others. "Not to be ministered unto, but to minister," is love's motto.

Love . . . is not provoked, taketh not account of evil. That is, it does not fly into a rage at every provocation. It is not quick-tempered, but checks and controls the rising passion, not allowing it to burst into angry speech or act. Then it does not watch for insults or grievances, and keep a record of all wrongs or slights or injuries. On the other hand, it forgets all evil done to itself, not allowing it to break the friendship or the spirit of kindness. This is the Christian forgiveness that is so much dwelt upon in the New Testament. Christ taught us to pray: "Forgive us as we forgive." This is the way God forgives us; he is not provoked at our sins, and he forgets our evil acts toward himself. If we mean what we say in the Lord's Prayer we ought to do to those who wrong us as we ask God to do to us.

III. The Immortality of Love. vs. 8–13.

Love never faileth. Acquirements are only temporary, but elements of character are permanent. Eloquence fails when one grows old and frail. Knowledge, too, is in a sense only temporary. The knowledge that one has as a child is outgrown and superseded as one advances into maturer years. In like manner all earthly knowledge, being imperfect, will fail and be left behind, when we advance into heaven's fuller light. So all other gifts fail, that is, fall away when they have served their purpose. They are not parts of the character, and therefore are not permanent. But love is enduring and eternal. It is wrought into the very life itself as its thread and fibre, and will last through all changes, through death itself and for ever. We are working for eternity when we are cultivating the spirit of love in our own hearts. A mother was weeping over the early death of a beautiful and accomplished daughter, and one of the elements of her grief was that she had just finished an elaborate education in music, painting, drawing and other branches, and now it was all lost. A friend remarked that all education was lost which did not help to fit one better for the eternal world. We are not to despise other culture, but the culture that is for eternity is that which builds up the life in love. This will never fail. He that learns to forgive, to bear wrongs patiently, to think of others, to be gentle, thoughtful, kind, will carry the lessons for ever.

When that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away. The morning dawn is very welcome to the early traveler, but it is only partial day, not the best thing, and when the full day comes the dim twilight gives place. Lamps in our homes and in the streets are very good at night, when darkness covers the earth, but their light is not perfect, and when the sun rises we care no more for the lamps and put them out. So it is that the knowledge that we have on the earth serves us very well when it is the best we can have; but it will not be prized when heaven's perfect knowledge comes. The things we have here and now may be compared again to the scaffold-

ing which men set up when a great building is being reared. It serves a good purpose for the time. It is necessary, and without it the walls never could be built. Yet when the work is finished the scaffolding is torn down and taken away, for there is no longer any use for it. So the gifts and graces and all the experiences of earth are but as scaffolding, about the life-work of each one, and when the life is finished they will all fall away and be left behind for ever.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Love is better than eloquence. v. 1.
2. Love is better than knowledge. v. 2.
3. Love is better than charity. v. 3.
4. Love is better than heroic devotion to a cause, even the cause of Christ. v. 3.
5. Love is not chilled by wrongs, injuries or trials, but remains kind and gentle in all experiences. v. 4.
6. Love is humble and courteous. v. 5.
7. Love is sweet-tempered and forgiving. v. 5.
8. Love is large-hearted, patient, hopeful. vs. 6, 7.
9. Love is eternal, while all other acquirements and attainments fail and fall away. v. 8.
10. The best things of earth are but partial and preparatory, and will give way before full revelation. v. 10.
11. We see but dim shadows here, even of the truths of divine relation, and see nothing in full, clear light. v. 12.
12. The enduring things in this life are spiritual gifts. v. 13.
13. Even among the gifts that are eternal, the best and most permanent is love. v. 13.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

BY JAMES A. WORDEN, D.D.

BEGIN.

With what gifts did the Corinthian Christians abound? Have the class turn to and read 1 Cor. 12: 4–11. From whom did these gifts come? Why ought we to "covet earnestly the best gifts?" What are the best gifts? Those which are the most useful, not those which are the most striking and attractive. How are we to seek the best gifts? This thirteenth chapter is an answer to this question. Love is the way of attaining the best gifts. Explain the meaning of *charity*.

DIVIDE.

Wanting love, all gifts are vain. vs. 1–3.
Love does all virtues sweet maintain. vs. 4–7.
In heaven, as grace-queen, love shall reign. vs. 8–13.

QUESTION AND APPLY.

I. *Wanting love all gifts are vain.* vs. 1–3.

What gift does the first verse take up? Why is the gift of tongues first mentioned? The Corinthians abounded in this gift, and were inclined to plume themselves upon it. What is meant by the clauses, "the tongues of men and of angels?" In what is a loud-mouthed, conceited talker, who has no Christian love, like a piece of clattering brass? He has no dignity, and makes only senseless noise. In what respects is such an one like a clanging cymbal? He only makes a loud, rattling, discordant sound. Why is all public speaking in the church vain without Christian love? Lacking love, the soul of real piety, it is only empty vibration of air. What three gifts are mentioned in v. 3? 1. Prophecy. 2. Knowing all mysteries and all knowledge. 3. The faith of miracles. Bring out the meaning of these gifts. Why are all intellectual *knowledge* and all *power* vain without love? They do not make better or holier. Satan has all these, and yet is Satan. What two kinds of acts of doing good are referred to in v. 3? Why is a man without Christian love utterly vain and unprofitable, though he give away all his property to the poor, and even die for others? Because it is the *motive* that is the *life* of good works; and if love to God and man be wanting, then the very life or true moral quality of good works is gone. What lesson is there in vs. 1–3 for eloquent speakers? What for deep scholars and men learned in the Bible? What for those who give alms? For those who do great things for the Church?

II. *Love does all virtues sweet maintain.* vs. 4–7.

In what way did the conceited Corinthians who had gifts behave? Dr. Hodge says: "They were impatient, discontented, envious, inflated, selfish, indecorous, unmindful of the feelings or interests of others, suspicious, resentful, censorious." Apply to yourself and your scholars the true words. Contrast with these failings Paul's picture of *love*. Dwell on the details of the pen-portrait. By careful questioning draw out explanations not only, but illustrations of each feature. "Suffereth long," "Is kind," "Envieth not," "Vaunteth not itself," "Is not puffed up," "Doth not behave itself unseemly," "Seeketh not her own," "Is not easily provoked," "Thinketh no evil," "Rejoiceth not in iniquity" but "Rejoiceth in the truth," "Beareth all things," "Believeth all things," "Hopeth all things," "Endureth all things." Paul treats love as a jeweler does a diamond—turns it around, lets all its facets

sparkle in the eye of the beholder. There are fifteen facets to this gem, eight on the negative side, seven on the positive.

III. *In heaven, as grace-queen, love shall reign.* vs. 8–13.

Space fails me to tell the method of applying these most beautiful verses. I advise taking up each part of this brilliant passage and clearly bringing out its meaning. There is a beauty and depth in each clause. What are the great lessons from this thirteenth chapter? What lesson for those who are specially gifted? What encouragement is here for persons of moderate talents? By cultivating Christian love and Christian character they can outstrip the most gifted who are devoid of this grace. Character is greater than all talents; grace, than all gifts.

Points in Lesson for May 11th:

1. What great change shall take place at the resurrection?
2. How do we know that the bodies of Christians shall be raised up?
3. What proves that the same bodies shall be raised up as those which died?
4. What are some of the reasons why men generally fear death?
5. Why should Christians not fear death?
6. What effect should the truth of the resurrection have on us?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

BY J. HOWARD SEAL.

SUGGESTIONS.—The last verse of the twelfth chapter is properly the connecting link in Paul's thoughts. The more excellent way is love's way. It makes effective our *gifts* and our *giving*. Call on classes or individuals to read the following texts, setting forth (1) The nature of love (vs. 4–7; 1 John 4: 7; Ex. 34: 6, 7; Col. 3: 12–14; 1 John 3: 18, 19); (2) The durability of love (vs. 8–10); (3) The supremacy of love. v. 13. Speak of the three abiding graces—Faith, by which we are justified (Rom. 5: 1); Hope, by which we are saved (Rom. 8: 24); Love, which is of God (1 John 4: 7), greater than all, it is the foundation of all. "Faith, to work and trust (Heb. 11: 1, 6); Hope, to expect and wait (Heb. 6: 19); Love, to enjoy, obey, and be like God." 1 John 4: 16.

The best exposition of this "Psalm of Love" that the writer has heard, was given by the Rev. A. T. Pierson, D.D., in the following outline, which is here given in the hope that it may help others:

"LOVE'S RELATION
HAS
An Utterance
A Knowledge
A Power
of her own
1. To Character,
2. To Service,
3. To Disposition,
4. To Perfection,
5. To Immortality."

Directions for Coloring.—"The more excellent way," white shaded with light blue; "Nature," "Durability," "Supremacy," red shaded with yellow; "Of love," large and bold letters, yellow shaded with white; "Without love, nothing," white shaded with brown.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

BY MRS. G. R. ALDEN—"PANSY."

Topic.—The importance of Christian love.

The Lesson Suggested by an Object.—Show a letter, copy of one written by a little boy to his father, in which the word "pony" occurred thirteen times. Underline the word with red ink, to let the children readily see how frequently it occurs. Does not this prove how important in the boy's mind was his pony? Show

a copy of Paul's letter, with the word "Love" underlined in red. What did Paul think of its importance?

The Lesson Illustrated by Blackboard.—Outline a tree, whose roots shall center in the word "LOVE." Let its branches bear some of the fruit which Paul mentions: "Long-suffering," "Kindness," "Unselfishness," "Love of truth," "Faith," "Sorrow for sin." Beside this, outline a scroll with figures to stand for the Ten Commandments, and after calling from class the fact that "Unselfishness" will keep them from coveting, and "Love of truth" will keep them from lying, and "Kindness" will keep them from wanting to hurt others, etc., draw an arch from the tree to the scroll, and print on it the golden text: "Love is the fulfilling of the law."

A second tree, drawn in the sin-color, having its roots in the word "SELF," and bearing the fruits of "Envy," "Pride," "Evil-thinking," etc., will help to illustrate the contrast. All these, as the class should be helped to see, are taken from Paul's letter.

Personal Application.—What fruit grows in my life? Which tree am I like? If the child's heart tells him that he is too much like the one whose roots are grounded in self, let two facts be made plain. First, that it is impossible with such a life to please God, no matter how regular in attendance at Sabbath-school the person may be, nor how many pennies he drops in the box, nor how perfectly he recites his lesson. Secondly, that there is a remedy. Just below the roots print the word "JESUS." Go to him for forgiveness, for help. Now let the word "Self," at the root of that sin-laden tree, change into "Love," and gradually the fruit of that tree will change. This, too, may be illustrated with crayon, to the intense interest of the school.

It has been taken for granted that the teacher will carefully explain the meaning of the word translated "Charity."

Lesson VI. **VICTORY OVER DEATH.** May 11th, 1884.

1 Cor. 15: 50–58. Memorize vs. 55–58.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Death is swallowed up in victory."—1 Cor. 15: 54.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 1 Cor. 15: 50–58. *Victory over Death.*
T. Matt. 28: 1–28.. *The Resurrection of Christ.*
W. John 11: 18–44.. *"The Resurrection and the Life."*
Th. 1 Cor. 15: 20–34. *Christ the First-Fruits.*
F. 1 Cor. 15: 35–49. *A Spiritual Body.*
S. John 5: 19–29.. *The Dead shall Hear his Voice.*
S. Dan. 12: 1–13.. *"As the Stars For Ever."*

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Great Change. 2. The Final Victory. 3. The Believer's Duty.

Time.—A. D. 57.

Place.—Written from Ephesus.

Catechism.—Q. 75. *What is forbidden in the eighth commandment?* A. The eighth commandment forbiddeth whatsoever doth, or may, unjustly hinder our own, or our neighbor's, wealth or outward estate.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—False teachers had been uttering words in Corinth against the great Christian doctrine of the resurrection, and this wonderful fifteenth chapter is devoted by the apostle to setting forth the truth on the subject. He begins with a full statement of the fact of Christ's resurrection. vs. 1–11. He then shows the close and intimate relation between the resurrection of Christ and that of his people. The two stand or fall together. He dwells, too, on the consequences of a denial of Christ's resurrection. vs. 12–19. But the truth of Christ's having risen again is clearly established, drawing after it the most glorious results. vs. 20–34. The manner of the resurrection is then illustrated. vs. 35–49.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. [Matt. 16: 17; John 3: 3, 5.]

51 Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, [1 Thess. 4: 15, 16, 17.]

52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. [Zech. 9: 14; Matt. 24: 31; John 5: 25; 1 Thess. 4: 16.]

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. [2 Cor. 5: 4.]

54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. [Isa. 25: 8; Heb. 2: 14, 15; Rev. 20: 14.]

55 O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? [Hos. 13: 14.]

56 The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. [Rom. 4: 15; 5: 13; 7: 5, 13.]

57 But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Je'sus Christ. [Rom. 7: 25; 1 John 5: 4, 5.]

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

REVISED VERSION.

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.
51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not
52 all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and
53 we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal
54 must put on immortality. But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in
55 victory. O death, where is thy victory? O
56 death, where is thy sting? The sting of death is sin; and the power of sin is the
57 law; but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.
58 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

50 *Now this I say.* The apostle uses this expression when he is about to make some statement of profound significance. See chaps. 1: 12; 7: 19. Here it is a new phase of his argument to which he would call particular attention. To the question, "With what body will they come?" he had already shown that a change in the body is *possible*, without the loss of identity. A buried seed rises into a plant, the same, yet not the same. "That body with which it is raised may be called its own body, and yet it is a new body. It is raised anew with stem and leaves and fruit, and yet all the while we know that it is no new corn; it is the old life in the seed reappearing, developed in a higher form." See vs. 36, 37, 43, 44. Here he asserts that a change is not only possible, but absolutely necessary, inasmuch as we cannot be received into the new heavenly life as we are, with our corrupt, perishable bodies. *Flesh and blood.* The words describe the animal organism of the present body, the "natural body" of v. 44, with all its infirmities, diseases and mortality. *Cannot inherit the kingdom of God.* By the "kingdom of God" here we are to understand the life after the resurrection, the future heavenly life of the redeemed; and the statement is, that our bodies in their earthly form cannot be received into this new life. There must, of necessity, be a change in them to adapt them to the conditions of the heavenly home. *Neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.* "Corruption" is that which can decay, as ordinary flesh turns to dust. In the resurrection life there will be no decay; hence again the necessity for a change in the body.

51 *Behold, I show you a mystery.* Something which human reason alone cannot find out, a divine secret revealed to the apostle. The reference is to the statement which follows regarding those who shall be alive when Christ comes to raise the dead. *We shall not all sleep.* The reference is to those who shall be alive when Christ comes; these shall not sleep. (See 1 Thess. 4: 15, 16, Lesson of March 16th.) *But we shall all be changed.* Those who are living when Christ comes shall not die, but the same change must pass upon them that shall take place in the resurrection of those who have died.

52 *In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.* The coming of Christ will be sudden, and the change will be instantaneous. Seeing him we shall be made like him. This change must have taken place in the bodies of Enoch and Elijah in their translation. It did not take place, however, in the bodies of the widow's son, the ruler's daughter, or Lazarus, whom our Lord raised from death, for these were not resurrections, but restorations only. They were brought back to the old life, with all its infirmities and frailties, and had to die again. There is an old tradition that the first question of Lazarus, after his return, was, "Shall I have to die again?" and when he was answered in the affirmative, it is said that he never smiled again. *The trumpet.* See 1 Thess. 4: 16. *And we shall be changed.* The apostle speaks in the first person, as if he felt that the Lord might come very soon, and that *he* might be among the living to be changed.

53 *This corruptible must put on incorruption.* See v. 50; also 2 Cor. 5: 4. There are two thoughts here—incorruptibleness and immortality. There shall be no decay, nothing that ever can decay, and there shall be no death, nothing that ever can die.

54 *The saying that is written.* See Isa. 25: 8. *Death is swallowed up in victory.* The apostle in his glowing realization of the great fact sees it as already accomplished, and therefore changes the form of the words of the prophecy, adapting them to the vision before his eyes. Instead of "He will swallow up death in victory," he says, "Death is swallowed up in vic-

tory." The victory over death is at length completed when the dead are brought again from their graves in immortal life.

55 *O death, where is thy sting?* This passage is an adaptation of the phrase in Hosea 13: 14. The idea of the "sting" of death suggests the figure of a venomous reptile, whose poisonous sting pierces to the very soul. *O grave.* Revised Version, "O death." *Where is thy victory?* This is a shout of triumph. Death has been victorious over men until now, and none have been able to resist him; but the apostle sees him now defeated and his prey plucked from his hands.

56 *The sting of death is sin.* If there were no sin death would not be terrible, would have no sting. *The strength* [power] *of sin is the law.* Sin is the transgression of the divine law, and the law has its penalties; it is this that makes sin such an awful fact. See Rom. 5: 12; 7: 7.

57 *But thanks be to God.* From a view of death in all its awfulness, the apostle turns again to look at the victory which has been won over death, and bursts into this exultant note of thanksgiving and triumph. *Who giveth us the victory.* Over death and the grave. The apostle regards the victory as already achieved. *Through our Lord Jesus Christ.* Christ met death for us, and by atoning for our sins took the sting from death. Then he conquered death in his resurrection, and will also bring all his people from the grave, thus accomplishing the full and final victory.

58 *Therefore.* Since all this is true, and because our life is immortal. The apostle has finished his grand argument, and now turns to offer the practical counsels that such a glorious truth should suggest. *Be ye stedfast, unmovable.* This is the first counsel. Do not waver in your faith, especially, do not let yourselves be torn away from your faith in the great doctrine of the resurrection. This was their particular danger. *Always abounding in the work of the Lord.* The influence of such a belief should be to quicken us into most eager and intense earnestness in doing good. The reason is given in the closing words. *Your labor is not in vain.* Life is immortal; it does not end at the grave. Labor done for Christ is therefore not in vain. In all that we do for Christ we are touching immortal lives and working for eternity.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. These bodies as they now are cannot be admitted into the heavenly home. They could not live there. They are fleshly, and the life there is spiritual. They are corruptible and liable to decay, and in heaven nothing can dwell but that which is imperishable and undecaying. The seeds of death are in these bodies, and there can be no death there; all is immortal; no one ever grows old or feeble. The remains of sin hide away in these bodies, in the appetites and passions and fleshly desires, and no sin can exist in heaven; nothing that defileth can ever enter there. For these and other reasons our bodies, as they are constituted on the earth, cannot pass into the new heavenly life. But who would want to keep his old, infirm, sickly, sin-poisoned and death-withered body through all eternity? What old person, with feeble limbs and trembling hands and failing eyes, and constant weariness and pain, would want to think of carrying the same poor, worn-out body into heaven's gates, and keeping it there for ever? What lame or deformed person, what blind or diseased person, would want to look forward to wearing the same suffering form age after age in glory? Who is not glad that there is to be a change?

We shall all be changed. He is speaking of Christians. Those who die and whose bodies lie in their graves, will come again changed; and in those who shall be living when Christ comes, and therefore shall never die, the same change will take place as they pass up to meet the Lord in the air. What the change will be we know not. It will be such a change as is necessary to fit our bodies for residence in the heavenly world. Whatever is mortal and corruptible in them must be removed, for we shall there possess everlasting youth; we shall never grow old, never be sick, never have a pain. It is a striking saying of a strange writer, that in heaven the oldest angels are the youngest. That is, the immortal life is ever toward youth rather than toward age. A little further back in this chapter we are told something about this change that is to take place in the body. It is illustrated by the plant that springs up from the seed; you drop a bare, brown, unsightly seed into the earth and it springs up a lovely flower. So is the resurrection. "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." Elsewhere we learn that the new body will be like Christ's: "Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory." After all, however, we can know only vaguely in what

this change shall consist. The new body will be holy—it will be beautiful; it will be strong and active; it will be spiritual—fitted in every way for the new and enlarged life of heaven.

This corruption must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. A pleasant story is told of Queen Victoria. She left her carriage one day near a paper mill, and went almost unattended to visit the mill. The foreman did not know who she was; however, he took her through the large establishment and patiently explained all the processes of paper-making. Coming down at last to the basement, the queen's attention was drawn to a room where there was a large heap of the dirtiest rags, that had been gathered from the gutters and alleys of the city. "What can you do with these?" the queen asked. The foreman told her that he would make of these the finest, whitest paper. The queen was astonished to learn this. As she went away the foreman learned who his visitor was, and in a few days he sent to the castle a package of the fairest, purest writing-paper, stamped with the likeness of his sovereign, and accompanied by a note telling the queen that this paper was made from the identical rags she had seen. In a faint way this incident illustrates the change that shall be made in our bodies in the resurrection. Instead of their vileness and corruption they shall be made glorious and pure, and shall bear upon them the likeness of Christ's own body. Should we not honor our bodies when we think what their destiny is to be?

Death is swallowed up in victory. Here death is victorious. He is a conqueror that none can resist. No power of earth can withstand him. He enters the loveliest home. Strong, human love would thrust him back, but its efforts are unavailing. In spite of all that affection can do, all that skill can do, all that money can do, death carries away his prize. The proudest commander, who has led hosts to victory, must himself lie down and yield to death. The millionaire, who has been accustomed to buy whatever he desired, cannot buy a minute of time. The sovereign, whose word has always been despotic, cannot bid death away. He is the universal conqueror. Two only since the world began have escaped from death by being lifted over the valley of shadows. But death is not always to continue his conquests. He is not always to retain his prisoners. His prisons are to be broken open and the captives led forth in glorious victory. Not one of Christ's followers shall remain in the grave; the humblest shall not be forgotten or overlooked; every one of them shall come forth in newness of life, bearing no marks of death, losing nothing but the stains and infirmities and blemishes of mortality.

O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? So we ought, if we are Christians, to rejoice, even in this world, over death. Death should have no terrors for one who believes in Christ. It has no power to harm us. We shall lose nothing in passing through it. It is really *life* of which we should be afraid; it is life only that has power to harm us or rob us of our jewels. Life has its dangers, its temptations, its sore battles with enemies. Life is too hard for many; many pass through it stript of all their glory and beauty, like the soldier who rides out in the morning in beauty of dress and full of hope, and is borne home at night with garments torn and soiled and with bleeding wounds. It is life that we should dread and tremble to meet, but not death. For death is but a gateway into glory. No Christian is ever wounded or defeated in death. Miss Procter's lines are suggestive:

"'What is life, father?'
'A battle, my child,
Where the strongest lance may fail,
Where the wariest eyes may be beguiled,
And the stoutest heart may quail;
Where the foes are gathered on every hand,
And rest not day or night;
And the feeble little ones must stand
In the thickest of the fight.'"

"'What is death, father?'
'The rest, my child,
When the strife and toil are o'er;
The angel of God—who, calm and mild,
Says we need fight no more;
Who driving away the demon band,
Bids the din of the battle cease—
Takes banner and spear from our trembling hand,
And proclaims an eternal peace.'"

We should not fear death, then, if we are God's children. It has no sting for us, nor is it really a victor. It comes but to free us from the last stings of sin, and to open the door not *into* but *out of* a prison, for us, and to lead us into eternal life and glory.

The sting of death is sin . . . but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Death was not as easy to Christ as it is to his people. He met it in all its awfulness and terribleness. He tasted death for every man, death itself, in all its bitterness. Gethsemane tells us how he approached death, and how fearful an experience it was for him. Turn to the death-beds of believing Christians for the contrast. Why this difference? Why was death so bitter to the Master, and why is it so peaceful and joyous to the disciples? Be-

cause to Christ it was death in reality, death as sin made it; and to the disciples it is death abolished. Christ absorbed the gloom in his own soul to make the way bright and joyous for his people. He had but a cross and a pillow of thorns for his head when dying that we might lay our heads on pillows of peace. It is only through Christ that death loses its terrors; hence it is only those who are in Christ that enjoy peace. To all others it is as awful as ever, without a lamp in the darkness, or a rod or staff to support trembling weakness, or any alleviation of its bitterness.

Wherefore . . . be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. If there were nothing beyond death, if life ended at the grave, there would be nothing really worth living for or working for in this world. Why deny ourselves, and fight sore battles, toil, if there is nothing after death? But when we learn that life goes on, in new volume, earnestness and power, for ever, then there is everything to live for.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Our bodies in their present state can never enter the heavenly life. v. 50.

2. Our bodies shall be changed to suit the conditions of the new spiritual life. v. 51.

3. The new life will be incorruptible and immortal, no more decay or death. vs. 52, 53.

4. Death is only temporarily a conqueror; he will not be able to hold his captives. v. 54.

5. It is sin that makes death terrible, but this terror is gone since Christ himself took death's sting in his own bosom to save us. vs. 56, 57.

6. It is only in Christ that there is any possible victory over death. v. 57.

7. To those who are not in Christ by faith and love, death is still awful and terrible. v. 57.

8. The truth of immortality gives something to live for and work for. v. 58.

9. Nothing done for Christ is lost or in vain, for in the eternal future there will be ample and glorious reward. v. 58.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

BEGIN

By holding a conversation about the resurrection of Jesus.

1. What Old Testament passages foretold Christ's resurrection? Ps. 16: 10, etc.

2. In what words did Christ foretell it? Matt. 20: 19; John 10: 18.

3. What eleven men prove it? Acts 1: 3; 1 Cor. 15: 5.

4. How does Paul's witness prove it? 1 Cor. 15: 8; Gal. 1: 12; Acts 9: 3–8.

5. What five hundred people saw the risen Jesus at once? 1 Cor. 15: 6.

6. How does the change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week prove it?

7. How did God seal the truth of Christ's resurrection by miracles? Heb. 2: 4.

8. How did the Holy Ghost witness to Christ's resurrection? Acts 5: 32. When you have developed a firm faith on Christ's resurrection, all doubts about our rising from the dead will vanish.

DIVIDE.

The Change. vs. 50–53.
The Victory. vs. 54–58.

Our bodies as at present made up shall not be raised up. v. 50. What is the meaning of the words "flesh and blood?" On what accounts cannot our bodies as now made up be taken to heaven? They are now corruptible, liable to die and corrupt; they are weak; they are mean; they are only natural, that is, only fitted for living in this world. Illustrate by bringing out that the body of a fish is not suited to living on the land. It would have to be made over before it could live out of water. So we will have to be made over before our bodies can go to heaven.

All persons are not going to die. v. 51. What does the word *mystery* mean? What is this newly revealed fact? That all are not to die. One generation shall pass into the other life without dying—those who are living when Christ comes.

But all persons shall be changed. vs. 51–53. What is the first thing we are taught about this change? It shall be sudden. What are we taught in 1 Cor. 15: 35–37 of this change? Our resurrection body shall be as different from our present body as is the flower from the seed from which it sprang. What do vs. 42–44 teach? What is a "natural body?" A body having animal life, and suited to the condition of the soul in this world. What is a "spiritual body?" A body fitted for the use of the soul in a glorified state. Where is it said in Scripture that our resurrection body shall be like Christ's body? 1 Cor. 15: 45–48; Phil. 3: 21. Where is it said that it shall never die? Rev. 21: 4, and v. 53. How do you know that the resurrection body shall be the same body that died? vs. 53, 54; John 5: 28; 1 Thess. 4: 13–17. Our resurrection body is like Christ's, and it was the same body which came forth as that which was "crucified, dead and buried." What *emblems* in nature has God given of our resurrection? *Morning* comes after night; *spring* comes after winter; the *butterfly* comes out of

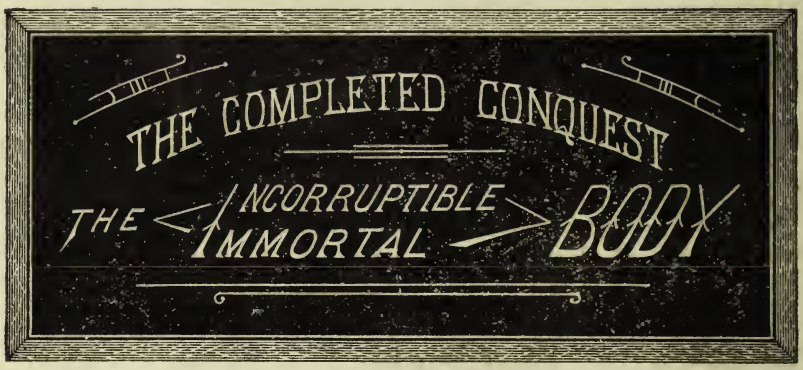
the shell of the caterpillar; the *beautiful tree* comes from the little dead seed.

II. THE VICTORY.—What is the enemy? 1 Cor. 15: 26. Who overcomes him? What is the sting of death? In what different ways does Christ gain the victory over death? 1. His atoning blood takes away sin, which is the sting of death. 2. He gives us his own Spirit, which makes us triumph over death. Rom. 8: 11. 3. He comes at last and wakes up his sleeping saints. 1 Thess. 4: 16. How should we feel toward Christ for giving us this glorious hope? Having this hope, how should we hold on to Christ and his word? "Steadfast." When others try to shake our faith and hope, how should we behave? "Unmovable." What is it to abound "in good works?" Do all we can, always. What is "the work of the Lord?" The work the Lord himself did. The work the Lord gives us to do? Spreading his gospel, saving souls, living aright.

Points in the Lesson for May 18th:

1. What were Paul's first labors in Ephesus? Acts 19: 1–7.
2. What miracles did Paul work in Ephesus?
3. What singular occurrence caused the workers of magic to repent and burn their books?
4. What were the silver shrines of Diana?
5. What do you know of the temple of Diana?
6. What do you know of the theatre of Ephesus?
7. What do you know of the Asiarchs? v. 31.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



SUGGESTIONS.—As the part of this wonderful chapter, which is the lesson for to-day, has to do with the nature of the resurrection body, let this be the theme for the blackboard lesson: The victory over death is complete when body and soul are redeemed (Rom. 8: 22, 23), and only then.

Body and Soul **R**edeemed, **R**eunited, Glorified, the **C**onquest is **C**omplete.

Bickersteth states, "that, upon careful examination, at least one verse in thirty of the New Testament points onward to the resurrection life." It is to be, to the believer, (1) Incorruptible (v. 42); (2) Glorious (v. 43); (3) Powerful (v. 43); (4) Spiritual (v. 44); (5) Like Christ's. vs. 45–50. Place in the margin of your Bible—

WHAT I { Was. v. 48.
Am. v. 48.
Will be. v. 49.
Ought to be. v. 58.

Those who have ability in drawing may place on the board an open grave, and on or over the headstone, "Thanks be to God;" at the foot, "Victory."

Directions for Coloring.—Top line, white shaded with red; "Incorruptible," yellow; "Immortal," light blue; "Body," brown shaded with orange.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

This lesson may be used as in part a review of the one taught March 16th. Recall the blackboard and object-lessons used then.

A flower is always a good emblem of the resurrection of the body. Show first a few seeds, then the flower which springs up from those seeds. Can any two things be more unlike? Think of these bodies—now so easily hurt, so capable of suffering—as the seed; think of them when God makes them immortal, as the flower. How beautiful they will be. Yes, but all bodies will be raised, and

all bodies will be made so that they will not die again; but will all be able to sing, "Death is swallowed up in victory?" Alas, no! for in some the sting is still there.

What is the sting of death? Here are two gravestones. Watch while I letter them. This one in the sin-color: "He loved sin." That is the story of this man's life. He did wrong, and wanted to do wrong, and was not very sorry for it, and did not try to keep from it. That was the way he lived, and that was the way he died; and when God raises his body, it will be found that death has not changed him; he does not love God nor want to please him.

Now watch while I letter this other stone: "He hated sin." Not that he did not sometimes do wrong, but, oh! how sorry he was for it. He told Jesus so; he begged him to forgive him, and every day he lived he tried harder not to grieve Jesus. When God raises his body it will be found that Satan has no more power over it. Since the man hated Satan, and wanted to get away from him, God has heard his cry and saved him. This is the victory over death.

The application is plain—the same which was made in a former lesson. There are two ways of dying, and *only* two. All must die, either in one way or the other. Now is the time to choose which.

Lesson VII. **THE UPROAR AT EPHESUS.** May 18th, 1884.

Acts 19: 23–41–20: 1, 2. Memorize vs. 38–40.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?"—Ps. 2: 1.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Acts 19: 23–20: 2..*The Uproar at Ephesus.*
T. Ps. 2: 1–12.....*"Why do the Heathen Rage?"*
W. Ps. 115: 1–18.....*Trust Only in the Lord.*
Th. Luke 12: 15–26....*Beware of Covetousness.*
F. Acts 16: 16–25.....*Hatred from Gains Lost.*
S. Acts 20: 3–16.....*From Corinth to Miletus.*
S. Acts 20: 17–38.....*Farewell to Ephesus.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Appeal of Demetrius. 2. The Excitement of the People. 3. The Quieting of the Uproar.

Time.—A. D. 57.

Place.—Ephesus.

Catechism.—Q. 76. *Which is the ninth commandment?* A. The ninth commandment is, *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.*

Q. 77. *What is required in the ninth commandment?* A. The ninth commandment requireth the maintaining and promoting of truth between man and man, and of our own and our neighbor's good name, especially in witness-bearing.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—We take up again the threads of Paul's history where we dropped them at the close of our lesson of April 13th. He was then at Ephesus, though purposing in spirit to go to Jerusalem and afterward to Rome. He remained a little longer, however, at Ephesus, and continued his work until the uproar occasioned by the success of his preaching made it necessary for him to take his departure. Of this uproar we are now to study.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

23 And the same time there arose no small stir about that way. [Acts 9: 2; 19: 9.]

24 For a certain *man* named De-me'tri-us, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Di-an'a, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen; [Acts 16: 16, 19.]

25 Whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth.

26 Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Eph'e-sus, but almost throughout all A'sia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands: [Ps. 115: 4–8; Isa. 44: 10–20.]

27 So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at naught; but also that the temple of the great goddess Di-an'a should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all A'sia and the world worshipeth.

28 And when they heard *these sayings,* they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great *is* Di-an'a of the E-phe'sians.

29 And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught Gai'us and A-ris-tar'chus, men of Ma-ce-do'ni-a, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre. [Rom. 16: 23; 1 Cor. 1: 14; Col. 4: 10.]

30 And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not.

31 And certain of the chief of A'sia, which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring *him*

that he would not adventure himself into the theatre.

32 Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together.

33 And they drew Al-ex-an'der out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Al-ex-an'der beckoned with the hand, and would have made his defence unto the people. [1 Tim 1: 20; 2 Tim. 4: 14.]

34 But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours, cried out, Great *is* Di-an'a of the E-phe'sians.

35 And when the town-clerk had appeased the people, he said, *Ye* men of Eph'e-sus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the E-phe'sians is a worshiper of the great goddess Di-an'a, and of the *image* which fell down from Ju'pi-ter?

36 Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly.

37 For ye have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess.

38 Wherefore if De-me'tri-us, and the craftsmen which are with him, have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies: let them implead one another.

39 But if ye inquire any thing concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly.

40 For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse.

41 And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.

Ch. 20: 1 And after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto *him* the disciples, and embraced *them,* and departed for to go into Ma-ce-do'ni-a. [1 Cor. 16: 5; 1 Tim. 1: 3.]

2 And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece.

REVISED VERSION.

23 And about that time there arose no small
24 stir concerning the Way. For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines of Diana, brought no little
25 business unto the craftsmen; whom he gathered together, with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by
26 this business we have our wealth. And ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made
27 with hands: and not only is there danger that this our trade come into disrepute; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana be made of no account, and that she should even be deposed from her magnificence, whom all Asia and the world worshipeth.
28 And when they heard this, they were filled with wrath, and cried out, saying, Great *is*
29 Diana of the Ephesians. And the city was filled with the confusion: and they rushed with one accord into the theatre, having seized Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia,
30 Paul's companions in travel. And when Paul was minded to enter in unto the peo-
31 ple, the disciples suffered him not. And certain also of the chief officers of Asia, being his friends, sent unto him, and besought him not to adventure himself into
32 the theatre. Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was in confusion; and the more part knew not
33 wherefore they were come together. And they brought Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander beckoned with the hand, and would have made a defence unto the people.
34 But when they perceived that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great *is* Diana of the
35 Ephesians. And when the townclerk had quieted the multitude, he saith, Ye men of Ephesus, what man is there who knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is temple-keeper of the great Diana, and of the *image* which fell down from Jupiter?
36 Seeing then that these things cannot be gainsaid, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing
37 rash. For ye have brought *hither* these men, which are neither robbers of temples nor
38 blasphemers of our goddess. If therefore Demetrius, and the craftsmen that are with him, have a matter against any man, the courts are open, and there are proconsuls:
39 let them accuse one another. But if ye seek any thing about other matters, it shall be
40 settled in the regular assembly. For indeed we are in danger to be accused concerning this day's riot, there being no cause *for it:* and as touching it we shall not be able to
41 give account of this concourse. And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.
1 And after the uproar was ceased, Paul having sent for the disciples and exhorted them, took leave of them, and departed for
2 to go into Macedonia. And when he had gone through those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece.

23 *The same time.* Revised Version, "About that time." *About that way.* See note on v. 9, Lesson of April 13th.

24 *Demetrius, a silversmith.* We have no other mention of this man. Evidently his business was quite extensive, giving employment to a large number of workmen. *Shrines for Diana.* The temple of Diana at Ephesus was one of the "Seven Wonders" of the world. It was built of white marble, and it was the fashion to say that the sun saw nothing more splendid in all his course. These "shrines" were models of this temple, containing a small image of Diana. Pilgrims to Ephesus bought them to bear away as memorials of their visit. They were also worn or carried as amulets. They were not only sold at Ephesus, but formed an article of trade in other countries; hence the import-

ance of the business of Demetrius. *No small gain to the craftsmen.* The *craftsmen* were the skilled workers in silver who were employed in making these "shrines." The great demand for these models made the business profitable.

25 *Whom he called.* Demetrius seems to have been at the head of the business. He called all those who were interested in the business. *The workmen.* The men who did the rougher parts in the manufacture, those who prepared the metal. The idea is, that all who were concerned in this business, from the smelters to the designers, engravers and finishers, were called together.

26 *Throughout all Asia.* Demetrius here unintentionally writes important history, and gives testimony to the great extent and success of the gospel. *This Paul.* Notice how contemptuously he speaks of the apostle, yet at the same time testifying to his zeal and abundant labors and influence. *Saying that they be no gods which are made with hands.* The inference is, that Demetrius believed they *were* gods. Compare Isa. 44: 9–18; Acts 17: 29.

27 *Not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought.* Compare Revised Version. It is not an unfair judgment that the chief concern of Demetrius was with this pecuniary side of the loss. *The temple of the great goddess Diana.* Tradition said that the image of Diana in this temple fell down from heaven. *Should be despised.* The success of the doctrine that Paul preached would destroy the worship of the idol. *Her magnificence should be destroyed.* See Revised Version. *Whom all Asia and the world worshipeth.* This shows the extent of the worship of Diana; pilgrims came there from all nations.

28 *They were full of wrath.* Demetrius was successful in his appeal. He had touched both the self-interest and the religious zeal of his hearers, and they were filled with wrath. *Great is Diana.* This was their response to Paul's teaching that the idol was no God.

29 *The whole city was filled with confusion.* The excitement that began in the meeting of the silver workers spread among the population. The people may not have cared particularly for the business of the craftsmen, but any danger to their goddess aroused them. The words indicate that in the excitement a tumultuous throng gathered to one place. *Having caught Gaius and Aristarchus.* Probably they could not find Paul, and in their wrath seized these two men, who were his companions. This Gaius is not the one mentioned in chap. 20: 4, who was of Derbe; nor is he the Gaius of Rom. 16: 23 and 1 Cor. 1: 14, who was of Corinth. Aristarchus was a Thessalonian who accompanied Paul to Rome (chaps. 20: 4; 27: 2), and shared his first imprisonment there. Col. 4: 10. *They rushed with one accord into the theatre.* This building was used for all great gatherings of citizens. The theatre at Ephesus would accommodate 25,000 to 30,000. Its ruins still remain.

30 *Paul would have entered.* When he learned of the arrest of his companions he desired to go to their rescue. He wanted to share their peril. This shows his courage and also his noble unselfishness. *The disciples suffered him not.* These disciples may have gotten him out of the way at the beginning of the excitement, and now they were determined to keep him from uselessly exposing himself to danger at the hands of the excited mob.

31 *Certain of the chief of Asia.* Revised Version, "Chief officers." Margin, Asiarchs. There were ten of these officers, belonging to various cities, whose duty it was to preside over the games and religious festivals. They were men of rank and prominence. *His friends.* This incidental statement shows that the apostle's influence was not confined to the humbler classes, but that some men of rank were not unfavorable to him and to Christianity. *That he would not adventure himself.* These men knew the nature of the excitement in progress, and the danger to which Paul would expose himself if he entered the theatre; hence they besought him not to go. Evidently they knew where he was, though he could not be found by the mob. This indicates that Paul's friends had him hidden for safety.

32 *Some therefore cried one thing.* That is, in the meeting in the theatre. v. 29. The crowd had rushed in, many not knowing the exact cause of the excitement.

33, 34 *They drew* [brought] *Alexander out.* Who this man was we do not know, although the way in which he is mentioned here would show that he was well known at Ephesus. Some identify him with Alexander the coppersmith, to whom Paul refers in 2 Tim. 4: 14 as his relentless enemy. If this is correct he probably belonged to the workmen of v. 25. Paul being a Jew, the Jews feared that they would be supposed to sympathize with the apostle, and put this man forward to let the mob know that this was not the fact. He came forward to make a defence, but when the mob saw by his face that he was a Jew they would not hear him. This shows the unpopularity of the Jews. *The space of two hours.* This was probably intended for worship of the idol. Compare 1 Kings 18: 26.

35 *The town-clerk.* This officer had charge of the state papers and drew up the public records. His position evidently was one of great influence, and when he came forward the people were quieted and gave him respectful attention. For *worshiper* the Revised Version has *temple-keeper.* The title is found on Ephesian coins. This was a high honor for the city, and he here warns the Ephesians that they may forfeit the distinction. *Which fell down from Jupiter.* This was the legend among the people, and the same was said of a number of other distinguished idols in the ancient times. Possibly some of them may have been meteoric stones.

36 *That these things cannot be spoken against.* He referred to what he had just said about the idol and the temple.

37 *Neither robbers of churches* [temples]. The apostle and his companions had not pillaged their temple nor blasphemed their goddess.

38, 39 *The law* [courts] *is open.* This is a condemnation of the course of Demetrius. He ought to have taken his case to the courts and not have appealed to the mob. *Deputies.* Proconsuls. The province of Asia was governed by a proconsul. *Implead.* Accuse, that is, bring an accusation and let it be fairly tried. *A lawful* [regular] *assembly.* This was a mob and not a regular assembly; its decisions would have no weight or authority.

40 *In danger to be called in question.* Revised Version, "Accused." That is, before Roman authorities. There had been no justifiable cause for the riot.

Chap. 20: 1, 2. *After the uproar was ceased.* Some little time elapsed between the riot and the departure of the apostle. It does not appear that he left Ephesus because of the uproar, as he had before determined to go away. Chap. 19: 21, 22. It was the spring of A. D. 57 that he went away from Ephesus. *Embraced them.* See Revised Version. *Gone over those parts.* Visiting the churches already established, confirming the believers. *Greece.* The province of Achaia. Corinth was in it. This verse covers the greater part of a year.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

There arose no small stir concerning the Way. There has always been a great deal of stir concerning "the Way" wherever it has been preached. Wicked men do not like it because it interferes with *their* ways. If it let them go on in their evil paths they would not care, but it does not. So wherever the gospel goes it makes a stir. It excites the bad elements against itself. Men are opposed to the gospel because the gospel is opposed to the things they love.

Demetrius . . . said, Sirs, ye know that by this business we have our wealth. Here we see the secret of the opposition. Paul's preaching was damaging their business. If he were allowed to go on, soon nobody would believe in the idol or care to worship it, and the result would be that no more little shrines would be sold. Anything that touches men's business is apt to be opposed by them. There are instances of this same spirit in our modern days. See how the rumsellers of all grades hate Christianity because it preaches temperance and tries to rescue men from the power of strong drink. It interferes thus with their business. Every young man pledged to live soberly, righteously and godly in this world, is a possible patron lost to the rumseller. Christianity declares open warfare against all evil, especially against every influence that debauches and destroys human lives and wrecks homes and destinies. Hence it is that all who make their living or their wealth by any traffic that ruins body or soul, cry out bitterly against the gospel. We must not expect such men to favor religion or welcome it.

This Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods which are made with hands. He had made no attack on the business of these men, but he had proclaimed the truth of the one God, and one only, and that idols were no gods. This is the way Christianity does wherever it goes. It does not merely start crusades against certain men or certain evils; it proclaims the great truths of the gospel, and lets these have their own legitimate effect. Of course, then, sin is smitten in the face wherever it lurks. All evil practices are revealed by the light that shines upon them. The particular suggestion here is, that the best way to do good is not to go about attacking in detail every form of evil, but to disseminate the great truths of the Bible, and they will strike all evil at its root.

There is danger . . . that the temple of the great goddess Diana be made of no account. This temple was a splendid ornament; it was the pride and boast of the city. The argument of Demetrius was, that if Christianity were allowed to spread this temple would lose its splendor, and the city would be the sufferer. That is, he looked at the matter in a purely worldly way. Christianity would injure the fame and distinction of the city. He thought nothing about the people's souls. The gospel

came to Ephesus to save the lost. It came to tell men the way of salvation. It came to turn them away from idols and from sins, and to lift them up to purity and holiness and heaven. Yet the damage to business and the dimming of the fame of an idol were greater interests in the eyes of this silversmith than all the blessings to the people's lives which the gospel brought. This false estimate of values is still made. There are a great many people who can see only worldly interests, whether for themselves or others. They want to "get on in the world," thinking only of getting money or power or fame. Ofttimes such getting on means the loss of the soul. So, many people think of the prosperity of their city or neighborhood only in a commercial sense, and do not ask what effects it is having on the lives of the children or the young, or on the homes of the people. The temple of Diana brought thousands of pilgrims to Ephesus, and made a fine trade for dealers in images and shrines, but meanwhile it debauched the morals of the city and degraded the people by its impure worship. Circuses and race-courses and low places of amusement permitted in a town may prove profitable to the hotels and railroads and merchants, but what about the moral effect on the people? And can any temporal gains compensate for the ruin of fair lives and the destruction of souls?

Paul was minded to enter in unto the people. Here we have a glimpse of Paul's heroic soul. His companions had been seized by the mob and dragged into the theatre, while he was outside, kept in a secure place by his friends. But he was determined to join them there to share their danger and speak in their defence. It took sublime courage thus to desire to face the mad crowd, when he knew that they might tear him to pieces the moment he faced them. But the spirit of Paul was equal to it, and only the restraint of his friends kept him from rushing in before the furious and exasperated mob. The lesson to be learned is not only courage to face danger, but also that when others are brought into trouble on our account we should desire either to rescue them or to share the trouble with them.

Certain also of the chief officers of Asia, being his friends, sent unto him. It seems rather strange that any of these distinguished men, so high in rank, should care enough for this poor Christian preacher in this great heathen city, to make any effort to save him. It seems still stranger to read that they were his *friends*. Yet it only shows that God can raise up friends for his people wherever they may be. He had brought about these friendships before this trouble arose, so that his servant might be helped in the hour of need. In like manner, Joseph and Nicodemus, two rich and influential men, were provided in advance as friends of Jesus, though only secretly, so that when he had died on the cross his body might be by them rescued from dishonor, and might receive honorable and loving burial. We need never fear, if we are God's true and faithful children, that he will always raise up friends for us in our hours of need, wherever we may be.

Ye ought . . . to do nothing rash. That was good counsel that day, and this town-clerk showed much wisdom by the way he handled this wild mob. But the counsel is one that we may all with profit take to ourselves and put down among our life-maxims. "*Do nothing rash.*" Rash people are for ever getting themselves into trouble. They are continually doing things to-day that to-morrow they regret and wish they had not done. A great many of us have tongues that are always speaking rash words. We make rash promises that we fail to keep. We speak rashly when we are angry and lose friends by our hasty sayings. We utter all manner of imprudent things because of our rash tongues. Then, many of us are constantly *doing* rash things that cause us any amount of trouble. We make rash bargains, and enter into rash speculations and spend money rashly. A very large per cent. of the blunders many of us make are due to rashness, and would be prevented by stopping always to think before we speak or act. It would be well for all of us to take counsel very frequently of this town clerk.

LESSON POINTS.

1. The gospel always makes a stir wherever it is faithfully preached. v. 23.
2. When Christianity strikes any profitable sins it soon makes opposition. v. 24.
3. The gospel always hurt every sinful business. v. 26.
4. Many people think more of outward prosperity than of moral and spiritual good. v. 27.
5. True courage never thinks of personal danger when duty is to be done or a testimony borne for Christ. v. 30.
6. It is right to restrain our friends from useless risk or sacrifice. vs. 30, 31.
7. God will always raise up friends for his people in every time of need. v. 31.
8. We see the influence of calm and courteous speech in quieting wild passions. vs. 35–41.
9. True preachers do not indulge in offensive denunciations of religious beliefs. v. 37.
10. A good counsel for us all—*Do nothing rash.* v. 36.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

APPROACH.

Nothing will be a more appropriate introduction to this lesson than a skilful review of Lesson II., April 13th, "Paul at Ephesus." Therefore call for a brief description of Ephesus. Where was it situated? What had been its history? For what was it renowned? Who had prepared the way for Paul in Ephesus? Acts 18: 18, 26. Who else? Acts 18: 24–26; 19: 1. Give an account of Paul's first labors in Ephesus? See Acts 20: 18–21, 27, 31, 34. What miracles did Paul work in Ephesus? 19: 11, 12. What effect had Paul's miracles and preaching upon the magicians of Ephesus? 19: 17–20.

ANALYZE

THE RIOT { *Excited,* *Incited,* *Quieted.*

APPLY.

Christian work will hurt a bad trade.

What did Demetrius and his fellow-workmen manufacture? Describe their shrines. How had Paul's work hurt this trade? What bad trades are now hurt by Christian work? Liquor selling, bad books, lotteries, etc.

Satan can always find his man.

Who comes to the front in Ephesus? What was his trade? Whom does Satan now inspire to oppose Christ's gospel? The infidel lecturer, the reckless companion who tries to laugh religion down, the circulator of infidel books, the defender of rum selling and evil reading.

Nothing excites a riot like "Our craft is in danger."

What was the complaint of Demetrius? On what accounts is this important testimony to the power of the gospel? On what accounts is this whole riot a confession of the weakness of heathenism and the power of the gospel? "Ye see," "ye hear," it is undeniable, even by avowed enemies, "this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia." On what accounts are all infidel clubs, unions of liquor dealers, etc., testimony to the power of Christianity? "Our business is in danger."

Nothing incites a riot like a show of patriotism and religion.

What was the cry of these rioters? Why? They aroused the pride of Ephesians and religious fanaticism for the idol and temple. What cry do the enemies of temperance raise? Personal liberty, "the Bible favors wine," etc. Whom did they mob? To what place did they hurry them? Describe this theatre. For what reasons ought Christians to shun the theatre? The "evil communications" there heard, the immoral men and women who there are applauded, the worldly influence which there rules, the duty of shunning the world's snares.

"Paul was the bravest of the brave."

Why should Paul face this angry mob? What did his willingness so to do prove? Who prevailed upon him to give it up? Who were the Asiarchs? Mention other circumstances in which Paul displayed heroism. Going back to Lystra after being stoned. At the mob in Jerusalem. Acts 21: 37–40. On board the shipwrecked vessel. How can we now show our heroic courage for Christ? By not being laughed out of our Saviour, by standing up for Jesus in the home, society, school.

It takes a cool and wise man to quell a mob.

Who quieted this Ephesian mob? What was this "town-clerk?" What four arguments did he use to check the uproar? 1. There is no real reason for this riot. Diana is in no danger. 2. Paul and his companions had not blasphemed even the heathen gods. 3. The courts were open and would redress all wrongs. 4. The Romans would call them to account for the tumult.

Paul retreats but ceases not to work.

Why did Paul use such deliberation in departing? That he might not appear to go as a fugitive. That he might encourage the disciples who remained. What was the Saviour's command to his apostles when they should be persecuted? Matt. 10: 23. How does Paul refer to this experience at Ephesus in 1 Cor. 15: 32?

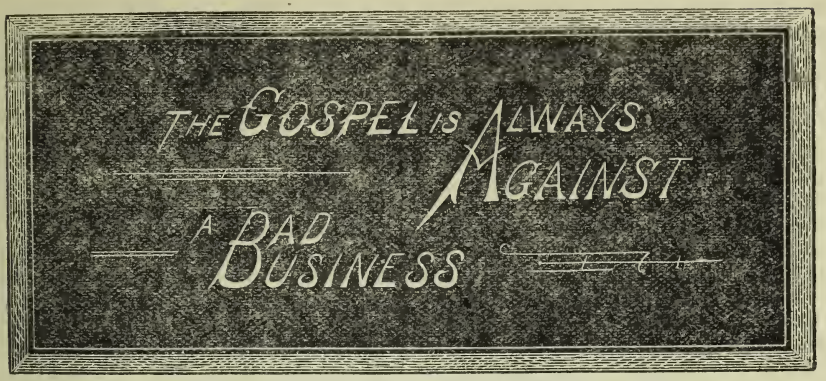
Points to be assigned for May 25th:

1. What proofs have we that many Christians in Jerusalem were poor?
2. What good effect would contributions of Gentiles for Jewish Christians have?
3. How much of our money ought we to give to God's cause?
4. What is the true spirit of Christian giving?
5. What blessings shall come upon a cheerful giver?
6. What is the great motive of Christian giving?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

SUGGESTIONS.—A good opportunity is here presented to instruct young men to avoid any business that cannot thrive where the gospel succeeds. The object of the blackboard diagram is to impress this lesson. Demetrius was opposed to the gospel of Jesus, because the gospel of Jesus was opposed to his business.

As in the days of the apostles, so now, self-



interest often leads men to oppose the truth. A missionary writes: "One man was very indignant on hearing the sin and folly of idol-worship exposed; the native brother who was speaking, coolly replied, 'I suppose you are a maker of images?' 'Yes!' exclaimed a voice in the crowd, 'he makes and sells them for four annas apiece.' 'I thought so,' said the native preacher, 'he is afraid lest any should be persuaded not to buy his images, and that is the reason he is angry with us.' This remark excited such a general laugh at the idol-maker, that for shame he retired from the court and gave us no more trouble." A good lesson may be made from the town-clerk's speech. Dr. Cotton Mather says: "I have heard one say that there was a gentleman mentioned in the nineteenth chapter of the Acts to whom he was more indebted than to any man in the world. This was he whom our translation calls the town-clerk of Ephesus; whose counsel it was

'TO DO NOTHING RASHLY.'

Upon any proposal of consequence, it was a usual speech with him, 'We will first advise with the town-clerk of Ephesus.'"

Directions for Coloring.—"The Gospel," white shaded with light blue; "Always against," brown shaded with orange; "A bad business," brown shaded with red.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The lesson taught to those who have not previously studied it.—What do you remember about the city of Ephesus? (Recall Paul's work there.) It is about two years since Paul began to preach to them about Jesus, and so many have listened to him and given up their idol worship that some of the people become frightened. Look, this is a picture of an idol named Diana. This square on the board stands for the great marble temple which was built for her. (Give a brief description of the magnificence of the temple.)

This mark in the sin-color stands for a man named Demetrius. These dots in the same color are for men who were in the same business as he. See, they are gathered around him. He has called a meeting to talk over their fears. What do you think their business was? They made little wooden or silver models of Diana, which people carried about with them for charms or kept in their houses.

Listen—let us see what Demetrius says: "Men, you know that we get our money by making these models of Diana. Now, don't you know that this man Paul, who has come here, is telling people that there are no gods made with hands, and turning them away from Diana, and our business is in danger, and our great beautiful temple is in danger. If this thing goes on the temple will be torn down, and nobody will worship Diana." Now the men are angry. Listen! What do they say? Read the sentence: "Great is Diana of the Ephesians."

They go through the city talking in loud, angry tones, urging the people to do something, until finally there is a great uproar. Look! Inside of this arch is the great space which they called a theater, where they used to gather for public meetings. It would hold many thousand people. Look at the many dots I am making. The crowds are gathering. Paul wanted to go to this meeting, but his friends coaxed him not to. They thought he would be killed, and that he would make the people still more angry by going. This red mark is for a Jew named Alexander. He tried to make a speech, but they would not listen to him. They kept crying out just one sentence. What do you think it was? Try to call from class the sentence which you read them from the Bible.

Look, here comes a man high in power. He is called the town-clerk. Listen to him; he has hushed the people, and is making a speech. "Men of Ephesus," he says, "everybody knows that we worship Diana. Nobody has hindered us. You ought to be quiet, and do nothing rashly. Paul and his helpers have not spoken against Diana. They have not robbed our temple. If Demetrius and his friends have any complaint to make, why let them go to law instead of getting up an uproar like this." And so he hushed them, and dismissed them. How does our golden text describe this scene?

Application.—The above is not the manner in which I shall teach the lesson to my class, for the reason that they will be prepared with the facts and able to give them to me; but I shall call for them, and illustrate on the board in the simple manner mentioned. As to the application, I propose to teach through this a temperance lesson. The uproar at Ephesus will do very well to illustrate a brewers' convention. It is by that craft they have their money, and therein lies the trouble to-day, as it did at Ephesus. They are as ready to say false things about the temperance workers as Demetrius was to speak against Paul. And the analogy holds good still further. They, too, are "imagining a vain thing." Diana has fallen. It is not even certain where the magnificent marble temple stood. Rum will fall. God was on the side of the missionaries, and God is on the side of the temperance reform, and therefore the issue is certain. The great practical question for my scholars is, On which side are they to be found? Do they mean to fight with God or against him? Do they want to be on the victor's side? The poor little silver image did not do a quarter of the harm that a glass of beer is doing to-day. Let the children see clearly that it is no new thing to have two sides to a question. There were always bad men fighting for the sake of money, against the truth.

Do you think that the children in primary classes are too young to have such issues brought before them? Let me tell you that I know of a little boy in a Christian community, surrounded by churches, who two months ago was too much under the influence of intoxicating liquor to be present in his class!

Lesson VIII. **LIBERAL GIVING.** May 25th, 1884.

2 Cor. 9: 1-15. Memorize vs. 6-8.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"God loveth a cheerful giver."—2 Cor. 9: 7.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 2 Cor. 8: 1-24...*Riches of Liberality.*
T. 2 Cor. 9: 1-15...*Liberal Giving.*
W. Ex. 35: 21-36: 7. *Liberal Gifts for the Tabernacle.*
Th. 1 Chron. 29: 1-19. *Liberal Gifts for the Temple.*
F. Ps. 112: 1-10....*Lending to the Lord.*
S. Prov. 11: 23-31 .*Liberal Giving Rewarded.*
S. Isa. 32: 1-8.....*Liberal Things Devised.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. A Liberal Church. 2. Principles of Christian Giving. 3. The Blessedness of Liberality.

Time.—A. D. 57 (Autumn). **Place.**—Written from a city of Macedonia, probably Philippi.

Catechism.—Q. 78. *What is forbidden in the ninth commandment?* A. The ninth commandment forbiddeth whatsoever is prejudicial to truth, or injurious to our own or our neighbor's good name.

Q. 79. *Which is the tenth commandment?* A. The tenth commandment is, *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's.*

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—Paul wrote his first Epistle to the Corinthians from Ephesus in the spring of A. D. 57, during the third year of his residence in that city. From Ephesus he went to Macedonia. There he was rejoined by Titus, who informed him of the effect of his letter. The apostle thereupon wrote this second Epistle from one of the cities of Macedonia, probably from Philippi, and sent it by Titus and two others. 2 Cor. 8: 18-24. In this lesson the apostle commends the Corinthian church for its liberal spirit, and urges it to carry out its purpose with regard to the collection for the Christians in Judea, that it might be in readiness for him when he came to Corinth on his way to Jerusalem.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

1 For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you: [Rom. 15: 26; Gal. 2: 10.]

2 For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Ma-ce-do'ni-a, that A-cha'ia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many.

3 Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready: [ch. 8: 6, 17, 18, 22.]

4 Lest haply if they of Ma-ce-do'ni-a come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting.

5 Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as *a matter of* bounty, and not as *of* covetousness. [Gen. 33: 11; 1 Sam. 25: 27; 2 Kings 5: 15.]

6 But this *I say*, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly: and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. [Prov. 11: 24; 19: 17; 22: 9; Gal. 6: 7, 9.]

7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, *so let him give;* not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. [Deut. 15: 7; Ex. 25: 2; 35: 5.]

8 And God *is* able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all *things*, may abound to every good work: [Prov. 11: 24, 25; Phil. 4: 19.]

9 (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever. [Ps. 112: 9.]

10 Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for *your* food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;) [Hos. 10: 12.]

11 Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God. [ch. 1: 11; 4: 15.]

12 For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God; [ch. 8: 14.]

13 Whiles by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for *your* liberal distribution unto them, and unto all *men;* [Matt. 5: 16; Heb. 13: 16.]

14 And by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you. [ch. 8: 1.]

15 Thanks *be* unto God for his unspeakable gift.

REVISED VERSION.

1 For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to
2 you: for I know your readiness, of which I glory on your behalf to them of Macedonia, that Achaia hath been prepared for a year past; and your zeal hath stirred up very
3 many of them. But I have sent the brethren, that our glorying on your behalf may not be made void in this respect; that, even as I
4 said, ye may be prepared: lest by any means, if there come with me any of Macedonia, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be put to shame in
5 this confidence. I thought it necessary therefore to intreat the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your aforepromised bounty, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not of extortion.
6 But this *I say*, He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth
7 bountifully shall reap also bountifully. *Let* each man *do* according as he hath purposed in his heart; not grudgingly, or of necessity:
8 for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound unto you; that ye, having always all sufficiency in everything, may abound unto every good
9 work: as it is written,

He hath scattered abroad, he hath given to the poor;
His righteousness abideth for ever.

10 And he that supplieth seed to the sower and bread for food, shall supply and multiply your seed for sowing, and increase the fruits
11 of your righteousness: ye being enriched in everything unto all liberality, which worketh
12 through us thanksgiving to God. For the ministration of this service not only filleth up the measure of the wants of the saints, but aboundeth also through many thanks-
13 givings unto God; seeing that through the proving *of you* by this ministration they glorify God for the obedience of your confession unto the gospel of Christ, and for the liberality of *your* contribution unto them
14 and unto all; while they themselves also, with supplication on your behalf, long after you by reason of the exceeding grace of God
15 in you. Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift.

1 *Touching the ministering.* The apostle had been urging this duty in the previous chapter, and here continues the subject. The collection here referred to was for the relief of the Christians in Jerusalem, who seem to have been very poor, and for whom more than once special contributions were raised in the other churches. See Acts 11: 28; Gal. 2: 10. *Superfluous.* The expression is one of the illustrations of Paul's courtesy and tact, as the following verse shows.

2 *I know the forwardness.* Revised Version, "Readiness." Paul always liked to speak words of commendation. *For which I boast of you.* He had held them up to the other churches as a pattern, extolling their liberality. *Achaia.* The province of which Corinth was the capital. *Ready a year ago.* This was the boast that he had made, that a year before they were prepared to send the money. *Your zeal hath provoked.* The word has its good sense here. Their example had incited or stimulated many others to give.

3 *Yet have I sent the brethren.* Titus, Luke and Erastus. See 8: 6, 16, 22. *Lest our boasting of you should be in vain.* Lest they might fail after all to give. This would bring reproach upon the apostle, who had publicly commended them and upon themselves who had promised. *That . . . ye may be ready.* The object in

sending the messengers was to make sure that the contributions pledged would be given.

4 *They of Macedonia.* Some of the Christians in Macedonia would accompany him to Corinth as an escort of honor. If the Corinthians were then unprepared he would be ashamed in the presence of these other Christians, because of his former confidence; and *they* would be ashamed, too, to let their visitors see them fall short of what the apostle had said of them.

5 *Therefore.* Lest they might fail. *The brethren.* Titus and his companions. They were to go in advance of the apostle himself to give the Corinthians time to get their promised contribution ready. *Of bounty, and not as of covetousness,* [extortion]. This touches the motive of the giving. The contribution should be given freely, generously, lovingly, and not unwillingly extorted by the apostle's importunity.

6 *But this I say.* It is answering the thought of his last sentence. There is blessing in giving. It is not a sacrifice, but a sowing which will yield a harvest. See Gal. 6: 7, 8. *He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly.* We shall reap in proportion to the sowing. *Bountifully.* Literally, "He that soweth *blessings* shall reap also *blessings.*" Not merely the quantity of the gifts, but the spirit in which they are bestowed determines the harvest.

7 *As he purposeth in his heart.* True giving must spring from deliberate principle and heart-motive, not from mere caprice or emotion. *Not grudgingly.* With pain at parting with the money. See Deut. 15: 10. *Of necessity.* Compelled by urgent persuasion or under compulsion of custom or other pressure. *God loveth a cheerful giver.* See Prov. 22: 8. Only voluntary service of any kind is acceptable with God. *Cheerful* implies also gladness, delight, as well as willingness.

8 *God is able to make all grace abound.* This is another motive for liberality. "Grace" has here a broad sense, including temporal good things. The thought of the verse is, that we need not be afraid of impoverishing ourselves by liberality to God's cause and God's people, for he is able to supply us abundantly with all that we need. A promise is also implied that those who give cheerfully God *will* bless. *Always having all sufficiency.* Luxuries are not promised, but always enough. *May abound.* God promises a *sufficiency*, and wants us to abound in unselfish liberality to others.

9 *As it is written.* Ps. 112: 9. The good man scatters blessings among the poor, but is not impoverished by giving. *His righteousness.* As manifested in his deeds of beneficence.

10 *He that ministereth* [supplieth] *seed to the sower.* That is, God. See Revised Version. This is not a benediction, but a promise or assurance, to encourage them to give. The same God who provides in the natural world both food and seed to the sower will do the same in the spiritual economy, care for those who give, and also bring back to them the fruits of their charity.

11 *Being enriched in everything.* Temporally and spiritually, as the result of God's blessing on their liberality. *To all bountifulness.* Those whom God enriches should repeat his bountifulness or liberality to others. *Which causeth* [worketh] *through us thanksgiving.* He refers to the thanksgiving of the recipients when they should receive the gifts at the apostle's hand. Thus the liberality of the Corinthians would result in praise and thanks to God.

12 *The administration* [ministration] *of this service.* The distribution among the poor of the collection taken at Corinth would not only meet the pressing temporal wants of the receivers, but would also do them good spiritually by opening their hearts toward God in thanksgiving.

13 *Whiles by the experiment.* See Revised Version, which makes the sense much clearer. *Experiment.* The proving. The thought is, that their sending of the promised contribution would prove to those who received it that the givers were, as they professed, obedient to the gospel of Christ. Some Jewish Christians at Jerusalem doubted that the Gentile disciples truly practiced the gospel law of love. This would prove to them that they did, and they would rejoice and praise God for it. *And for your liberal distribution* [the liberality of your contribution]. This would also be a reason for thanksgiving.

14 *By their prayer.* See Revised Version, in which the meaning is more clearly brought out. The contribution when received at Jerusalem would not only produce thanksgiving to God, but also prayer for the givers. These prayers God would hear and answer, so that blessings would come down upon them in return for their gifts. *Long after you.* Yearn to see you and know you personally. *For the exceeding grace of God in you.* As shown in your gifts.

15 *Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.* What is the unspeakable gift to which the apostle refers? Most writers agree that it is God's gift of his Son. This gift is unspeakable in that no words can express its greatness, its preciousness, its value, to those who receive it. Surely we should join in this thanksgiving.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

As touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you. It ought always to be superfluous for any one to remind a Christian of his duty to minister to other Christians in need. There should always be love enough in our hearts to prompt to this duty without any reminder more than a knowledge of the needs. If we hear that another Christian is suffering our sympathy should instantly go out toward him, and wherever there is true sympathy there is also a desire to help if there is anything that we can do. Christians are all one family, children of the one Father, and when one suffers all should feel the pain and desire to give relief. In nature, when one branch of a tree is bruised or injured all the other branches send part of their vitality to help to heal the wound. So it should be among the branches on the great Vine. Another motive is, that every suffering Christian represents Christ himself, for he said that the kindness we show to one of the least of his brethren we show to him. Then the other side of this truth is, that when we neglect to show needed kindness we are neglecting Christ.

Your zeal hath stirred up very many. Good example is contagious. Liberality in one person incites liberality in others. When we hear of good deeds done by another, we feel stimulated to do good deeds, too. This is one of the indirect results of benevolence. One church doing well in its missionary collections stirs up other churches to give largely. One liberal class makes all the other classes desirous to be liberal.

Make up beforehand your aforepromised bounty, that the same might be ready. A good many people promise under earnest appeal to give, and then when the pressure is removed fail to keep their promise. That seems to have been Paul's fear in this case. What we engage to do we should always fulfill. Then we should give promptly. He gives twice who gives promptly. The time to do a kindness is when it is needed. If you hear that some one is suffering for food, the time to send relief is not to-morrow, but at once. The time to call to see the sick person is while he is sick, and not when he is going about again, or when, perhaps, he is dead. It is a fine habit in life to learn to do all our kindnesses promptly.

As a matter of bounty, and not of extortion. The word "bounty" means blessing. You are to do good because you really desire to help the person in need, and not because some one is urging you, and you feel you *must* give although you do not want to, and do not have the least pure desire to relieve the distress. That is, you should give out of a heart of love. There should go with your gifts a part of yourself, "For the gift without the giver is bare."

He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. This is very simple as applied to sowing natural seed. If a man looks covetously at his pile of wheat and says, "I cannot bear to waste this golden grain by sowing it in the ground," and then sows but a little of it, hoarding the remainder, he will have but a little harvest when the season comes, while the grain he hoarded will perhaps be worm-eaten and destroyed. But if he scatters the precious grains broad-cast over his field he will seem to be robbing his garner, but in the season he will have a plentiful return. Now it is precisely the same in the matter of giving. Gifts and good deeds are seeds sown which will yield a harvest just as surely as will the grains of wheat one may sow in his field. They will yield many different harvests. The blessing they carry to those who receive them is one harvest. Then the blessing that the mere act of giving returns to the giver is another, for it was Jesus who said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Then there will be a harvest gathered in the other world when Jesus shall reward even the giving of a cup of water. It is true also that the harvest shall be small or large, just as the seed has been stingily or liberally scattered. He that keeps and hoards loses, while he that scatters and dispenses holds. An old epitaph reads, "What I gave I have; what I kept I lost."

Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart. We are not merely to give mechanically to everything that comes before us. There are some who always contribute a little to every cause that appeals to them, never thinking anything about the merits of the case, merely putting their hands in their pocket and taking out a piece of money and laying it on the plate. There is nothing to commend in such giving. We should think earnestly about each case that appeals to us and study it as well as we can, to be sure that it is our duty to help. We cannot contribute to all causes; we must make careful selections of those to which we give. Besides, there is no real charity in the relief we bestow unless there is love in our gifts. The psalm does not say, "Blessed is he that *giveth* to the poor," but "Blessed is he that CONSIDERETH the poor." So all our charities should begin in our heart. They should be

thought about; attention should be given to them; they should be deliberate resolves, inspired by love and true principle; and as far as possible, we should *consider* each case so as to give to it heart as well as gift.

Not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver. This strikes all whom it grieves to give, who merely give for decency's sake, or because they cannot get clear of giving, who whine and complain about it afterward. Such giving does not please God. He wants us to love to give, and to give lovingly, not with whining and murmuring, but with gladness. He wants us to do all our good work cheerfully; not only willingly, but with sunny face and joyful voice. There is a ministry in cheerfulness itself. People who go into sick rooms and among the troubled and the poor, with long faces and sad tones, may do good with their gifts or words, but they fail to carry the highest measure of blessing possible to those whom they visit. God loves cheerful givers, and he loves cheerfulness in all kinds of doing good. I never believed the old saying, that Christ never smiled. I believe he was the most cheerful, sunny-hearted, sunny-faced man that ever lived in this world.

God is able to make all grace abound unto you; that ye . . . may abound unto every good work. We need not fear but that God will take care of us if we use our gifts to bless others. We need to trust him more. The barley loaves did not give out on the mountain side when Jesus was feeding the multitude. The disciples had more when all had been fed than before they began to distribute. The lesson in this verse seems to be that those shall never lack who abound in good work. Of course "all sufficiency" may not mean a palace on Fifth Avenue and millions of income; but it does mean *enough*, and that is all we can get even if we have millions. There is another thought here, too—that when God makes all goodness abound to us it is because he wants *us* to abound in every good work. He gives us his good gifts that we may pass them on.

The ministration of this service . . . aboundeth through many thanksgivings to God. So it is a good thing to cause thanksgiving to God. If you send relief to one in distress, and the relief makes him sing praise to God, that is a good service. It is good for the person, for it opens his heart toward God, and it is always a blessing to any sufferer when he can be gotten to sing and thank the Lord. Besides, thanksgiving is a pleasing offering to God, rises before him as sweet incense. So the relief of temporal wants is not the only good we do a fellow-Christian when we minister to his necessities; we also start a song in his heart which sings up to heaven.

They . . . with supplication on your behalf, long after you. That is, another of the rewards of ministering to the saints is their prayers to God for you. They receive blessings at your hand, and they lift up their hearts in supplication for you. Who can tell what rewards may thus come down upon you? The prayers of the poor or the sorrowing whom you have helped or comforted are worth more than any of earth's prizes.

Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift. If our hearts ever falter in giving to others, we need but to look back and remember what God did for us when we were poor, very poor. He spared nothing; he gave the best gift in heaven—his only-begotten Son. We should never fail of a motive, nor should we ever tire of giving, nor should we ever turn away from any appeal of a fellow-Christian for relief, for help, for comfort, while we have before us this highest of all examples, and while we owe every hope of our souls to this "unspeakable gift." The memory of this great gift should keep heart and hand ever open, for if we would be like God we must give.

LESSON POINTS.

1. There are ever needy saints to whom we should minister; "the poor ye have always." v. 1.

2. One generous act inspires many more. v. 2.

3. We should carry out our generous promises, and not let them fail, to shame us and others. v. 4.

4. We should give systematically and give promptly. v. 5.

5. We should give through love and desire to bless and do good, and not have our gifts wrung from us. v. 5.

6. Those who would reap large rewards must give largely. v. 6.

7. We should consider the objects to which we give so as to give most wisely, and to give ourselves with our gifts. v. 7.

8. We should not be afraid to trust God in giving. His gifts to us abound that we may abound toward others, and he will provide. vs. 8–10.

9. One of the blessings of giving is that it causes the recipients to give thanks to God. v. 12.

10. One of the return blessings of giving is that it secures for us the prayers of those we help. v. 14.

11. The great motive, example and inspiration for all giving is God's unspeakable gift to us. v. 15.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

APPROACH.

A practical introduction will be a conversation on *objects to which we ought to give.* Ask, What are some things for which we ought to give money? To support the gospel in our own neighborhood; to care for the poor in our own church and community; to send the Sabbath-school missionary to the needy children of this land. (What is the missionary work of the Board of Publication?) To send the gospel to all the perishing in this land. (What is the Board of Home Missions for? What is the Board of Church Erection for? What is the Board of Missions to Freedmen for?) To what else ought we to give? To send the gospel to heathen lands. (What is the Board of Foreign Missions for? What is the Woman's Board of Foreign Missions? What is the work of Mission Bands?) To what else are we to give? To educate persons to preach the gospel in this and other lands. (What is the Board of Education for?) To relieve the wants of old and wornout ministers? (What is the Board of Ministerial Relief for?) How much money did it take last year to carry on all these objects? $9,661,493. Who contributes this money? Show the scholars that every man, woman and child must do a part. This brings you to the lesson. In it Paul is stirring up the Corinthians to give to the relief of the poor saints at Jerusalem, and thus stirs up us to

LIBERAL GIVING { *Its Call.* vs. 1–5.
Its Manner. vs. 6, 7.
Its Rewards. vs. 8–15.

I. *How does Paul present the call for giving?* vs. 1–5.

Most courteously, "It is superfluous for me to write to you." How does he praise the Corinthians while calling upon them to give? "I know the forwardness of your mind," etc. How does he recognize the good of their example? "Your zeal hath provoked many." How had Paul boasted of the Corinthians?

II. *What is the true manner of liberal giving?*

1. *Bountifully.* Why should we give bountifully? What is promised to such? Why does Paul call giving "sowing?" Illustration: A rich Christian who always had family prayers, but was stingy, prayed for a poor family nearby. This he did morning after morning. At last his little boy said: "Father, if I had all your flour and potatoes and apples I would answer your prayers." Neighbors once held a prayer-meeting to pray for a poor man and his family in their deep poverty. One man sent a load of provisions, saying: "Here is my prayer out in the wagon."

2. *Deliberately.* "As he purposeth in his heart." Why should we use our judgment and good sense in giving?

3. *Cheerfully.* Why does God love a *cheerful* giver? He is like himself. "The quality of mercy is not strained. It droppeth like the gentle rain from heaven upon the earth beneath. It blesseth him that gives and him that takes." This applies to all our home life, social life, public life. God wants no stingy, hasty, grudging workers.

III. *What rewards shall liberal givers receive?*

1. *Earthly blessings.* What is the meaning of "make all *grace* abound toward you?" Grace here means gift, and it means God is able to give you money and means. What is the meaning of "having all sufficiency in all things?" You need not fear to teach plainly, that if your scholars will give to God's cause from a true motive *to do good and glorify him,* he will bless them with temporal good. This is the law. Of course there will or may be exceptions. See Prov. 11: 24, 25; 28: 27; Phil. 4: 19.

2. *Spiritual blessings.* "That ye may abound in every good work." In what ways does liberal giving benefit our inner Christian life? It saves us from the deceitfulness of covetousness, which is idolatry. It breaks up selfishness. It makes us like Christ? 2 Cor. 8: 9. See also Mal. 3: 10; also vs. 9–11 of the lesson.

3. *It makes us instruments of glorifying God.* vs. 12, 13. How does liberal giving glorify God? It proves that Christians are real and sincere servants and followers of Jesus Christ, and this makes men believe in the Saviour. What we need is, not more *lectures* on the "Evidences of Christianity," but more *living* of Christianity.

4. *Those you help by your giving will pray for you.* What is the value of the prayer of the afflicted for those who help them? Ps. 102: 17. How did Job in his great suffering refer to the prayer of those he had aided? Job 29: 13. "The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I made the widow's heart to sing for joy."

Points to be assigned for June 1:

1. What do you know of the Galatians?
2. Tell all that is known of the founding of the churches in Galatia. v. 13.
3. What is the bondage of the law?
4. On what accounts was the time of Christ's coming "the fulness of the time?"
5. What are the blessings of being a son of God?
6. What is Christian liberty?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

SUGGESTIONS.—Let the outline, as on the board, be the basis of a Bible reading in connection with the lesson text, thus having the school take an active part in the superintendent's closing exercises. Notify classes or individual scholars beforehand to have ready for reading, when called upon, the texts selected.

1. The reasons for liberal giving. (*a*) The need of the poor. Deut. 15 : 11 ; Rom. 15 : 26. (*b*) The command of the Lord. Acts 20 : 35 ; Luke 14 : 12–14.

2. The result. Prov. 28 : 7 ; Heb. 13 : 16.

3. The reward of liberal giving. Prov. 14 : 21 ; Ps. 41 : 1–3 ; Matt. 25 : 34, 40.

All these, of course, are to be used in connection with the lesson, and not apart from it.

See lesson of October 2d, 1881, on "Free Giving," in WESTMINSTER TEACHER, for another diagram and Bible reading, which may be preferable.

Directions for Coloring.—"Liberal Giving," bold, green shaded with yellow ; "Reasons," "Result," "Reward," white, orange and blue, respectively, shaded with red.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The fact that we have for a lesson more of Paul's letter to the Corinthians should be called from class. I am endeavoring to teach scholars to give book and chapter. To help the little children in remembering I often make an outline of an open Bible on the board, and ask them to tell me what book to write and on what page, *i. e.*, whether in the Old or the New Testament.

The facts about Paul's letter, viz., his commendation to the Christians in Corinth, his faith in them, and joy concerning them, may be called from your children if you use the *Westminster Primary Leaf*, and are careful to teach your scholars to study it.

One Method of Teaching the Lesson.—Divide it into three topics. Print on the board the words : "WHY," "WHAT," "HOW."

1. Why should we give?
2. What should we give?
3. How should we give?

The first answer to the first question is, Because God has told us to. This is reason enough for one who wants to obey him. He has been pleased to give us other reasons. One is found in the golden text, which call for at this point. It is pleasant to do what will make people love us. Other answers may be drawn from class at the discretion of the teacher. For instance : We should give, because we see and hear of people who are in need, and they are our brothers and sisters.

2. What should we give? The scholars will reply, "Money." Make an outline of a piece of silver or gold, then lead into other lines of giving. Here is a child who cannot find her book. Charlie is in a hurry to go out to play. Shall he stop and help this little one? In doing so, what does he give? Having called out the reply, print the word "TIME." Here is a little girl who cannot get down from the fence. Shall Johnny stand and laugh at her, or give—what? Try to call out the word "STRENGTH," in reply, then print it. Here is a poor frightened child, the tears rolling down his cheeks ; he thinks he is lost. A little girl passing by knows that he is not in any danger, that his mother is but a few steps away, hidden by a tall man, yet the little girl stops and kisses the poor baby, and soothes him, and has given him—what? Print the word "LOVE."

It will be seen that there are endless possibilities to this method of developing the lesson. The teacher must select a very few of such illus-

trations as she considers most important to her class, striving to impress the truth that there is more to give than simply money; nor will it be wise to omit the fact that to give earnest prayer is the most important of all.

3. *How* shall we give?

What did Paul tell the Corinthians? In the centre of the piece of money make a little heart. Then open the large Bible on your desk, and read: "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give."

I know a boy who says, when he is starting for Sabbath-school: "I suppose I must take a penny for those old heathen; I don't want to a bit, but all the folks do it." Does he give with his heart? Let us see if Paul says anything about him. (Read the rest of the verse.) What kind of a giver does God love?

Final Thoughts.—How can we give with the heart? This brings you to the thought that should never be omitted from the Sabbath lesson. The heart must have Jesus for its centre, else it will not be possible to give either time or money or strength from the right motive. The very first gift of all is the heart to Jesus, then we will be ready with all the rest.

This blackboard outline may be surmounted by an arch, for there is a wonderful promise in the lesson. It may be embodied for children in the verse: "Give, and it shall be given unto you." I think I would print that on the arch.

It is not a motive for giving; it is merely a statement of fact, that people cannot give from the right motive without being richly repaid. God will see to it that this is so.

Of course there would be no difficulty in developing this into a grand missionary lesson. The Christian women and children of our Church will, during the month of May, be absorbed with Siam and Laos, and an outline map of those mission fields, with a new fact added concerning them, would be helpful in turning the thoughts of the class toward definite giving of prayers and pennies for that day.

LESSONS AND GOLDEN TEXTS FOR 1885.

Studies in the Acts.

First Quarter.

Lesson 1. Jan. 4.—PAUL AT TROAS. Acts 20: 2-16. *Commit vs.* 9-12. GOLDEN TEXT: And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them. Acts 20: 7.

2. Jan. 11.—PAUL AT MILETUS. Acts 20: 17-27. *Commit vs.* 18-21. GOLDEN TEXT: Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Acts 20: 21.

3. Jan. 18.—PAUL'S FAREWELL. Acts 20: 28-38. *Commit vs.* 32-36. GOLDEN TEXT: Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. Acts 20: 28.

4. Jan. 25.—PAUL GOING TO JERUSALEM. Acts 21: 1-14. *Commit vs.* 12-14. GOLDEN TEXT: The will of the Lord be done. Acts 21: 14.

5. Feb. 1.—PAUL AT JERUSALEM. Acts 21: 15-26. *Commit vs.* 17-19. GOLDEN TEXT: And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord. Acts 21: 20.

6. Feb. 8.—PAUL ASSAILED. Acts 21: 27-40. *Commit vs.* 30-33. GOLDEN TEXT: I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. Acts 21: 13.

7. Feb. 15.—PAUL'S DEFENCE. Acts 22: 1-21. *Commit vs.* 12-16. GOLDEN TEXT: And I said, What shall I do, Lord? Acts 22: 10.

8. Feb. 22.—PAUL BEFORE THE COUNCIL. Acts 23: 1-11. *Commit vs.* 9-11. GOLDEN TEXT: And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul. Acts 23: 11.

9. March 1.—PAUL SENT TO FELIX. Acts 23: 12-24. *Commit vs.* 20-22. GOLDEN TEXT: If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed. 1 Pet. 4: 16.

10. March 8.—PAUL BEFORE FELIX. Acts 24: 10-27. *Commit vs.* 14-16. GOLDEN TEXT: A conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men. Acts 24: 16.

11. March 15.—PAUL BEFORE AGRIPPA. Acts 26: 1-18. *Commit vs.* 16-18. GOLDEN TEXT: And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest. Acts 26: 15.

12. March 22.—PAUL VINDICATED. Acts 26: 19-32. *Commit vs.* 22, 23. GOLDEN TEXT: Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day. Acts 26: 22.

13. March 29.—REVIEW; or Missionary, Temperance, or other lesson selected by the school.

Studies in the Acts and the Epistles.

Second Quarter.

Lesson 1. April 5.—PAUL'S VOYAGE. Acts 27: 1, 2, 14-26. *Commit vs.* 22-25. GOLDEN TEXT: I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. Acts 27: 25.

2. April 12.—PAUL'S SHIPWRECK. Acts 27: 27-44. *Commit vs.* 33-36. GOLDEN TEXT: Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. Psa. 107: 28.

3. April 19.—PAUL GOING TO ROME. Acts 28: 1-15. *Commit vs.* 3-6. GOLDEN TEXT: He thanked God, and took courage. Acts 28: 15.

4. April 26.—PAUL AT ROME. Acts 28: 16-31. *Commit vs.* 28-31. GOLDEN TEXT: The salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles. Acts 28: 28.

5. May 3.—OBEDIENCE. Eph. 6 : 1-13. *Commit vs.* 1-4. GOLDEN TEXT: Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Eph. 6 : 1.

6. May 10.—CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE. Phil. 2 : 5-16. *Commit vs.* 8-11. GOLDEN TEXT: Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. Phil. 2 : 5.

7. May 17.—CHRISTIAN CONTENTMENT. Phil. 4 : 4-13. *Commit vs.* 4-7. GOLDEN TEXT: The God of peace shall be with you. Phil. 4 : 9.

8. May 24.—The FAITHFUL SAYING. 1 Tim. 1 : 15-20; and 2 : 1-6. *Commit vs.* 15-17. GOLDEN TEXT: This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. 1 Tim. 1 : 15.

9. May 31.—PAUL'S CHARGE TO TIMOTHY. 2 Tim. 3 : 14-17; and 4 : 1-8. *Commit vs.* 15-17. GOLDEN TEXT: The holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation. 2 Tim. 3 : 15.

10. June 7.—GOD'S MESSAGE BY HIS SON. Heb. 1 : 1-8; and 2 : 1-4. *Commit vs.* 1 : 1-3. GOLDEN TEXT: How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation? Heb. 2 : 3.

11. June 14.—THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST. Heb. 9 : 1-12. *Commit vs.* 11, 12. GOLDEN TEXT: Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. Heb. 7 : 25.

12. June 21.—CHRISTIAN PROGRESS. 2 Pet. 1 : 1-11. *Commit vs.* 5-7. GOLDEN TEXT: But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. 2 Pet. 3 : 18.

13. June 28.—REVIEW; or, Missionary, Temperance, or other lesson selected by the school.

Studies in the Kings,

Third Quarter.

Lesson 1. July 5.—REVOLT OF THE TEN TRIBES. 1 Kings 12 : 6-17. *Commit vs.* 6-8. GOLDEN TEXT: He that walketh with wise men shall be wise; but a companion of fools shall be destroyed. Prov. 13 : 20.

2. July 12.—IDOLATRY ESTABLISHED. 1 Kings 12 : 25-33. *Commit vs.* 28-31. GOLDEN TEXT: Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Exod. 20 : 3.

3. July 19.—OMRI AND AHAB. 1 Kings 16 : 23-34. *Commit vs.* 30-33. GOLDEN TEXT: The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord. Prov. 15 : 9.

4. July 26.—ELIJAH THE TISHBITE. 1 Kings 17 : 1-16. *Commit vs.* 5-9. GOLDEN TEXT: So he went and did according unto the word of the Lord. 1 Kings 17 : 5.

5. Aug. 2.—ELIJAH MEETING AHAB. 1 Kings 18 : 1-18. *Commit vs.* 15-18. GOLDEN TEXT: Ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim. 1 Kings 18 : 18.

6. Aug. 9.—THE PROPHETS OF BAAL. 1 Kings 18 : 19-29. *Commit vs.* 19-21. GOLDEN TEXT: If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him. 1 Kings 18 : 21.

7. Aug. 16.—THE PROPHET OF THE LORD. 1 Kings 18 : 30-46. *Commit vs.* 36-39. GOLDEN TEXT: The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God. 1 Kings 18 : 39.

8. Aug. 23.—ELIJAH AT HOREB. 1 Kings 19 : 1-18. *Commit vs.* 11-13. GOLDEN TEXT: And after the fire a still small voice. 1 Kings 19 : 12.

9. Aug. 30.—THE STORY OF NABOTH. 1 Kings 21 : 4-19. *Commit vs.* 17-19. GOLDEN TEXT: Thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord. 1 Kings 21 : 20.

10. Sept. 6.—ELIJAH TRANSLATED. 2 Kings 2 : 1-15. *Commit vs.* 9-11. GOLDEN TEXT: And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him. Gen. 25 : 4.

11. Sept. 13.—THE SHUNAMMITE'S SON. 2 Kings 4 : 18-37. *Commit vs.* 32-35. GOLDEN TEXT: I am the resurrection, and the life. John 11 : 25.

12. Sept. 20.—NAAMAN THE SYRIAN. 2 Kings 5 : 1-16. *Commit vs.* 10-14. GOLDEN TEXT: Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Psa. 51 : 7.

13. Sept. 27.—REVIEW; or, Missionary, Temperance, or other lesson selected by the school.

Studies in the Kings and Prophets.

Fourth Quarter.

Lesson 1. Oct. 4.—ELISHA AT DOTHAN. 2 Kings 6 : 8-23. *Commit vs.* 15-17. GOLDEN TEXT: Fear not; for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. 2 Kings 6 : 16.

2. Oct. 11.—THE FAMINE IN SAMARIA. 2 Kings 7 : 1-17. *Commit vs.* 14-16. GOLDEN TEXT: The things which are impossible with men are possible with God. Luke 18 : 27.

3. Oct. 18.—JEHU'S FALSE ZEAL. 2 Kings 10 : 15-31. *Commit vs.* 28-31. GOLDEN TEXT: Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly. Psa. 1 : 1.

4. Oct. 25.—THE TEMPLE REPAIRED. 2 Kings 12 : 1-15. *Commit vs.* 9-11. GOLDEN TEXT: I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Psa. 122 : 1.

5. Nov. 1.—DEATH OF ELISHA. 2 Kings 13 : 14-25. *Commit vs.* 20, 21. GOLDEN TEXT: He, being dead, yet speaketh. Heb. 11 : 4.

6. Nov. 8.—THE STORY OF JONAH. Jonah 1 : 1-17. *Commit vs.* 4-6. GOLDEN TEXT: Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it. Jonah 1 : 2.

7. Nov. 15.—EFFECT OF JONAH'S PREACHING. Jonah 3 : 1-10. *Commit vs.* 5, 6. GOLDEN TEXT: The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold a greater than Jonah is here. Luke 11 : 32.

8. Nov. 22.—HEZEKIAH'S GOOD REIGN. 2 Kings 18 : 1-12. *Commit vs.* 5-7. GOLDEN TEXT: He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord. 2 Kings 18 : 3.

9. Nov. 29.—HEZEKIAH'S PRAYER ANSWERED. 2 Kings 20 : 1-17. *Commit vs.* 1-3. GOLDEN TEXT: The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble. Ps. 20 : 1.

10. Dec. 6.—THE SINFUL NATION. Isa. 1 : 1-18. *Commit vs.* 16-18. GOLDEN TEXT: Cease to do evil; learn to do well. Isa. 1 : 16, 17.

11. Dec. 13.—THE SUFFERING SAVIOUR. Isa. 53 : 1-12. *Commit vs.* 4-6. GOLDEN TEXT: The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Isa. 53 : 6.

12. Dec. 20.—THE GRACIOUS INVITATION. Isa. 55 : 1-11. *Commit vs.* 6-9. GOLDEN TEXT: Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters. Isa. 55 : 1.

13. Dec. 27.—REVIEW; or, Missionary, Temperance, or other lesson selected by the school.

THE WESTMINSTER TEACHER.

VOL. XII. JUNE, 1884. No. 6.

—Some one says, "Wherever we can send a thought God can send a blessing." The truth is a very inspiring one, and should encourage us in prayer for others. There is no one we can pray for to whom God cannot get a blessing.

—The lessons of this month carry us to lofty summits of Christian doctrine. It is always difficult to make plain for young people such great truths as justification and predestination. The article of Dr. Pierson on "Great Truths for Little Folks," is designed to help teachers in expounding these doctrines as they come in the lessons of June 8th and 15th.

—The Fourth International Sunday-School Convention, for the United States and British North American Provinces, will be held in Louisville, Kentucky, June 11–13th. It is expected that the convention will be one of great interest. The central thought or topic will be "Organization for Evangelization." Thus the missionary, soul-saving idea is to be prominent.

One evening in a parlor at a summer watering-place the young people were dancing. One young lady was not taking any part in the exercise. "Does not your daughter dance?" asked another lady of this young lady's mother. "No," was the reply. "Why, how will she get on in the world?" "I am not bringing her up for the world," was the quiet answer. That young lady is now a woman, and the influence of her consecrated life is felt in many of the Christian interests of a great city. But, for what are you bringing up your daughters, dear mothers of other young girls? What aim have you for them? You brought them and gave them to God in baptism. Were you sincere? Did you mean that they should indeed be "lent unto the Lord," as long as they live? Are you bringing them up for the Lord, or for the world? What are your dreams and ambitions for them? What do you want to see them become? Do you want them to shine in society, to "marry well," to live in wealth? Is that the vision that fills your soul when you think of them? Look on a little further. Life is short. Suppose your dream is fulfilled—is it anything more than a dream? What lies beyond? The curtain is drawn and there is the hushed chamber of death. What do you want for your child then? The curtain is drawn again and eternity opens. What would your fond affection choose for her then? It is better to think matters of this kind through to the end.

Great Truths for Little Folks.

BY ARTHUR T. PIERSON, D.D.

THE lessons of this second quarter reach their climax in the lofty summits of *Justification* and *Predestination*. We imagine that many a teacher is already asking anxiously, "What shall I do with such grand truths, in teaching my class?"

We can appreciate such perplexities, having often been harassed by them ourselves. Such doctrines are among the high things of God; it seems equally hard to bring them *down* to the level of children, or to bring children *up* to their level. They remind us of the Domes of the Yosemite: a few daring adventurers may scale their precipitous sides, but most of us can only look up and behold, with awe, their sublime loftiness. .

Yet, may it not be, that there is a *practical side*, from which the ascent is gradual and easy; and from which it will appear that these grand doctrines are but corresponding halves of one greater original truth, as those domes themselves appear to have been once united, but cleft asunder?

It is in hope to *help*, at least, to make these mysterious teachings both apprehensible and useful, that we venture a few words on how to make great truths profit little folks; and we take these very truths as our examples of doctrines which may be put in simpler forms.

These examples are happily chosen for us, for they present the two main forms of difficulty which face us in Bible teaching: first, what it is *hard for the youthful mind to grasp*; and, secondly, what it is *hard for the natural heart to receive*. Of the first, Justification is an example; of the second, Predestination. To explain, to a child, our acceptance with God on the basis of an imputed righteousness, is no easy task, because of the narrow limits of a child's *mind;* but to reconcile God's electing decrees with human freedom of choice and action, is to confront not only the feebleness of the understanding, but the pride and perverseness of the *heart*.

How, then, shall we evade the difficulty without avoiding the doctrines?

1. We must *use simpler forms of words.* "Justification" and "Predestination" may do for Church Catechisms and theological treatises; but, in a class of children, the more familiar household words are needed, that our little folks may not first of all stumble over the big names. It is to be noted, that technical terms do not appear in the *Gospels.* You look in vain for such words as Justification, Sanctification, Predestination, Election, in the discourses of our Saviour. They are reserved for the *Epistles.*

Why? Because, as it seems to us, the words of Jesus were meant to be our model for teaching children; for feeding babes that have no teeth to chew with, and need the pure *milk* of the word, that does not demand mastication; while the Epistles were meant for maturer believers, who have their cutters and grinders, and have both need of strong *meat* and power to digest it.

2. Let us *substitute things for names.* You will find in the Gospels all the truths you find in the Epistles, but in the germ only. Christ taught all these mysterious sublime doctrines, but he taught them *not by names but by things!* He never talked of justification through imputed righteousness; but he told the *parable of the Prodigal Son,* who forfeited all claim to a father's love and care, went from home, spent all his money, wasted his substance in the worst sins, and came home without anything but rags and wretchedness; and yet, on that poor boy, a father's love and grace put a *robe, shoes, and even a ring.* Any child can understand *that;* and yet here is *imputed righteousness* in the *robe,* the alacrity of holy obedience in the *shoes,* and the adoption of a son and heir in the *ring!* (Compare parable of Wedding Garment.) So Jesus never spoke of election or predestination. Yet he gives us the parable of the *sheepfold,* of which he is the *Door,* and of the *flock,* of which he is the *Shepherd:* and, because one of these does not put the whole truth before us, he gives us the two half-truths joined in one double parable. (John 10.) How exquisitely does the doctrine of electing grace wind about the mind and heart, all unconsciously, as we study this double parable! How do I get to heaven? Not through any door I make for myself; not by climbing into it over the wall by my good works, but *through him, as the Door.* All I have to do is to *go in through an open way made for me.* If that is not election, what is?

But it must be put more fully and forcefully. And so Jesus gives us a supplementary or complementary parable. "I am the good Shepherd." Then he expands the thought: As the good Shepherd, he *gives his life* for the sheep. He *goes before* them, *calls them by name, leads them* out and in; and so their safety is owing to his power and love, and all their movements are only because of *his voice,* which they follow! Here is predestination, vicarious sacrifice, prevenient grace, effectual calling and holy obedience, and all *traced back* to one source—the Redeemer's love for us, which first awakened and constantly nourishes our love for him!

This is teaching not by *names,* but by *things,* a method always most successful with children. Here lies the power of object lessons, blackboard lessons, visible forms of illustration. We turn the ears into eyes, and the eyes into ears. We make a double impression by sight and by sound. Instead of taxing immature intellectual faculties by abstruse mysteries, we do not even make any heavy draught on the imagination; the form of presentation is so familiar, so vivid, that it becomes almost *visible;* and so it was that our Lord, teaching not by names but by things, "revealed these things unto babes!"

3. The *substance of these grand truths must be got hold of* by every teacher before he can give them simple, practical form. Let him, like the cattle which chew the cud in order to give milk, master the doctrine, that he may know how to present the thing without the name.

Justification means "making just." It is a legal term, and refers to man's position before the law of God. He is not only a sinner, and so under condemnation; but has a *sinful nature,* which prompts him continually to new acts of sin, so that the more *law* he has the more *light* he has, and so the greater sin. As every man has sinned and come short of duty, the law has its grip upon him; and even if he could henceforth perfectly obey, there is need of something to bridge over his past sin. On any ground, therefore, there must be an atonement. If he comes before the law at all, without bearing its curse, some one else must bear his guilt, and he himself must bear before the law a merit not his own. He is bankrupt; another must pay his debt. He is naked; another must clothe him. He is a felon; another must be his surety. *This is Justification*—standing before God with my debt paid, my nakedness clothed, and my guilt borne by another. Man's gospel is, "*Do!*" God's gospel is, "*Done!*" Boasting is excluded. I have only to believe; this is my only *work,* the work of faith, which is my bond of union with the Justifier. To take Jesus as my Saviour, to put on Christ, is to accept the white robe of his perfect righteousness, which is "unto all and upon all that believe."

Election is practically this: My salvation is

due, first of all, to *God's choice of me, not to my choice of God.* I do, indeed, choose him, but because he first chose me. My love, my coming to him, my yearning toward him, are all to be traced to his love, his coming to me, his yearning toward me. Otherwise, salvation would hang on man and not on God, and would imply a merit on man's part that would dispute the claims of grace.

The consistent view presented in the word of God, throughout, is this: God has a plan, born in his own heart, borne out by his own providence and grace. And in our salvation, all from first to last, is to be traced to him. This plan is perfect and all embracing. It takes in my repentance, faith, justification, sanctification, glorification. He begins the work *without* my knowledge and co-operation; he carries it on *with* my knowledge and co-operation. I come to see his plan, to recognize its perfect beauty and benevolence; I, by faith, *come into that plan*, as a planet wheels into its predestined orbit; and begin in holy obedience to revolve about God, held in my place by the centripetal force of his grace and love, that alone could prevent the centrifugal force of my old sinful nature from making me again a wandering star.

When once brought within that plan by my own consent, all things work together for my good. There can be no confusion or collision with any other interest, for every other being has his orbit also, and it cannot cross mine. Even eccentric orbits only appear so, because the universal plan is not, from our limited point of view, clearly apprehended by us. Every part of the work done *in* me is linked to every other, and all are but parts of a work done *for* me by my Redeemer. As Leighton says: "Effectual calling is unseparably tied to this eternal foreknowledge or election on the one side, and to salvation on the other; these two links of the chain are up in heaven, in God's own hand; but this middle one is let down to earth into the hearts of his children, and they laying hold of it have sure hold on the other two, for no power can sever them."

Both predestination and justification are thus the *two branches* from *one grand stock*—God's eternal plan of grace. In the work of our salvation, the first thought and the whole plan was his; his the first drawing, the first approach, the first calling; his the first loving, yearning, seeking: before I was even the *subject*, I was the *object* of divine grace. And before God made these first advances to me, he *meant* to; and as there was no *new thought or intent* in the unchangeable God, that previous purpose was an *eternal* one. So that, to admit as all true disciples do, that justification is all of grace, and that God, in the whole work of saving souls, makes *the first approach*, is *to be compelled logically* to admit that from all eternity *he purposed* such gracious and unmerited advances to the sinner—*which is Election!*

In fact, true disciples, when they forget sectarian lines, often find themselves holding to and standing on common ground. Of this let the familiar story of Wesley and Simeon be our simple illustration in closing this paper.

AN ARMINIAN AND A CALVINIST MAY AGREE.

The following conversation between Mr. Wesley and Mr. Simeon is related by Dr. Dealtry in his sermon on the occasion of the death of the latter:

"Pray, sir, do you feel yourself a depraved creature, so depraved that you would never have thought of turning to God, if God had not first put it into your heart?"

"Yes," said the veteran Wesley, "I do, indeed."

"And do you utterly despair of recommend-yourself to God by anything that you can do, and look for salvation solely through the blood and righteousness of Christ?"

"Yes, solely through Christ."

"But, sir, supposing you were first saved by Christ, are you not somehow or other to save yourself afterwards by your own works?"

"No; I must be saved by Christ from first to last."

"Allowing, then, that you were first turned by the grace of God, are you not in some way or other to keep yourself by your own power?"

"No."

"What, then, are you to be upheld every hour and every moment by God, as much as an infant in its mother's arms?"

"Yes, altogether."

"And is all your hope in the grace and mercy of God to preserve you unto his heavenly kingdom?"

"Yes, I have no hope but in him."

"Then, sir, with your leave, I will put up my dagger again; *for this is all my Calvinism; this is my election, my justification by faith, my final perseverance; it is, in substance, all that I hold, and as I hold it.*"

The Duty of the Teacher to the Superintendent.

BY MISS ANNIE W. GAYLEY.

A GREAT deal has been said of the Superintendent's duties to the teachers and the school. Still more have the duties of the teacher to the class been discussed. The phase of duty that has been comparatively over-

looked is that which the teacher owes to the superintendent.

The teacher owes fealty to the superintendent particularly in two places—in the school-room and the teachers' meeting.

The prominent duties in the school-room are punctuality, respect, attention, obedience.

In the matter of punctuality we are apt to think of the scholars, who will miss their teacher; we do not think of the one, who from his post of supervision, notes the empty chair, and knows how hard it is to fill it. If each teacher would notify the superintendent of an expected absence, or else send a substitute, it would greatly lighten the burden of the superintendent.

Another duty is respect. Surely this should be a matter of course with all Christian teachers. But ask candidly the question. Is respect to the superintendent a uniform qualification of our Sabbath-school teachers? and what is the answer? Let every teacher ask himself honestly these questions, and if they cannot be answered affirmatively, let him, as the children say, turn over a new leaf: Am I always respectful *to* my superintendent? Do I always speak respectfully *of* my superintendent? Do I insist that all the members of my class should be equally respectful in tone and behavior?

Our third duty is that of attention. Attention should be given to every signal from the desk. It is not attentive to send for Bibles after the reading is announced, nor to inquire the number of the hymn after it has been given out. Clergymen often remark upon the small proportion of the congregation who hear the pulpit notices. In the school, festival and entertainment notices are usually heard, but what about the others? Dickens has said, "The one safe, certain, remunerative, attainable quality in every study and in every pursuit is the quality of attention." Teachers should feel that one of their duties to their classes is to train them in the habit of attention. An attentive teacher will insist upon an attentive class. But attention must be practical. What will it profit if the superintendent asks the school to read or sing, and the attentive teacher will not read, and the attentive scholar will not sing, or if the notices are accompanied by a running comment of disapprobation or sarcasm or downright refusal from the attentive teacher.

In connection with the teachers' meeting there are several conspicuous duties. Of course there must here also be punctuality, prompt and regular attendance. Nothing so dampens a superintendent's zeal as the meeting to which the teachers come one after another until the proper hour for closing the meeting has nearly arrived, and perhaps half the evening has been wasted in waiting for a quorum.

Another duty here is a willingness to serve. Committees and efficient committees are a necessity in every large and well regulated school. Each teacher should feel that his duty to the school and to his class involves labor in connection with the temporal affairs of the school. The superintendent who can nominate full committees and has no fear of being disheartened by refusals to serve is, or ought to be, a happy man.

Another duty is the absence of class-feeling. Many a school is torn by dissension arising from the feeling of class superiority and class independence. The teacher that wishes to govern his class to suit his own wishes, and who plans entertainments and meetings and schemes of benevolence that clash or interfere with the plans of the superintendent and the other teachers is usually the teacher of an adult class. Very few superintendents would refuse sanction to the plans of these adult classes, but the trouble is that the sanction is not sought. To these teachers the message is, "If ye fulfil the royal law according to the Scriptures, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well." Still another duty is the absence of contention. It is very hard sometimes for the aggressive, emphatic teacher to yield gracefully and gently to the will of the majority. Envy and strife and hasty speech are always to be deplored, "for where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work." Let us pray that the Master who cast devils out of so many poor, afflicted dwellers in Judea may cast these demons of unrighteousness out of our meetings, out of our hearts, and out of our lives. Let us not forget that "The servant of the Lord must not strive."

Besides the specific duties of time and place, there are others that refer to habit of mind or habit of life.

The first of these is sympathy with the superintendent. If we sympathize in heart with him —do we give utterance to our joy when he rejoices? or to our sorrow when he is cast down? Do we encourage him in his successes? or better still, do we utter words of encouragement when he is depressed and the outlook is gloomy? "Kind looks, kind words, kind acts, and warm hand-shakes, these are the secondary means of grace when men are in trouble and are fighting their unseen battles."

Another duty is that of prayer. Every prayer offered in Sabbath-school or in teachers' meetings should ask for special blessing upon the superintendent, and in our closets his name should be often on our lips.

Then our duty to our superintendent involves the doing of our whole duty to our class. The superintendent commits immortal souls to our care, and we in taking the charge from him, pledge ourselves to be faithful teachers, to remember above all that we are ambassadors for Christ, and that week after week our plea to our classes should be, "We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

A Method of Conducting Reviews.

BY ALBERT A. BIRD.

I HAVE often been perplexed as to what to do with the quarterly review. Our superintendent is not one of the obliging kind that review the whole school and give lazy teachers a holiday. There are thirty-five minutes to be filled up with my class. The early lessons are forgotten; both pupils and teacher have a painful sense of that fact (of course I mean that the teacher has a painful sense that the pupils have forgotten). If we do take up one of these lessons we are likely to spend half our time on it; one is not satisfied with merely having the titles and golden texts read; the scholars regard the prepared review lessons as dry. I want to make the review a real review, to make it interesting, to make the looking forward to it the means of leading the class to study during the whole quarter.

I have found the following plan to work admirably; in fact, to change the bugbear of review into an exercise that interests my class as much as any in the quarter. There are say six scholars. I take a pencil tablet and write beforehand a set of questions, one or two for each scholar, on each lesson; like this one for instance, taken at random, the second lesson of this quarter:

1. How did Paul speak at Ephesus? What bad effect on some that heard him?

2. How long did Paul stay at Ephesus? What about handkerchiefs and aprons?

3. Who besides Paul tried to cast out evil spirits? Who *were* driven out?

4. What did many of the converts do in regard to their covered sins? Do you believe they were happier for it?

5. What did they do with their bad literature? Did it cost them much?

6. What was the effect of the bold preaching and earnest acting on the condition of religion? Where did Paul propose to go?

I try to make the questions easy, occasionally introducing a lively one or a personal one, and particularly bringing up facts that we have thought important during the quarter.

When we are ready I distribute the first set, one to each scholar. The understanding is that they are not to look up anything unless they have to. After waiting a minute I call for number one, and the scholar reads the first question and answers it, then the second and answers it. Number two does the same. If any one can not answer the questions, I give the paper to a bright one, who has already answered, and call for it last. My further questions or remarks are very few and brief. When through with this set a second set is distributed, beginning with a different scholar.

It is surprising how much of the quarter's work can be reviewed in this way, and how quick and ready the pupils become. They enjoy the novelty, and the swiftness with which it must all be done. Of course it takes some time for the teacher to prepare in this way; but not much more than is necessary to make a passable review in other ways, and the result is worth the trouble.

The Children's Day.

THE Sabbath-school Committee of the Board of Publication has made the following suggestions regarding the observance of "Children's Day:"

They deem it proper to issue a call for the observance of the day, with general suggestions as to the methods of its observance. Among these suggestions are, that Saturday evening, June 7th, be devoted to a meeting for prayer by the officers and teachers of each Sabbath-school; that the early hours of Sabbath morning be set apart to private meditation and prayer for the Sabbath-school work of the Church and to family meetings for prayer for the same object; that each Sabbath-school assemble one half-hour before the morning time for public worship and proceed to the church, where the whole congregation will listen to a sermon by the pastor on some theme connected with the vital topics of the Christian nurture and conversion of the young.

At this service it is suggested that an offering be made to the mission Sabbath-school work of the Board of Publication, to which each child is requested to give at least one cent, and the older scholars, officers, teachers and members of the congregation, more according to their ability.

It is suggested that the afternoon Sabbath-school session be addressed by selected persons on subjects relating to the salvation of the scholars, and that services in behalf of the young people be held in the evening.

If on this day the attention of the entire Church is turned with thought, love and prayer, to the young, the outcome should be great.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

SECOND QUARTER.

1. April 6.—Paul's Third Missionary Journey. Acts 18: 23-28 and 19: 1-7.
2. April 13.—Paul at Ephesus. Acts 19: 8-22.
3. April 20.—Paul's Preaching. 1 Cor. 1: 17-31.
4. April 27.—Abstinence for the Sake of Others. 1 Cor. 8: 1-13.
5. May 4.—Christian Love. 1 Cor. 13: 1-13.
6. May 11.—Victory over Death. 1 Cor. 15: 50-58.
7. May 18.—The Uproar at Ephesus. Acts 19: 23-41 and 20: 1, 2.
8. May 25.—Liberal Giving. 2 Cor. 9: 1-15.
9. June 1.—**Christian Liberty.** Gal. 4: 1-16.
10. June 8.—**Justification by Faith.** Rom. 3: 19-31.
11. June 15.—**The Blessedness of Believers.** Rom. 8: 28-39.
12. June 22.—**Obedience to Law.** Rom. 13: 1-10.
13. June 29.—**Review.**

Lesson IX. **CHRISTIAN LIBERTY.** **June 1st, 1884.**

Gal. 4: 1-16. Memorize vs. 4-6.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free."—Gal. 5: 1.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Gal. 2: 11-21..*Dead to the Law.*
T. Gal. 3: 1-29...*The Law a Schoolmaster.*
W. Gal. 4: 1-16...*Christian Liberty.*
Th. Gal. 4: 17-31..*The Law and the Gospel.*
F. Gal. 5: 1-18...*Called for Freedom.*
S. Heb. 7: 11-28..*Surety of a Better Testament.*
S. Heb. 10: 1-25..*Hold Fast the Profession of Faith.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Spirit of Adoption. 2. The Spirit of Bondage.

Time.—A. D. 57 (Winter).*

Place.—Written from Corinth.

Catechism.—Q. 80. *What is required in the tenth commandment?* A. The tenth commandment requireth full contentment with our own condition, with a right and charitable frame of spirit toward our neighbor, and all that is his.

Q. 81. *What is forbidden in the tenth commandment?* A. The tenth commandment forbiddeth all discontentment with our own estate, envying or grieving at the good of our neighbor, and all inordinate motions and affections to any thing that is his.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

INTRODUCTORY.—As will be seen by the accompanying map Galatia was a province in the heart of Asia Minor. Paul's first visit to this district seems to have been occasioned by sickness. v. 13 and Acts 16: 6. His work among the Galatians thus began in what we would call an accidental way, but churches sprang up and a great work resulted. This Epistle was probably written from Corinth. Its aim was to "remedy or prevent the ruinous evil resulting to the Galatians from the success of the Judaizing movement among them." For this purpose he writes throughout of the great doctrine of justification by faith. Our lesson passage treats of the full liberty of believers in Christ.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

1 Now I say, *That* the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;

2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.

3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: [Col. 2: 8, 20; Heb. 9: 10.]

4 But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, [Gen. 49: 10; Dan. 9: 24; Eph. 1: 10; John 1: 14; Rom. 1: 3.]

5 To redeem them that were under the

law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. [Eph. 1 : 7; 1 Pet. 1 : 18, 19.]

6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. [Rom. 5 : 5.]

7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. [Rom. 8 : 15, 16, 17.]

8 Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. [Eph. 2 : 11, 12.]

9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? [1 Cor. 8 : 3; 2 Tim. 2 : 19; Col. 2 : 20; Rom. 8 : 3.]

10 Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. [Rom. 14 : 5; Col. 2 : 16.]

11 I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain. [ch. 2 : 2; 5 : 2, 4; 1 Thess. 3 : 5.]

12 Brethren, I beseech you, be as I *am;* for I *am* as ye *are:* ye have not injured me at all. [2 Cor. 2 : 5.]

13 Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first. [1 Cor. 2 : 3; 2 Cor. 11 : 30.]

14 And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, *even* as Christ Jesus. [Matt. 10; 40; Luke 10 : 16; 1 Thess. 2 : 13.]

15 Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if *it had been* possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.

16 Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth? [ch. 2 : 5, 14.]

REVISED VERSION.

1 But I say that so long as the heir is a child,
he differeth nothing from a bondservant,
2 though he is lord of all; but is under guard-
ians and stewards until the term appointed
3 of the father. So we also, when we were
children, were held in bondage under the
4 rudiments of the world: but when the ful-
ness of the time came, God sent forth his
Son, born of a woman, born under the law,
5 that he might redeem them which were under
the law, that we might receive the adoption
6 of sons. And because ye are sons, God sent
forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts,
7 crying, Abba, Father. So that thou art no
longer a bondservant, but a son; and if a
son, then an heir through God.
8 Howbeit at that time, not knowing God,
ye were in bondage to them which by nature
9 are no gods: but now that ye have come to
know God, or rather to be known of God,
how turn ye back again to the weak and
beggarly rudiments, whereunto ye desire to
10 be in bondage over again? Ye observe days,
11 and months, and seasons, and years. I am
afraid of you, lest by any means I have be-
stowed labor upon you in vain.
12 I beseech you, brethren, be as I *am*, for I
13 *am* as ye *are*. Ye did me no wrong: but ye
know that because of an infirmity of the
flesh I preached the gospel unto you the first
14 time; and that which was a temptation to
you in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected;
but ye received me as an angel of God, *even*
15 as Christ Jesus. Where then is that gratu-
lation of yourselves? for I bear you witness,
that, if possible, ye would have plucked out
16 your eyes and given them to me. So then
am I become your enemy, because I tell you
the truth?

1 *Now I say.* In the close of the previous chapter the apostle had said that all Christians, without regard to nation, are children of God by faith in Christ, are the true seed of Abraham and heirs of the promise. In this verse he speaks of the condition of the heir while under age, illustrating it by that of a child under law while a minor. *The heir.* Prospectively; he does not come into possession of his inheritance until he is of a certain age. *A child.* One under age. *Differeth nothing from a servant.* A bondservant. He is under restraints, and is not his own master. *Though he be lord of all.* The full possession of the estate only waiting for him till he is of age.

2 *Under tutors and governors.* Guardians and stewards, the former having care of his person, the latter of his property. *The time appointed.* When the son shall come into full possession. In the case which the apostle was illustrating the time was fixed by the heavenly Father, the time when Christ came.

3 *Even so we.* The church, or family of God, whether Jews or Gentiles. See chap. 3 : 28, 29. *When we were children.* Referring to their state before Christ came. *Were in bondage.* According to the analogy of the heir in v. 1. The Church had not then attained its liberty. *The elements.* The rudiments. The word means, primarily, the letters of the alphabet out of which words or sentences are composed. It is used in 2 Pet. 3 : 10 to denote the materials which make up the material world, and in Col. 2 : 8 it means the elements of knowledge. Here the expression seems to denote elementary lessons, and the words "of the world" represent the fact that these lessons were communicated under worldly symbols, in contradistinction to the higher spiritual teachings of Christ and the gospel.

4 *The fulness of the time.* The time fixed by the Father, the time when the course of preparation was complete. *Sent forth.* From himself. This implies that Christ had an existence before he became incarnate. This shows his deity. *Made of a woman. Born* of a woman. This shows his humanity. *Made under the law. Born* under the law, subject to the law, like other men.

5 *To redeem.* To ransom by paying a price. *Them that were under the law.* Helplessly and

hopelessly so, under its curse, and utterly unable to satisfy its penalty. Christ came under law, and redeemed these captives of the law, by himself paying the ransom, enduring the curse. See Gal. 3 : 13. *The adoption of sons.* That we might become children of God, be taken into his family. See John 1 : 12.

6 *God hath sent forth the Spirit.* The teaching is, that whenever one receives Christ and becomes a child of God, God sends the Spirit into his heart. This is the divine seal or witness of sonship. See Rom. 8: 9; Eph. 1: 13, 14. *Crying, Abba, Father.* Compare Rom. 8: 15–17. The word "crying" denotes great earnestness. The expression, "Abba, Father," was used by our Lord in Gethsemane; it occurs elsewhere only in Rom. 8: 15. Abba is the Chaldee word for Father, so that in the phrase we have the name Father twice given and in two different languages, Hebrew and Greek, as if for both Jew and Gentile, thus illustrating the universal fatherhood of God. The meaning of the cry is, that when the Spirit is given the feeling of sonship at once springs up in the heart, and the new-born child looks up into God's face and calls him Father.

7 *No more a servant.* A bondservant. Referring to the state described in vs. 1–3. Compare again Rom. 8: 15; the "spirit of bondage" gives place to the "spirit of adoption." *An heir of God.* See Rom. 8: 17. The adoption is real, and the child receives the inheritance.

8 *Howbeit.* The Galatian Christians had been disregarding these high privileges as children and heirs of God, and going back into the bondage of ceremonialism. The apostle speaks of this with sadness. *Then, when ye knew not God.* Before becoming Christians. *Did service.* Were in bondage. *No gods.* Idols. He refers to their condition as heathen.

9 *But now.* Since becoming Christians. *Known God . . . known of God.* "Knowing" here implies intimate knowledge and personal acquaintanceship. This begins with God. *Weak and beggarly elements.* They had gone back into Judaism, adopting the rites and ceremonies of the old Mosaic ritual. "Elements" is the same as in v. 3. These are "weak" because they have no spiritual power to help those who cling to them, and "beggarly" because they lack all that rich blessing which the gospel contains.

10 *Ye observe.* In a servile, slavish way. *Days, months, etc.* The sabbatic days, months and years, all the Jewish festal seasons.

11 *Afraid of you.* Afraid that by falling back again into foolish ritualism they would bring disgrace upon the Church and make Paul's work in vain.

12 He implores them in tender earnestness to be *as he is*, that is, free from bondage to ordinances. *I am as ye are.* I have given up my Jewish views and practices. Compare 1 Cor. 9: 21; Phil. 3 : 4–9. *Ye have not injured me.* Ye did me no wrong; that is, it is not me but yourselves that you harm. They must not think that he is offended.

13 *Through infirmity.* Bodily illness. It is supposed that he was first stopped in Galatia by sickness, and that thus it came about that he preached to them. See Acts 16: 6. *At the first.* His first visit, for he had been there a second time. Acts 18: 23.

14 *My temptation.* The correct reading is, "That which was a temptation to you in my flesh ye despised not." This suffering of Paul's was probably the same as the "thorn in the flesh." 2 Cor. 12: 7. What it was never can be known. It is very certain that it was some bodily suffering which interfered with his work, and which deeply humiliated him. That it was "a temptation" to the Galatians would indicate that it was something that disfigured his personal appearance or was loathsome. *Ye despised not.* Instead of being repelled by his infirmity they received him even *as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus.* His gratitude is very deep, as he remembers their great kindness.

15 *Where is then the blessedness?* See Revised Version. What has become of your devotion to me? *Ye would have plucked out.* A strong figurative expression denoting readiness to make any personal sacrifice for his sake. Many suppose from this that Paul's "infirmity" was in his eyes, and that his friends here would if possible have dug out their eyes to give to him.

16 *Am I therefore become your enemy?* Perhaps on his second visit he had had occasion to speak the truth to them in such a way as to give offence.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

So long as the heir is a child, he differeth nothing from a bondservant, though he is lord of all. This is illustrated in the infancy and early years of royal children. An interesting little story is told of the present Prince of Wales. When he was a child he once refused obedience

to his governess, and appealed to his dignity and rank as heir to the throne of England. Prince Albert was called, and bringing a Bible he read this verse to him and chastised him. One application here is, that in entering upon a Christian life its requirements and restraints may seem at the beginning burdensome. The first duty of a child of God is absolute and unquestioning obedience, and obedience may not at first be a delight. Yet we are to obey, whether it is a pleasure or not. The fact that we are children of God and heirs of eternal glory does not free us from the most commonplace duties that our earthly relations impose. Freedom has to be gotten through submission to law.

We also when we were children were held in bondage under the rudiments of the world. All learning is bondage at first. We listen to a fine player on the piano. Her fingers wander over the keys without a pause or mistake. But there was a time when every note had to be picked out on the keyboard, and when the simplest exercise cost painful effort. There was bondage under the rudiments before there was freedom. So it is in reading; the child begins with the a b c, and learns to spell syllables and frame words. It is a slavish process. But in a few years he takes up and reads any page with fluency and ease, never thinking of the letters and syllables. It is the same in all arts and in all learning. So it is in Christian life. Duties have to be learned, sometimes painfully, and repeated over and over until they become gracious habits. The value of this truth here is to press the importance of perseverance in all Christian duties, however irksome and hard at first, until bondage becomes freedom and delight.

God sent forth his Son . . . that he might redeem them which were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. A gentleman interested in the education of the Indians has many photographs of parties that have passed under his notice. One day he picked up three pictures and was struck by the order in which they lay. The first was of a group of Indians at the time of their arrival at Hampton, in all their wild savagery of feature and dress. The third picture was of that same group at the close of their course at Hampton, when they wore all the marks of civilization and Christian refinement. Then between these two pictures there had slipped by mere accident a photograph of one of the famous paintings of the Saviour. The suggestion was very beautiful. Between the state of savage rudeness and Christian refinement there was Christ. It was, indeed, Christ that had wrought the wondrous transformation. It needs only to be pointed out here that between the bondage and freedom of these verses there is Christ and his redemption.

That we might receive the adoption of sons. It is a blessed relation into which redemption brings all that accept Christ. Even to be made God's servants, in the lowliest places, would be a high honor; but we become God's children. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God; and such we are." It is said that when a convert in India was translating these words of John, he said: "Surely it cannot mean that;" and he wrote instead, "That we should be allowed to kiss his feet." But the words are not thus to be toned down. The adoption is real. "As many as received him," said John again, "to them gave he the right to become children of God." All, therefore, who truly receive Christ as their Saviour and Lord become God's children. The Holy Spirit is given to them, and thus they are born again. Some people seem almost ashamed to be known as Christians. They act as if it were something unmanly or unwomanly. But when we learn into what dignity it exalts us we should rather glory in being Christians. The children of Queen Victoria are never ashamed to be recognized as such. They do not try to hide the fact. Why should any human being be ashamed to be known as a child of the God of heaven?

Because ye are sons God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. This is the way God "seals" his children, that is, testifies that they are his children. He gives them the Holy Spirit. It is in this way, too, that he changes their hearts. One day in Africa a chief of one of the tribes said to Dr. Livingstone: "I wish you would change my heart. Give me medicine to change it, for it is proud, proud and angry, angry always." Dr. Livingstone lifted up the New Testament, and was about to tell him of the only way in which the heart can be changed, but the chief interrupted him: "Nay, I will have it changed by medicine to drink, and changed at once, for it is always very proud and very uneasy, and continually angry with some one." Yet there is no medicine that will change a heart. But when the Spirit comes and enters the heart it is changed, and one of the evidences of the change is a new feeling toward God. For the first time we feel toward him as a Father, and call him out of our hearts with loving joy, "Our Father."

So that thou art no longer a bondservant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir. It takes many Christians a long while to realize this.

They do not seem to understand their privileges, their dignity. There is a picture which somewhere I have seen described, which, looked at in the ordinary light, shows but the figure of a wearied and defeated pilgrim, stretched in his last sickness on a straw pallet in the poorest sort of a city garret. But when you look at the picture in the light the artist meant it to be seen in, you see that above the head of that outcast and dying man the air is all athrong with angels, and the light that streams down from the heavenly home points out the pathway thither. In the picture, as at first it appears, we see the man as he seems; in the other view we have the man as he really is, a child of God, an heir of glory. If all Christians but realized their glorious dignity and destiny, what joy it would inspire in their hearts! This was the freedom that Paul had. See him in the jail at Philippi, in the inner prison, his feet fast in stocks, but his spirit free as the eagle that soars in the sky. That is a glimpse of his whole experience. He could not be bound. Nero might thrust him into the Mammertine dungeon, but it was the tyrant and not his prisoner that was the real slave. A child of God who realizes his dignity cannot be robbed of his liberty.

At that time, not knowing God, ye were in bondage. Many people think they are free only while they keep away from Christ and out of his service, and that if they become Christians they would become slaves. But really they are slaves while they live in sin, and can only become free by taking Christ's yoke.

Now that ye have come to know God . . . how turn ye back again to the weak and beggarly rudiments? They had gone back from the blessed liberty of Christ to the old ceremonies of the Jewish Church, and had made themselves slaves again to its burdensome observances. There are Christians now also who are slaves to ritualism. They can worship God only in certain forms. They observe days and minute rules. Their liturgies written or unwritten are to them what the lame man's crutches are to him. A Christian who has the true liberty of Christ worships God in Spirit, and is not dependent on the mode. He uses all helps and means of grace, but is himself above all. Yet it must not be inferred that Christian liberty is freedom from the law and will of God. Liberty is not license. Rather, it is the bringing of the whole heart and life into such perfect subjection to God that the highest freedom is the truest devotion to him. The child that is free is not the prodigal who has torn away from the restraints of the home, but the one who is lovingly and faithfully doing filial duty. Christian freedom is consecration to Christ's will. He who can say, "Thy will be done," and say it sweetly and lovingly, whether it be a hard duty or a painful submission, is free. George MacDonald says: "When God's will is our law, we are a kind of noble slaves; but when God's will is our will, then we are his free children." So it is not freedom *from* God's law, but *in* it that is the Christian's privilege.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Even in doing God's will there is apt to be a period of *serving* before the doing becomes a liberty and delight. v. 1.
2. True Christian liberty is reached not by breaking away from the rule of Christ, but by learning to obey in all things. vs. 2, 3.
3. Christ set his people free from the penalty and curse of the law by taking their place under law. vs. 4, 5.
4. The gospel is God's great emancipation proclamation. vs. 4, 5.
5. Christ makes his people free by making them children of God. v. 5.
6. Those who are God's children ought to have the spirit—the faith, the love, the confidence—of children. v. 6.
7. Those who become God's children receive God's Spirit, and are thus born again and have new hearts. v. 6.
8. To be a child of God is also to be an heir of God to the heavenly inheritance. v. 7.
9. The Christian should not serve God as a slave, but should realize his freedom and rejoice in it. v. 7.
10. To become a Christian is not to sign away one's liberty, but to throw off the chains and become free in the fullest sense. v. 7.
11. It is sad when one who has known the liberty of Christ turns back into bondage. v. 9.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

BY JAMES A. WORDEN, D.D.

APPROACH.

The best introduction to this Epistle is to bring out the main questions concerning it. Thus, *Who were the Galatians?* Descendants of Gauls, who came into Asia B.C. 277. *Where was Galatia?* (See map.) *What were the characteristics of the Galatians?* They were similar to the characteristics of the French of today. Courage, quick sensibilities, warm sympathies, with a changeful fickleness of character. *What led Paul to write this Epistle to the Galatians?* Judaizing teachers had come to Galatia.

They taught, "Except ye be circumcised and keep the ceremonial law ye cannot be saved." Paul had visited Galatia again on his third missionary journey. All seemed quiet. But soon after this visit the news reached him that the Judaizers were carrying everything before them. In order to repel the assaults of these Judaizers, Paul writes this letter, proving that he was equal to any of the apostles (chaps. 1, 2), and that we cannot be saved by our good works. Chap. 3. This brings you to the lesson.

A LESSON PLAN.

I. **Bondage.** vs. 1–3. II. **Freedom.** vs. 4–7. III. **Which?** vs. 8–16.

QUESTIONS AND PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS.

I. **Bondage.** vs. 1–3. Why ought a child to be under tutors and governors? Why must he be taught obedience? Why is it wrong to keep a man in the bondage of children? What did Peter call the ceremonial law? Acts 15: 10. In what respects was the ceremonial law like a yoke of slavery? Why did God put this yoke on the Israelites? They needed it. They could appreciate nothing better. It prepared them for Christ. See Gal. 3: 24; Col. 2: 17; Heb. 9: 9, 10. Who are to-day in bondage to the law? All persons who are trying to save themselves by their own good works. All who are trying to be saved by going to church, by saying their prayers, by being baptized, by saying the Catechism and Scriptures, by taking the Lord's Supper. Make this very plain and specific. On what accounts are all such persons slaves? The law is their *master*. The church is their *master*. They do everything under the lash of the law.

II. **Freedom.** vs. 4–7. When did God deliver the world from bondage to sin and to the law? "In the fullness of time." On what accounts was the time of Christ's coming the fullness of time? The world had failed to find God by its own wisdom. It had been prepared by the dispersion of the Jews, by the great conquests of Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander and Cæsar, and by its conscious needs, for Christ's coming. The time of prophecy was "full." What is the meaning of the terms, "Made of a woman?" "Made under the law?" "Redeem?" "Adoption of sons?" "Spirit of his Son?" "Abba, Father?" "Heir of God through Christ?" What is the difference between trusting and working for Christ as a son, and dreading and obeying him as a slave? In what particulars is the Christian a freeman? 1. He is released from slavish fear of the punishment. Gal. 3: 13. 2. He serves God out of a grateful love. 3. His mind is free to investigate all God's word and works. 4. He draws near to God as a son. 5. Christ says, "Henceforth I call you not servants," etc.

III. **Which?** vs. 8–16. Why was it foolish in the Galatians to turn back from Christian liberty to the bondage of the Jewish law? 1. What had they once been? v. 8. What were they now? 2. Why does Paul call circumcision, etc., weak and beggarly elements? (See Notes.) Thus go on through Paul's arguments in these verses. Close with the question, "Which will you choose to-day? To save yourself, by forms and ceremonies, by self-righteousness, or to trust Christ to save you by his atoning blood and purifying Spirit?

Points in the Lesson for June 8th:

1. What was the occasion and design of Paul's writing the Epistle to the Romans?

2. Give the Catechism answer to the question, What is justification? Take the answer apart, and show the meaning of its several parts.

3. Why is it impossible that any man can be saved by his own good works?

4. How does justification by faith exclude boasting?

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

BY MRS. G R. ALDEN—"PANSY."

This seems to me to be one of the lessons where for primary scholars we cannot enter closely into the explanations of the text, but must teach topically. Thus, having called for the general facts regarding the condition of the Galatians, and Paul's letter to them—which facts should be learned by the children from their *Westminster Primary Leaf*—I should think it wise to turn at once to the application.

The Galatians were in bondage to old laws that they need no longer have kept. To what are our children in bondage? It seems to me wise to apply this to the bondage of Satan. To this end I would make a chain on the board, and suppose a child to be bound with it.

He is so entirely a slave that he is satisfied with his condition, does not desire to get away. Perhaps he thinks he is free. He says, "I am going to do this or that," but all the time Satan is laughing at him, because he is his slave.

Let the story progress to the time when the child hears of Jesus, and wants to be free from Satan, so as to serve him, and cannot. What shall he do now? Call for the last half of the golden text: "Christ makes us free." Carefully teach once more the old story of the way to freedom, illustrating as you talk, by erasing the parts of the chain, so that there shall be broken links—the prisoner is free.

Now the question is, What kind of liberty is

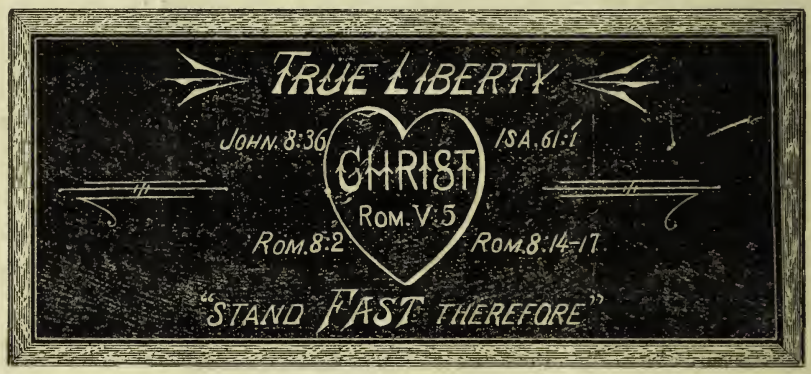
this? Liberty to do wrong? Your children will promptly answer "No." Why then is the boy not a slave to Jesus? Why is his condition called one of "liberty?" This truth is capable of a very simple object illustration: Stretch a tiny silken thread across certain points in your class-room. It is so small that the veriest child can break it with ease. Yet he does not. It bars the way to that road which he thought he would take, and he turns from the road, making no attempt to pass. Why? Here is a sign hung over it. Let the teacher hold up the printed sign, and the class read: "This way would not please Jesus." "Oh," says the one whom he has made free, "if that is so, I don't want to go there; I *want* to do only what will please him." In other words, God has given him a new heart, so that now he wants to do what before he did not. This is why he is free.

It may be objected to this method of teaching the lesson that it does not really teach the difficulty which the Galatians were having; but the *Spirit* of the truth which Paul was presenting to them is, I think, clearly taught in this way; and for the rest, the children may safely wait until they are older and are in danger of depending too much on forms and ceremonies.

The personal application is exceedingly obvious. Are you talking this Sabbath day to slaves or to freemen? If free, how do they show it? Are they glad always to turn away from that which is shown to be wrong? If not, they are acting like slaves. Will any one who has hitherto been a slave call to Jesus to-day and ask him for freedom?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

BY J. HOWARD SEAL.



SUGGESTIONS.—Prepare the board before the school opens. Do not show diagram until the time for beginning the desk lesson. True liberty is only through and in Christ. Christ in the heart removes the bondage of sin, and our state is that of adopted sons, conscious relationship and family privileges. Have the several texts read by classes, explaining each, and urge every one to come into this Christian liberty, and to "*stand fast*" in it.

Directions for Coloring.—"True liberty," blue shaded with white; "Christ," in bold letters, yellow shaded with green; "Stand fast, therefore," red shaded with brown; texts plain white.

Lesson X. **JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.** **June 8th, 1884.**

Rom. 3: 19-31. Memorize vs. 24-26.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ."—Rom. 5: 1.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Rom. 3: 19-31.....*Justification by Faith.*
T. Rom. 4: 1-17.....*Imputed Righteousness.*
W. Rom. 5: 1-11.....*Fruits of Justification.*
Th. Rom. 5: 12-21.....*Grace Abounding.*
F. Rom. 6: 1-23.....*Exhortation to Holiness.*
S. Gal. 3: 1-29.....*Redeemed from the Curse.*
S. Heb. 9: 11-28.....*"By His Own Blood."*

LESSON PLAN.

1. No Justification by Works. 2. Full Justification by Grace.

Time.—A. D. 58 (Spring).

Place.—Written from Corinth.

Catechism.—Q. 82. *Is any man able perfectly to keep the commandments of God?* A. No mere man, since the fall, is able, in this life, perfectly to keep the commandments of God; but doth daily break them in thought, word, and deed.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—When Paul wrote this Epistle he had never been in Rome, although he had long been very desirous to visit that city. He had friends there, among others Aquila and Priscilla, and was deeply interested in the work there. The Epistle was written at Corinth, and sent by the hand of Phœbe, a Christian woman, who was going from Corinth to Rome. Written first as a letter to the Christians in the great capital, it comes down to us as a most profound and important treatise on Christian doctrine. The fragment we are now to study treats of the great central truth of justification by faith.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. [John 10: 34; Ps. 107: 42; Ezek. 16: 63.]

20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin. [Gal. 2: 16; Eph. 2: 8, 9; Tit. 3: 5.]

21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; [Phil. 3: 9; John 5: 46; 1 Pet. 1: 10.]

22 Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Je'sus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; [Col. 3: 11; ch. 11: 32; Gal. 3: 22.]

24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Je'sus: [Eph. 2: 8; Tit. 3: 5, 7.]

25 Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; [1 John 2: 2; Col. 1: 20; Acts 13: 38, 39.]

26 To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Je'sus.

27 Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. [Eph. 2: 9.]

28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. [Acts 13: 38, 39; Gal. 2: 16.]

29 *Is he* the God of the Jews only? *is he* not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:

30 Seeing *it is* one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. [ch. 10: 12, 13; Gal. 3: 8, 20]

31 Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

REVISED VERSION.

19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it speaketh to them that are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may be brought under the
20 judgment of God: because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for through the law *cometh* the knowledge of
21 sin. But now apart from the law a righteousness of God hath been manifested, being
22 witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe; for
23 there is no distinction; for all have sinned,
24 and fall short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the re-
25 demption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God set forth *to be* a propitiation, through faith, by his blood, to shew his righteousness, because of the passing over of the sins done
26 aforetime, in the forbearance of God; for the shewing, *I say*, of his righteousness at this present season: that he might himself be just, and the justifier of him that hath
27 faith in Jesus. Where then is the glorying? It is excluded. By what manner of law? of
28 works? Nay: but by a law of faith. We reckon therefore that a man is justified by
29 faith apart from the works of the law. Or is God *the God* of Jews only? is he not *the God* of Gentiles also? Yea, of Gentiles also:
30 if so be that God is one, and he shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircum-
31 cision through faith. Do we then make the law of none effect through faith? God forbid: nay, we establish the law.

19 The apostle has been proving from the Scriptures that all men are sinners and guilty, thus showing that there is no hope for any in human merit. The Jews admitted this so far as Gentiles were concerned, but for themselves they claimed exemption from condemnation on the ground that they were the children of Abraham. "Abraham sits beside the gates of hell," they said, "and does not permit any wicked Israelite to go down to hell." The apostle's object here is to show that Jews are also liable to the penalty of sin. *The law.* The Old Testament Scriptures as a whole. *Under the law.* That is, to the Jews particularly, to whom the law had been given. *That every mouth may be stopped.* Including Jews. The expression means that every excuse may be taken away, that no one can have a word to say against the sentence of condemnation. See Job 5: 16; Ps. 63: 11; 107: 42. *Guilty before God.* See Revised Version.

20 *Therefore.* Because. The reason is here given why every mouth is stopped. *By the deeds of the law.* Acts of human obedience. *No flesh.* No living person. *Be justified.* Acquitted, acknowledged and declared just or righteous. No man, Jew or Gentile, can be justified in God's sight by his own keeping of the divine law. *By* [through] *the law is the knowledge of sin.* The law only shows us our guilt, and reveals the penalty without presenting any way of escape. "It holds the mirror up to guilt, but cannot remove it."

21 *But now.* Having seen the hopelessness of sinners in their natural state, we turn now to the divine way of salvation. *The righteousness of God without the law.* See Revised Version. "Apart from the law a righteousness of God hath been manifested." The phrase, "Righteousness of God," means the righteousness provided and wrought out by God for the justifying of the sinner who receives it by faith. The words, "Apart from the law," indicate that this righteousness is in no sense human; we do not contribute in any degree to our justification by our own obedience. *Is* [hath been] *manifested.* In Jesus Christ. See 2 Tim. 1: 10. *Being witnessed.* Foretold and foreshadowed. *The law.* Here the word refers to the Pentateuch, in whose sacrifices and types redemption was pictured. *The prophets.* The part of the Scriptures including the prophets. See Acts 10: 43.

22 *By faith.* The righteousness is received through faith in Christ. Believing in Christ is the only condition of receiving this righteousness. *No difference.* No distinction between Jew and Gentile; all are alike in their need.

23 *All have sinned.* This explains the last statement; all are alike sinners. *Come short.* Fail to reach. *The glory of God.* See 2 Cor. 4: 6; 3: 18. The phrase seems to mean the requirements of the divine holiness. None are able to attain to the standard of the divine likeness.

24 *Being justified freely.* Gratuitously, entirely without human merit. *By his grace.* By God's favor, his unbought love. Christ did not purchase the divine favor by his death; rather, it was grace that led to the gift of God's Son. See John 3: 16. *Through the redemption.* Deliverance by the payment of a ransom. Even grace does not save men except through Christ's redeeming blood. See also Matt. 20: 28; Heb. 9: 15. *In Christ Jesus.* See 1 Cor. 1: 30. The redemption is all in him.

25 *Set forth.* Publicly exhibited before all eyes, in the act of death on the cross. *A propitiation.* A sacrifice of expiation, by which mercy and forgiveness are obtained for sinners. *Through faith.* The salvation is received by individuals through personal faith. *In his blood.* It was the blood of Christ that was the ransom. See Mark 14: 24; Rom. 5: 9; Eph. 1: 7; Col. 1: 20; Acts 20: 28. *To declare his righteousness.* The fact that Christ died for sin showed that God was righteous; pardon could not be given without expiation. *For the remission.* Passing over, or letting pass. *Sins that are past.* Sins done aforetime, that is, before Christ came. *Through the forbearance of God.* It was his forbearance that led him to overlook the sins of men in the Old Testament times.

26 *At this time.* Referring to the time of the gospel, the "due time" in which Christ came. *That he might be just.* That his justice might appear. *And the justifier.* He could now pardon sins and yet remain just, for Christ had made expiation for sins. *Of him which believeth in Jesus.* Of him who by faith accepts the atonement of Christ as his sole ground of righteousness.

27 *Where is boasting?* The boasting of the Jew. See chap. 2: 17, 23. *It is excluded.* There is no room for any human glorying in the way of salvation which he has just explained. The *law of works* promotes glorying, but the *law of faith* forbids it.

28 This verse sums up what has been said before. *We conclude.* This is the result of the reasoning. *A man is justified by faith.* Not by ritual observances prescribed for the attainment of salvation; not by good deeds of obedience, by faithfulness in duty, by acts of charity, by self-denials; but by a simple faith in the atonement of Christ.

29 *Of the Jews only?* Does God belong to the Jews only? *Of the Gentiles also.* This is the apostle's answer to Jewish exclusivism.

30 *Seeing it is one God.* See Revised Version. If there is but one God he must be the God of all men, Gentiles and Jews. *Which shall justify.* The way of being justified is the same both to the circumcision (Jews) and the uncircumcision (Gentiles); both must be justified by the righteousness wrought out by Christ and received by faith.

31 *Do we then make void?* Cancel, annul, make of none effect. *The law.* The moral law. He had said (v. 28) that man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law. Was the law then set aside? No; it was really established and vindicated by the gospel, for Christ himself fulfilled the law.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

What things soever the law saith, it speaketh . . . that every mouth may be stopped. After trial and conviction, before the judge utters the sentence, he asks the prisoner if he has anything to say why sentence should not be pronounced upon him. So every human soul is tried at the bar of the divine law and convicted and stands dumb. In the presence of the holy and perfect law of God every mouth is stopped. No one can claim to have kept the law without ever breaking it. We have but to read this chapter from the beginning to see where we all stand. We are all guilty before God.

By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight. No man can live well enough to merit salvation. No one can live without sin, and wherever there is sin, even the least, the law is broken and its penalties are incurred. "The wages of sin is death." There have been some very holy people in this world, who have lived very close to God in faithful obedience and loving service; but there never has been one who was received into heaven on the ground of his own good works. The law is so broad and deep, extending not only to acts and words, but to thoughts, motives, feelings and affections, that it is utterly impossible for any fallen being fully and perfectly to meet all its demands. If this verse were the last word of the Bible; if the book of inspiration revealed to us the law and our sinfulness, inability and guilt, declaring that by our own works none of us can ever be justified in God's sight, it would be a dark and terrible finality. But thank God, this is not the last word.

But now apart from the law a righteousness of God hath been manifested . . . through faith in Jesus Christ. A colporteur left a Bible in a Godless home. As the man and his wife sat together in the evenings the man took up the book, and reading in it began to feel its power. "If this book is true," he said one evening to his wife, "we are wrong." He read more, and a few evenings said again, with deep concern and alarm: "If this book is true we are lost." He read still further, and through the darkness the light began to break, as he caught a glimpse of the cross and the Saviour, and at last he said to his wife with glowing joy: "If this book is true we may be saved." That is the story always of the work of grace in the heart. First there is the law-work, which shows us our guilt and hopelessness in ourselves. Then the gospel comes, showing us salvation and life. Verse 20 is *not* the last word of inspiration; this verse comes after with its blessed revelation of mercy. We have no righteousness of our own, but God has provided for us a righteousness. No flesh can be justified in his sight by the works of the law, but there is a way of justification which is not dependent on our obedience.

Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. No one can be justified by his own works, yet there is a way of justification whereby a sinner may appear before God as if he had never sinned, and as if he had faithfully performed every duty. It is by grace that this is possible. That is, it is an act of mercy on God's part. It is not something that we can claim or demand, but something that is given out of the great love and kindness of the Lord. Yet we must not think that this justifying of sinners costs no one anything. It is not merely an act of clemency on the part of the great Ruler of the universe. While we enjoy the blessings of civil and religious liberty, we should remember what these blessings cost our forefathers in hardship, toil, blood and treasure; and while we pillow our heads on the divine promises and rest secure in the hope of forgiven sins, we should never forget that these blessings all come to us "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

Whom God set forth to be a propitiation . . . by his blood. Nothing is clearer in the Bible than that it was by his *death* Christ redeemed his people. His teaching was important; his words are the seeds of the world's life. His example was important; he lived out a perfect human life to show us how to live. His daily obedience all his three and thirty years was important; he kept the law and fulfilled all righteousness. But after all, it was in dying that he wrought the great act of redemption through which salvation comes to sinners. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." There is a reference here, no doubt, to his expiatory sacrifice. Then Christ's own words assert the same. "The Son of man came . . . to give his life a ransom for many." "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, even that which is poured out for you," "which is shed for many unto the remission of sins." He died the just for the unjust, the holy for the sinner. That great act on Calvary was the expiation of our sins. Our justification comes through it. All our hopes spring out of the darkness of those hours.

That he might himself be just, and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus. If God had simply declared pardon to sinners without any atonement, what would have become of his law, his holiness, his justice, his truth? But when he laid the sins of men on Jesus, and when

Jesus made expiation for them, the law was satisfied, and the claims of justice were met, and now sinners may be freely justified.

The justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus. All are not justified. The gospel is not a universal emancipation proclamation. In one sense it is. Emancipation is offered to all. But there must be an individual acceptance of it on the part of each sinner who would receive its blessing. This is called faith. It is believing this message of God's mercy and accepting its conditions. It is faith *in Jesus* that is required; not merely believing in God's mercy, but receiving Christ as the Saviour, and resting upon him alone for salvation. This implies a great deal. If we take Christ as our Saviour we take him also as our Master. That means that we forsake our sins and begin to do his will; that we devote ourselves to him and follow him with love and obedience.

Where then is the glorying? It is excluded. There is no place in this way of salvation for any human glorying. We do no part of the work. It is in no sense our own righteousness that obtains for us acceptance. We are justified freely by grace. It is not partly our work and partly Christ's by which we are admitted to heaven; it is altogether Christ's. No share, therefore, of the glory belongs to us. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us; but unto thy name give glory."

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling."

So human pride is humbled. When we reach glory all the song will be, "Unto him that loveth us and loosed us from our sins by his blood." There will not be a note of human glorying in the song of redemption.

Do we then make the law of none effect through faith? . . . Nay, we establish the law. Are we freed from the obligation to be holy by this gratuitous salvation? By no means. We are to walk in all God's ways, and are to be fashioned by his Spirit into holiness of character, until at last we are conformed to the image of Christ. Christ did our law-work *for* us on Calvary; he does another law-work *in* us when he renews us and fashions us into perfect men. Redemption is the bringing of sinners back to perfect holiness and to the divine image. In heaven we shall for ever obey God's moral law. We shall then do it naturally, because our natures will then be in perfect harmony with it. Let no one think that we are by Christ's obedience absolved from the duty of obeying the divine law. It is the eternal principle of right.

LESSON POINTS.

1. All are sinners and guilty before God. v. 19.
2. It is utterly impossible for any human being to be saved by his own works. v. 20.
3. All the law itself can do is to convict us of sin, and wall us in a prison of despair. vs. 19, 20.
4. But there is a way of salvation, one made altogether by grace. v. 21.
5. We can be saved by the righteousness of God. vs. 21, 22.
6. We are justified through the redemption of Christ; his blood was the propitiation. vs. 24, 25.
7. On the cross the question was answered how God could be just and yet justify the sinner. v. 26.
8. Faith is the condition of salvation—faith in Christ Jesus. v. 26.
9. There is no place for human glorying in this divine way of salvation. v. 27.
10. All men, Jews and Gentiles, stand alike in redemption. vs. 22, 29, 30.
11. Justification does not dissolve the obligation of the law or set it aside. v. 31.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

APPROACH.

The key to this lesson is, a clear understanding of the word justification. Once a young man—afterwards a dear friend—came to me and said, with tears in his eyes: "My pastor is always talking to me of '*justification*.' For my life I cannot tell what justification is. I want to find Christ." How can we explain the act to our scholars? Describe a trial of a criminal in a court. God is our Judge. The law is our prosecutor. Each soul is the prisoner or sinner. The charge is that we have broken the law. The witnesses are our thoughts, words and deeds. The sentence is, "The wages of sin is death." But Christ becomes our Saviour and Counsellor. He bore the punishment for us. He gives us his righteousness. On account of his atonement, God forgives our sins. On account of his righteousness becoming ours, God pronounces us righteous. This is justification. It is not *making* us *righteous;* it is the act of the Judge *declaring* that on account of Christ we *are* righteous. It is more than forgiveness; it is acceptance as righteous. Then call for the Catechism answer to the question, What is Justification? the class to explain each portion.

ANALYSIS OF THE LESSON.

I. NATURE
II. GROUND
III. DESIGN
IV. RESULTS
} *Of Justification by Faith.*

JUSTIFICATION { What? On What? Why?

I. What is Justification? vs. 19–24.

1. *It cannot be by deeds of the law.* vs. 19, 20. What is the "law" spoken of here? The ceremonial and moral law. What things does the law say? Who are under the law? All. What effect has God's law on all men? "Every mouth is stopped." What does this mean? In what way does the law make all the world guilty before God? "By the law is the knowledge of sin." What, then, can the law and deeds of the law do for our justification? Nothing.

2. *Justification can come only by trusting Jesus Christ.* vs. 21, 22. Explain the phrase, "The righteousness of God." What is said of this righteousness? (*a*) It is "manifested," clearly made known. Who made it known? The law and the prophets. (*b*) *It is "by faith of Jesus Christ."* What must the sinner do to be justified? Believe on, trust, the Lord Jesus Christ. See John 1: 12; 3: 14, 16; Rom. 9: 33; 10: 14; Gal. 2: 16, 20; 3: 24; Eph. 3: 12. (*c*) This righteousness is *suited to all.* On what account is there no way of justifying Jews different from that of justifying Gentiles? "For there is no difference," etc.

3. *Justification comes only by grace.* What is the meaning of the word "grace." Unmerited love, undeserved favor.

II. On what is our Justification Founded? vs. 24, 25.

On Jesus Christ, our atoning sacrifice, our righteousness. How can God declare a sinner forgiven? Only when his sins are borne by Christ. How can God declare a sinner righteous? Only when the sinner receives Christ's righteousness.

III. What is God's Design in Justifying Sinners Through Christ? vs. 26–31.

1. *To show to the world his righteousness.* v. 26. In what way does God's plan of saving sinners exalt his righteousness? Prove that God's righteousness is more gloriously displayed in justifying sinners through Christ, than in punishing them for ever.

2. *To exclude boasting.* vs. 27, 28. Why should God humble sinners while saving them? Pride is the worst of all sins. What will always keep the redeemed humble? To realize that all their salvation is of grace.

3. *To show that God is the Father of all.* vs. 29, 30.

4. *To establish the law.* How does justification by faith establish the law? By Christ honoring and obeying all the law.

Points in the Lesson for June 15th:

1. Please bring in writing a brief analysis of the eighth chapter of Romans.
2. What is included in the "all things" mentioned in v. 28?
3. What is the meaning of the words "foreknew," "did predestinate?"
4. Prove that it is Christ's love for us, not our love for him, which is spoken of in v. 35.
5. What makes the believer sure that nothing shall separate him from God's love.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Central thoughts to be impressed by this lesson:

1. All have sinned.
2. No hope through the law.
3. A way of escape.
4. The door to it—FAITH.

A blackboard picture (found in "Through the Eye to the Heart," by the Rev. W. F. Crafts,) has suggested to me the method which I present of teaching this lesson to the little ones. I give below the progressive steps by which I propose to develop the truths embodied in the texts.

Having called from class the fact that "all have sinned," and helped them to realize that this statement includes "us," print that word on the board in large letters. On the right, make a row of horizontal marks for the Ten Commandments, placing the figures on them. Spend a few minutes in conversation, which will impress the fact that these good laws have been broken. That is why they cannot help us. Make erasures through the centre of those marks, which the children admit stand for commands that they have broken; as, for instance, the fourth and fifth. Each teacher should develop this conversation through the channel which she thinks best fitted to the needs of her children, *i. e.*, dwell on the commands, the breaking of which are most common among her pupils.

To impress the fact that we break some of these laws in God's sight, while to lookers on we appear to be keeping them, print the word "GOD" in large letters quite at the left of the board. (If you are able to make a good outline picture of an eye, it would be better to do so, instead of printing the name.) Then tell of a child who repeated the words of prayer in class with the rest, and thought all the time of her dolly's new dress. God knew she was speaking his name without thinking of what she said. Draw fine lines from the word "God" to those which stand for the commandments. The lines surround the word

"US." God can see us, every one; he sees our hearts, he knows that we have broken his law. What shall we do?

Look! here is a friend; a powerful friend. He has lived on earth for years and never broken one of the commandments in word or thought. He came to show us how to live. He is willing to be punished in our place. God is willing to accept him. (Print the name "JESUS," dropping one letter below the other in such a manner that they will reach from the top to the bottom of the lines which stand for the commandments.)

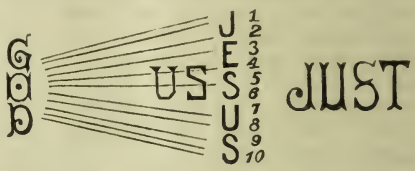
See, I am printing the word "US" again on the other side of "JESUS." It stands only for those of us who have gone to Jesus and asked him to forgive and take care of us, and have promised to serve him for ever. Now look at those fine lines which stand for God's watchful eye. He sees us still, but he sees Jesus first, and Jesus says: "These are mine; I have kept the law for them, I have been punished for them, and then in God's sight," because of Jesus we are JUST. (Add the two letters to the word US.)

Close the lesson with the solemn thought that those who are on the left are still exposed to God's eye, with no Saviour between.

How shall we explain what FAITH has to do with this story? Why, the child who does not truly believe that he needs help, and that only Jesus can help him, will not go to him to be saved; so that Faith is the starting point of the soul toward Jesus.

The golden text gives the result of this faith-journey, viz.: Peace. No one who is trusting in Jesus has cause for fear. Our lesson to-day is made up of very strong meat, but I think we can cut it into such careful portions that the children may have their share of food.

Blackboard at Close of Lesson—



This is quite similar to the one in the book quoted.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

SUGGESTIONS.—Justification is always grounded on obedience to the law. It rests either on the ground of personal obedience, or of another in our place. "Personal obedience justifies unfallen angels. The obedience and suffering of Christ accepted in our place justifies the sinner." It includes freedom from guilt and divine acceptance, "through the redemption that is *in* Christ Jesus," not *independent* of Christ Jesus. "Faith is not our righteousness, but our righteousness is by faith." In the opening of the desk lesson, let the title of the lesson only be on the board, as in diagram. Have classes read Rom. 5: 9; 5: 1, and Titus 3: 7, and print the rest as you impress the lesson. Before God we are justified by faith alone (Rom. 4: 5); before men, by works. Jas. 2: 24. "Though faith justifies us, yet works must justify our faith." There is no conflict in these two doctrines. Freedom from guilt and divine acceptance are of God's grace, and must be received by faith. Another way of putting the lesson is as follows:

"BY GRACE ARE YE SAVED THROUGH FAITH."

Directions for Coloring.—"Justification," "By Faith," white shaded with red; the rest, orange shaded lightly with blue.

Lesson XI. **THE BLESSEDNESS OF BELIEVERS.** June 15th, 1884.

Rom. 8: 28-39. Memorize vs. 37-39.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God."—Rom. 8: 28.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Rom. 8: 1-11.....*No Condemnation.*
T. Rom. 8: 12-27.....*Saved by Hope.*
W. Rom. 8: 28-39.....*No Separation.*
Th. Ps. 91: 1-16.....*No Evil or Danger.*
F. Rom. 12: 1-21.....*A Reasonable Service.*
S. John 10: 22-30....."*They shall Never Perish.*"
S. John 17: 1-26.....*With Him in Glory.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. All Things Ordered for their Good. 2. God on their Side. 3. No Separation from God's Love.

Time.—A. D. 58 (Spring).

Place.—Written from Corinth.

Catechism.—Q. 83. *Are all transgressions of the law equally heinous?* A. Some sins in themselves, and by reason of several aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others.

Q. 84. *What doth every sin deserve?* A. Every sin deserveth God's wrath and curse, both in this life, and that which is to come.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—This Epistle has thus far discussed the great theme of Justification by faith; now the writer turns to look at the blessed results. This chapter is one of the most precious in the whole Bible. It begins with "no condemnation" and closes with "no separation." Our lesson embraces only a fragment of the chapter, but it is a most precious fragment, each verse and phrase a sparkling jewel.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose. [2 Tim. 1: 9.]

29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. [1 Pet. 1: 2; Eph. 1: 5-11.]

30 Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. [Eph. 4: 4; 1 Pet. 2: 9.]

31 What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us? [Ps. 118: 6.]

32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? [ch. 5: 6, 10.]

33 Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth. [Isa. 50: 8, 9.]

34 Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. [Col. 3: 1; Heb. 7: 25.]

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. [Ps. 44: 22.]

37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. [1 Cor. 15: 57; Rev. 12: 11.]

38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, [Eph. 1: 21; 1 Pet. 3: 22.]

39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Je'sus our Lord.

REVISED VERSION.

28 And we know that to them that love God
all things work together for good, *even* to
them that are called according to *his* pur-
29 pose. For whom he foreknew, he also fore-
ordained *to be* conformed to the image of his
Son, that he might be the firstborn among
30 many brethren: and whom he foreordained,
them he also called: and whom he called,
them he also justified: and whom he justi-
fied, them he also glorified.
31 What then shall we say to these things?
32 If God *is* for us, who *is* against us? He that
spared not his own Son, but delivered him
up for us all, how shall he not also with him
33 freely give us all things? Who shall lay any
thing to the charge of God's elect? It is
34 God that justifieth; who is he that shall
condemn? It is Christ Jesus that died, yea
rather, that was raised from the dead, who
is at the right hand of God, who also maketh
35 intercession for us. Who shall separate us
from the love of Christ? shall tribulation,
or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or
36 nakedness, or peril, or sword? Even as it is
written,

For thy sake we are killed all the day long;
We were accounted as sheep for the
slaughter.

37 Nay, in all these things we are more than
38 conquerors through him that loved us. For
I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life,
nor angels, nor principalities, nor things
39 present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor
height, nor depth, nor any other creature,
shall be able to separate us from the love of
God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

28 *And we know.* It is not a mere "perhaps," but a glorious certainty. *All things.* Prosperous or adverse. The reference is particularly to afflictions and trials. *Work together.* There is good in each and every event for a Christian, and all events so combine as to produce a result of blessing. *For good.* The highest good, not mere temporal prosperity. *That love God.* A description of God's children. This confidence is for no others. *Who are the called.* The same persons just described. Those who love God are the called. It is the internal or effectual call that is here meant. See Rom. 1: 6; 11: 29. *According to his purpose.* His plan. In the following verses the apostle explains his meaning; see also Rom. 9: 11; Eph. 1: 11; 3: 11; 2 Tim. 1: 9.

29 The apostle expands the thought of calling according to purpose, showing the divine part in its several stages. *Whom he did foreknow.* In one sense God foreknew all men; to his prescience all future things are present. But more is meant here; there is the idea of loving, approving, then of preferring, choosing. *He also did predestinate.* Foreordain, appoint beforehand. See Eph. 1: 5–11; Acts 4: 28. *To be conformed.* This is part of the purpose of God, the end for which he chose his people. They are to be renewed and fashioned into the divine likeness. See Eph. 1: 4, 5; 4: 24; 1 Cor. 15: 49; Phil. 3: 21; 1 John 3: 2. *The first-born among many brethren.* The idea of pre-eminence usually belongs to the first-born. Believers are made "sons of God," but Christ is "the Son of God." The final aim of the divine choice reaches beyond the saved to Christ himself, that he might stand in his glorious pre-eminence, surrounded by many brethren. See Col. 1: 15, 18; Heb. 1: 6; 2: 10, 11.

30 *Them he also called.* Here the divine foreordination begins to be fulfilled. Those whom he had predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son he calls. The calling here is the inner, effectual calling, not merely the external invitation of the gospel. *Justified.* See last lesson. They are called to *faith*, and those who believe are justified. *Glorified.* This is the completion of all, the last link in the chain of blessedness. The glorification is in heaven, but it is sure for all who are justified.

31 *What shall we then say?* What follows from these glorious truths? *If God be for us.* As he surely is if we are his people; we are bound up in his eternal purposes, and all his infinity of love, wisdom and power is pledged to our security and final glorification. *Who can be against us?* Who can prevail against us? All the powers of the universe combined cannot harm us when we are under God's protection.

32 *He that spared not his Son.* In giving Christ to become our ransom, not sparing him from sacrifice; delivering him up to shame and death, God gave the greatest proof possible of his love. *Shall he not with him?* His doing the greater is pledge that he will not fail to do the less. See chap. 5: 8, 9.

33 *Who shall lay anything to the charge?* The question form implies triumphant confidence that no one can bring any charge. *God's elect.* God's chosen ones. See Matt. 24: 22; Luke 23: 35. The elect here are the same persons referred to in vs. 29, 30 as foreknown, predestinated, called, justified and glorified. *It is God that justifieth.* This is Paul's answer to his own question. If God justifies no one can bring any charge.

34 *Who . . . condemneth?* Revised Version, Who *shall* condemn? That is, at the day of judgment. In answer he refers to what Christ has done to secure the acquittal and salvation of his people. *It is Christ that died.* For us, bearing our sins. *Risen again.* His resurrection was proof of his power, also that his atonement was accepted as sufficient. See chap. 4: 25; 1 Cor. 15: 17. *At the right hand of God.* In the place of power, ruling over all things. *Also maketh intercession.* Actually pleads for his people, is their Advocate, represents them in heaven. See Luke 22: 31, 32; Heb. 4: 14–16; 7: 25; 1 John 2: 1. None can condemn when Christ has done all this.

35 *Who shall separate us?* This is the last step in the apostle's triumphant argument. See John 10: 28, 29. *The love of Christ.* Christ's love for us, not ours for him. *Shall tribulation, or distress, etc.?* The apostle enumerates these trials to which many Christians in those days were subject, to show that none of them had any power to separate from the love of Christ. In all suffering, persecution and loss his love remains ever the same. See 2 Cor. 6: 4.

36 *As it is written.* Ps. 44: 22. The word "sword" (v. 35) seems to have reminded him of the words in the Psalm.

37 *More than conquerors.* These afflictions come to us, but they have no power to crush or destroy us; we are conquerors over them, and not barely conquerors, but we come out of them benefitted, blessed. *Through him that loved us.* It is through Christ that this victory is obtained. See Phil. 4: 13; Gal. 2: 20.

38 *I am persuaded.* The word implies deep, personal conviction, strong, certain confidence,

and in his elevation of triumphant assurance the apostle looks in every possible direction of danger, and concludes that in all the universe there is nothing that can separate the believer from the divine love. *Death.* Death separates soul from body, but it only brings the saved spirit closer to God's heart. See Phil. 1: 23. *Life.* With all its temptations, trials, losses, dangers, sorrows. *Nor angels, nor principalities.* Superhuman powers, for there are evil as well as good angels. See Eph. 6: 12. *Things present . . . to come.* No events in the present world or in the future world; nothing in time.

39 *Nor height, nor depth.* No dimensions of space, since God is everywhere. Ps. 139. *Nor any other creature.* The phrase embraces all created things. He gathers into this one all-inclusive expression every possible element of danger not already named. *Shall be able.* In all the eternal future. *The love of God.* God's love for us. *In Christ Jesus.* It is manifested in Christ Jesus, and it is those who are themselves *in* Christ Jesus who are thus secure.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

We know that . . . all things work together for good. This is one of the most wonderful assertions in all language. And it is not a mere guess or supposition, not a mere rhetorical or poetical exaggeration. It is a divine certainty. "We *know.*" The assertion is very broad and comprehensive. It is not merely that God's people are *safe* in this world, amid all conflicting events, amid all storms and dangers, that he watches over them and shelters them, that not one of them ever is lost. This is true. "In the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion." "He shall give his angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways." There are hundreds of texts to prove this. But this verse goes farther, and assures us not only of safety and protection amid all the infinite combinations of circumstances and events, but of such a working together of all these as shall bring good to the Christian. Every word is emphatic. "All things"—not the pleasant things only, but the unpleasant as well; not the prosperities alone, but the adversities also; not the sweet drops only, but the bitter, too; not the things which seem to help us onward, but just as surely those which seem to be against us. "Work together." They co-operate and combine in their results. One qualifies the other. There may be a hundred wheels in a complicated machine, turning in different directions, with varying motions, but they all combine to produce one result. So it is in providence. Events combine and harmonize in their issue. "For good." Not necessarily temporal good. The result may not be worldly prosperity or advancement. Some people can get to heaven only through earthly defeat and loss. The "good" promised is the highest good, that of the soul, and the final good, the outcome at the end of life.

To them that love God . . . even to them that are called according to his purpose. It is not a blind fate that brings good out of all events; nor does this result come to all people indiscriminately. Here are two qualifying words. It is to *them that love God* that this blessing comes. This implies that it is the hand of God which brings good out of all the complexity of events. There is no chance in this world. There is a hand that directs, that restrains and holds in check, that overrules, that brings good out of what seems or is intended for evil; and that hand is our Father's. His eye is ever on his children, not merely in the mass, but as individuals. It is very wonderful that among millions God can keep his eye on each one all the while, and can so shape and direct all events that all shall work together for good to each one; but that is what the Bible teaches us, and that is what is meant here. The words, "Them that are called according to his purpose," show that each separate life is "a plan of God," thought about in the infinite past and provided for amid the great divine purposes. The promise is, "to them that love God." That is all our part. We are to make sure of our love to God and our faithfulness to him. But there is a stronger chain than our poor, uncertain love that binds us to this blessedness. Those who love God truly are in God's family. They have been called effectually by the Spirit and born again, and their lives are linked in with God's eternal purposes.

Whom he foreknew he also foreordained to be conformed to the image of his Son. Some people seek to caricature the great doctrine of these verses, as if it taught that those whom God foreordains will be saved no matter how they live. These words show that such an inference is false. That to which each child of God is predestined is, to be made like Christ. There is no proof, therefore, that any one is thus predestined who is not ever growing in likeness to the Son of God. The other side of this truth is also full of comfort and cheer. The destiny of every true Christian is to become at last fully like Christ. Sometimes we are discouraged by our own faults and infirmities and our

slow growth in grace. Here we see what the end is to be in our own case, what God is going to make of us when his work in us is finished. This ought to encourage us. A rose-bush looks very unpromising in March, and scarcely worth anything, but we know that in June it will stand covered with rich, fragrant roses. So out of all our present faults and blemishes, if we are God's children, we know that in the end we will come in the glorious beauty of Christ.

Whom he foreknew, he also foreordained . . . and whom he foreordained, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. Here we see the links of this chain of gold. God's believing people are thus bound up in his eternal plan. Into the matter of the divine purpose in the undated past we may not pry; but when it comes down to the present, and begins to be fulfilled in the effectual *calling* of God's children and their justification by faith, we see it. Then, again, it sweeps up out of sight, inside the veil, when they who have been foreordained, called and justified are also glorified. Thus we see how the salvation of each believer is wrought into God's eternal purpose, and made secure. No wonder the apostle asks: "What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?"

He that spared not his own Son . . . how shall he not also with him freely give us all things? The gift of Christ is proof and pledge that nothing else will be withheld that is needed to secure the final salvation of every true believer. God made the rainbow the token and pledge to Noah and his posterity that he would never again destroy the earth with a flood. The sight of the bow on any cloud was a reassurance that the waters would not again destroy all flesh. In like manner Calvary is a constant pledge and reminder to us, in all our trials and dangers, that God will not fail. In any danger or trial, when we are tempted to be afraid or to think that God has forgotten us, we need but to remember the cross, that God "spared not his own Son," and instantly all fear should vanish. The love that has done so much will not fail us in any small need. See Rom. 5: 6–10 for another way of putting the same assurance.

It is God that justifieth; who is he that shall condemn? Who else has any right to condemn if God justifies? Is not he the Eternal King? Are not his decisions final? Luther's dream is familiar. The devil came and showed him a scroll with all his sins written on it, trying to destroy his peace. "You a child of God, a saved man, with all these sins against you!" Luther recognized the sins—yes, they were his. "But you have forgotten one thing," he said. "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." With that Satan vanished, and the scroll with him. If God justifies, who shall condemn? We confess our sins, but Christ died for them, and surely his blood satisfied justice and made expiation.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Some one may say, "Yes, all these things are true so long as Christ continues to love me; but surely he does not love me now, or all these trials and troubles would not come upon me." Our assurance that Christ loves us is too apt to fail us in our dark hours. But to meet this we are here told that this love *never* fails. Tribulation and distress and persecution and peril cannot separate us. Through all these experiences the love of Christ burns on. Does a mother cease to love her child when it is passing through trial or suffering? We know that her love only grows stronger and tenderer in such experiences. Will Christ then cease to love us when we are in distress or pain or enduring wrong? Nay, his love only waxes more fond; through it we are enabled to endure and to overcome, becoming *more than conquerors.* We all know what inspiration in the heart in the day of danger or pain is the consciousness that we are loved, even by a human friend. A little picture found on the young soldier's bosom after he had fallen in battle, told the secret of his heroism in the engagement. Why does the wife go with a song through all her day's toils? Is it not because she knows she is loved? And in danger, in trouble, in sorrow, in loss, in great adversities, there is nothing that gives such strength and inspiration as to know always that Christ loves us. An unshaken consciousness of this will enable us to endure *anything*, even with rejoicing and victorious gladness. And after studying this passage we should never for one moment doubt this love, if we are among those who believe on Christ and love God.

LESSON POINTS.

1. There is a hand that overrules all events, and out of them all brings good and blessing to each one of God's children. v. 28.

2. The salvation of God's children is not left to chance or their own weakness or uncertain resolves, but is bound up in God's eternal plan. vs. 29, 30.

3. The end of the salvation of every believer is, to be conformed to the image of Christ and glorified. vs. 29, 30.

4. It matters not who is against us if God is for us. v. 31.

5. Christ is God's pledge to us that nothing shall be withheld that is necessary to our final salvation. v. 32.

6. If God justifies us we need fear no one's condemnation. He is the one only Judge, and if he acquits us there is no appeal from his decision. vs. 33, 34.

7. When the love of God fastens upon us nothing can ever tear us out of his bosom. vs. 35–39.

8. Trials and sorrows do not make God's love grow weary of us. He even loves us all the more when we are in danger. v. 35.

9. The assured consciousness that God loves us will enable us to be more than conquerors in any distress or danger. v. 37.

10. The believer will triumph finally over all enemies and dangers, and reach glory, through God's love. Nothing can tear him out of the eternal covenant of love. vs. 38, 39.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

INTRODUCTORY.

One way to approach the main lesson is by calling for the points of the apostle's argument in the chapter. Thus, What arguments does Paul in this chapter use to prove that all true Christians are safe? What argument in vs. 1–4? Christ has delivered them from the law. What argument in vs. 5–11? The Holy Spirit has begun salvation in them? What in vs. 12–17? They are children of God. How do vs. 18–27 prove the same? The sufferings of Christians are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in them.

The main divisions of this lesson are: The blessedness of believers consists in these truths. God's providence works only good for believers. v. 28. God's predestination insures them eternal glory. vs. 29, 30. God's gift of Christ insures all other good gifts. vs. 31, 32. God's unchanging love never forsakes them. vs. 33–39.

What are the great doctrines taught in this lesson?

1. God plans and works all things together to bring about a certain blessed result. v. 28.

2. Only those who love God are effectually called. v. 29.

3. God chooses certain persons to be his own people. v. 29.

4. The end to which God predestines his people is to become like Jesus Christ. v. 29.

5. Whoever is predestinated by God shall certainly be saved. v. 30.

6. The only way of knowing that we are chosen of God is that we love and obey Christ. v. 30.

7. It is God's love for us, not our love to him, which is unchangeable. vs. 31–39.

8. Trials cannot divide the Christian from Christ. vs. 35, 39.

9. All created things cannot destroy one soul that rests in Christ. vs. 38, 39.

What are the prominent practical bearings of this lesson?

1. He who desires comfort as well as pardon should come to Christ and love God. v. 28.

2. Those who sincerely trust and obey Christ should humbly rejoice in hope of the glory of God. vs. 29–39.

3. We cannot read God's book of predestination, but we can tell whether we are really and effectually called. See Gal. 5: 22, 23.

4. If God loves us so that he freely gave up Christ for us, we should trust his love.

5. We should stand the criticisms and sneers of the world when we know that God is for us. vs. 33, 34.

6. When doubts arise we should remember what Christ has done for us. v. 34.

Points in the Lesson of June 22d:

1. Why has God set up civil government?
2. Why ought we to obey civil government?
3. Why ought Christians to pay taxes?
4. Why ought not Christians to be in debt to others?
5. When is it our duty to disobey civil government?
6. Prove that love is the fulfilling of the law.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

This lesson properly commences with a review of the last one. We left the Christian "Justified." Call from class the blackboard illustration, etc. To-day Paul tells Christians what Jesus will do for those who have been "justified" in God's sight, through his name. Make a picture of the cross, with the word "US" in large, bright letters at its base. Let the word represent those who are his. Who shall separate them from Jesus?

Here comes an enemy. His name is "Ill-Temper." (Make a mark in the sin-color to stand for the enemy.) He tries to make the child go away from Jesus. He whispers that it is of no use to try to be good. He says, "You know you were cross to-day, and you were yesterday, and it is likely you will be to-morrow; and you don't feel like praying, and you are tired of trying to do right. Just give it all up."

Then the Holy Spirit whispers: "Don't do

it. If you are sorry for doing wrong, God will forgive you. If you trust him, he will keep you from this sin." So the child kneels and prays, and Ill-Temper has failed.

Here comes Disobedience. He knows this boy wants to go to the river and swim, though his mother has told him not to go, and he says: "You never can do what you want to. If I were you, I would give up trying to be good; it is too hard work. I would do as I pleased." But the Holy Spirit whispers: "Jesus said, 'Children obey your parents.' You ought to try to please him. You belong to him. Ask him *now* to help you." And the boy asks, and by-and-bye his face is shining, and he does not even want to do wrong.

The teacher may follow out this method in any line which presents itself to her as the most helpful for her class, taking care not to use too many illustrations, lest the little minds become confused. It is desirable, I think, to make one of the "enemies" DEATH. He thinks he shall succeed in separating the child from Christ. Follow one rapidly through different stages of sickness, then death, then the grave. Death thinks he has succeeded. But look at this bright line leading from the grave straight up to that word in bright letters at the top. What is that at the top? A crown, and on it the word "HEAVEN." What are those words on the bright line? Look! "Them he also glorified." What a mistake death has made! He thought to separate the soul from Jesus, and he only opened the door to a "glory" that has no end. No more enemies for that soul.

The above is a hint of one way in which this difficult lesson may be managed.

Another way would be to build the entire lesson on v. 31. Divide the board by a line through the centre, then call from class all the things which can possibly be "against" them in their honest efforts to do right. The temptations, the drawbacks, etc. Make dots or initials to represent these. Admit that they are many and formidable; but on the other side of the board, with the dot that represents the child, print the word "GOD." "If God be for us—."

Still another method would be to centre one's thought on the golden text. Select a story, or invent one, that shall represent several seeming hindrances to the child-Christian. Make little crooked lines to stand for them, and follow the history of the life, until it shall be made plain that all these seeming hindrances, viewed from God's standpoint, are actual helps to the child, and contribute to his future happiness.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

SUGGESTIONS.—To show God's purpose in Christ, God's power in Christ, and the believer's triumph in Christ, is the purpose of the blackboard lesson here presented. Notice (1) that all things work; (2) that all things work together; (3) that all things work together for good; but only "to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," *i. e.*, his purpose in Christ. God's power is manifested in his care of the believer. See v. 31; Ps. 118: 6; Matt. 28: 18. The believer's triumph—*nothing* shall separate him from the love of God, "*which is in Christ Jesus* our Lord."

Or, if preferred, the following may be placed on the board:

GOD'S CALLED
CONSECRATED ONES.
CONQUERING

Directions for Coloring.—"God's," green shaded with yellow; "Purpose" and "Power," white shaded with red; "The believer's triumph," pink shaded with green.

Lesson XII. **OBEDIENCE TO LAW.** June 22d, 1884.

Rom. 13: 1-10. Memorize vs. 7-10.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers."—Rom. 13: 1.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Rom. 13: 1-10..*Obedience to Law.*
T. 1 Pet. 2: 1-17...*Submission to Rulers.*
W. Tit. 3: 1-9.....*The Christian Citizen.*
Th. Matt. 22: 15-22..*The Things which are Cæsar's.*
F. Matt. 17: 22-27..*Tribute Paid.*
S. Prov. 8: 1-17...*"By Me Princes Rule."*
S. Mark 12: 28-34..*The Sum of the Commandments.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. Rulers God's Ministers. 2. The Obligation to Obey them. 3. Love the Fulfilling of Law.

Time.—A. D. 58 (Spring).

Place.—Written from Ephesus.

Catechism.—Q. 85. *What doth God require of us, that we may escape his wrath and curse, due to us for sin?* A. To escape the wrath and curse of God, due to us for sin, God requireth of us faith in Jesus Christ, repentance unto life, with the diligent use of all the outward means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—The doctrinal part of the Epistle to the Romans closes with the eleventh chapter, and the remaining chapters are given to practical teachings, in the application of the great truths which have been elucidated. This thirteenth chapter treats principally of political duties. In the portion assigned for our present lesson we have instructions concerning the duties of Christians to civil rulers, and in all their civil and social relations.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

1 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. [Tit. 3: 1; 1 Pet. 2: 13; Prov 8: 15, 16; Dan. 2: 21; 4: 32; John 19: 11.]

2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. [Tit. 3: 1.]

3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: [1 Pet. 2: 14; 3: 13.]

4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil.

5 Wherefore *ye* must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake. [Eccles. 8: 2; 1 Pet. 2: 19.]

6 For, for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

7 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due;* custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor. [Matt. 22: 21; Mark 12: 17; Luke 20: 25.]

8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. [Gal. 5: 14; Col. 3: 14; 1 Tim. 1: 5; James 2: 8.]

9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if *there be* any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. [Ex. 20: 13; Deut. 5: 17; Matt. 19: 18; Lev. 19: 18; Matt. 22: 39; Mark 12: 31; Gal. 5: 14; James 2: 8.]

10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love *is* the fulfilling of the law. [Matt. 22: 40; ver. 8.]

REVISED VERSION.

1 Let every soul be in subjection to the
higher powers: for there is no power but of
God; and the *powers* that be are ordained
2 of God. Therefore he that resisteth the
power, withstandeth the ordinance of God:
and they that withstand shall receive to
3 themselves judgement. For rulers are not a
terror to the good work, but to the evil.
And wouldest thou have no fear of the power?
do that which is good, and thou shalt have
4 praise from the same: for he is a minister of
God to thee for good. But if thou do that
which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not
the sword in vain: for he is a minister of
God, an avenger for wrath to him that doeth
5 evil. Wherefore *ye* must needs be in sub-
jection, not only because of the wrath, but
6 also for conscience sake. For, for this cause
ye pay tribute also; for they are ministers
of God's service, attending continually upon
7 this very thing. Render to all their dues:
tribute to whom tribute *is due;* custom to
whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour
to whom honour.
8 Owe no man any thing, save to love one
another: for he that loveth his neighbour
9 hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt
not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill,
Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet,
and if there be any other commandment, it
is summed up in this word, namely, Thou
10 shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love
worketh no ill to his neighbour: love there-
fore is the fulfilment of the law.

1 *Every soul.* Every person. The word "soul," however, is suggestive of man's intelligence and responsibility. *Be subject.* In subjection, submissive. *Higher powers.* Magistrates, civil rulers of whatever grade; not merely the higher authorities, but all ruling powers. *No power but of God.* No government or magistrate but from God. To him all authority belongs. *The powers that be.* It is to be remembered that Rome now ruled the world, and that Nero was emperor. *Ordained of God.* Act by divine appointment. This is the ground of the command to be subject to rulers; their authority is derived from God.

2 *Whosoever therefore resisteth.* Since all authority is derived from God, he that resisteth civil power withstandeth God's ordinance. *Damnation.* Judgment. All such resistance being a sin against God shall be punished.

3 *Not a terror to the good works, but to the evil.* This is another reason why we should be in subjection to rulers. They favor the good and the right, and resist the bad and the wrong. Of course Paul is speaking here of rulers who govern in the fear of God, and seek only justice and truth. Yet this is the true theory of all civil government; it is the duty of magistrates to advance the good and check the evil. *Wilt thou then not be afraid? do that which is good.* Those who obey rulers will have nothing to fear from them, but will have *praise*, commendation, favor, protection.

4 *The minister of God to thee for good.* Not only is he ordained of God to rule, but it is the good of the governed that he is to seek. See 1 Tim. 2: 2. *The sword.* The emblem of authority to punish. The use of the sword implying death, this passage is by many supposed to sanction capital punishment, the civil ruler being the minister of God to bear the sword.

5 *For wrath.* For fear of punishment. *Conscience sake.* There is also a religious duty, growing out of the ruler's divine ordaining.

6 *For this cause.* For conscience sake. *Tribute.* Taxes. *Attending continually.* Devoting themselves wholly to the affairs of their office as rulers; therefore they must be supported.

7 *Render therefore to all.* To all in authority. *Tribute.* Any direct tax on person or property. *Custom.* Toll on goods. Both these taxes were paid to the Roman government, and the collectors were to Jews especially objects of hatred. *Fear.* Awe for those who have power to punish. *Honor.* The respect due to officers of any grade.

8 *Owe no man anything.* After paying taxes and rendering honor to those in authority, there are other obligations to all men about you; acquit yourselves of these. The application is not directly to the paying of money debts, but to all duties to others. *But to love.* This is a debt that never can be wholly discharged. It is an "immortal debt," which, however fully paid to-day, remains to-morrow to be paid again, and so on for ever. *Fulfilled the law.* All duties are summed up in loving.

9 *For this.* He refers to the commandments of the "second table" in detail to show that they are all comprehended in the summary, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

10 *Love worketh no ill.* By its very nature it seeks only the good of others, and refrains from whatever would do harm or injury.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers. The reason for this duty is because "there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God." It is the will of God that there shall be civil government, and that rulers shall bear authority. He is a God of order, and only chaos could exist without government. Hence it is the duty of all persons to give respect and obedience to the powers that bear rule in the place or country in which they dwell. This lesson cannot be too plainly taught or too earnestly impressed. There is a danger in our own country arising from want of respect to rulers. No doubt this is partly due to the methods of our politics, which tend to bring the whole matter of civil government into contempt. But nevertheless, the fact is to be deprecated that the names, even of our highest officers, are treated so lightly. Rulers should be honored for the sake of the power which they represent. We should teach the true nature of civil government as set forth in this lesson. We should pray more for rulers; why not in every service, if we are true patriots? We should inculcate the duty of respect and of subjection.

He that resisteth the power withstandeth the ordinance of God. To resist any power that God has established is to resist God himself, and is therefore a sin against God. We will remember that our Lord himself submitted to rulers while he was on the earth. Although he suffered all indignity, shame and wrong, he raised no hand to resist. We will remember, also, that Nero was emperor of Rome when Paul wrote this letter, and that no more cruel man ever ruled an empire. Yet, to the Christians at Rome, who no doubt had many ques-

tions in their minds concerning their duty under such a government, the apostle sent these loyal counsels. If this was the Christian duty in such a time, surely when the government is good, just and beneficent, the obligation to submission cannot be questioned. Of course, there may come times when rulers are not to be obeyed. "We ought to obey God rather than men," said the apostles themselves, when forbidden to preach any more in the name of Jesus; and they did right in refusing to obey. So the young Hebrews did right in refusing to fall down and worship the king's image on the plain of Dura, and Daniel did right in disregarding the command that forbade him to pray. No ruler has any power to command us to sin against God. God is *always* to be obeyed first, whatever other power may intervene.

For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil, . . . he is a minister of God, an avenger for wrath, to him that doeth evil. Those who are disposed to obey the law are hardly conscious of the existence of government. It has no chains and no restraints for them. Only the rebellious and disobedient feel the hand of the law as a rod of iron; to the obedient it is a hand of protection and of good. Of course this applies only to just and good government. There have been times when rulers *were* a terror to the good work; but these occasional failures of justice and right in government do not destroy the principle. However, this truth lays upon all rulers a most solemn responsibility to rule in the fear of God, and to execute justice and right with the strictest and most unflinching impartiality. The ruler who connives at evil or wrong, or who becomes a terror to any good work, is lifting his hand in the face of God, for he is "the minister of God," representing God in his office of ruler, and is under the most solemn obligation to decide as God himself would decide in each case that comes before him. If men understood the high responsibility which they assume in accepting official positions, there would not be the need and pitiable rush for place which we now witness when elections are about to be held.

Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom . . . honor to whom honor. The Jews only paid taxes to the Roman government under compulsion, feeling the tribute as an exaction and as a mark of humiliation; Paul tells the Christians, Jews or Gentiles, to pay their taxes, and pay them cheerfully. Government costs something, and those for whose good it is conducted must share its expenses. Those who devote their time and abilities to the affairs of government must be supported. It is probably true yet that men as a rule pay no debts as grudgingly and reluctantly as their taxes. This is not right. There are many also who try to hide their property from the assessors, reporting as little as possible for taxation. It should be understood that no lying is worse than this kind of lying. A historian says that what the Romans lost by the Christians refusing to bestow gifts on their temples they gained by their conscientious payment of taxes. There is a word here, too, about paying custom-house dues. There are people who, when they visit Europe, try hard to elude the duties on things they bring home. Such a thing for a Christian is shameful as well as sinful. We need to impress this lesson of honesty to the government. Some people imagine that because *no man* is cheated or robbed, therefore there is no sin; but if government is *an ordinance of God*, what about the cheating and robbing?

Owe no man anything, save to love one another. This is a summing up and crystallizing into one phrase of the counsels of the foregoing passage. Render to every one the obligation you owe to him, whatever it may be, tribute, custom, obedience, honor, reverence. Do not have an unfulfilled obligation or duty to any one. Then it occurred to the apostles that there was one debt that never could be discharged, the debt of love. We may pay it in full to-day, but we are not thereby released from the obligation to pay it in full to-morrow. The debt never grows any less. No matter how well we meet love's duties up to any point, they remain just as large as ever. One might as well try to dip the ocean dry with a cup as to exhaust the debt of love. This counsel does not mean that we are to pay all debts *but* love; we are to pay all debts and meet all obligations, and are to pay our love-debts, too, but the debts of love never can be fully met; after the most faithful payment they will still remain great as ever.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Civil government is an ordinance of God, and civil rulers are God's ministers. vs. 1, 4.

2. It is a Christian duty to be in subjection to the civil powers as in God's place. v. 1.

3. To resist civil power is to resist God, unless the things required are contrary to God's law. v. 2.

4. Government being an ordinance of God, rulers should always do the things that God approves. v. 3.

5. Civil rulers are required to punish evil as well as reward good. v. 4.

6. We should always pay our taxes cheer-

fully, and be sure we make honest returns of property that is taxable or dutiable. v. 7.

7. Every obligation to rulers and all in authority we should fully meet. v. 8.

8. The debt of love though inexhaustible we should ever meet with faithfulness. v. 8.

9. To love in the true and full sense of the word covers all obligations. v. 10.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

On what accounts did Roman Christians specially need to be warned to obey their rulers and the laws? 1. Part of the church at Rome had been Jews. Many of the Jews thought it was wrong to obey heathen kings and emperors. They understood Deut. 17: 15 as meaning that Jehovah's people should not submit to Gentile kings. 2. The Roman emperor and his government were cruel and unutterably corrupt. These reasons made it important for Paul to warn the Roman Christians to be subject "to the higher powers."

On what accounts do we to-day need to be taught to do our duty to our country? 1. Political duties require some self-denial. We are tempted by our love of ease to neglect them. 2. Every one is in a degree responsible for the kind of laws enacted, the kind of rulers elected, and the kind of administration of the government. 3. By faithfully performing political duties Christians present an example to the world. 4. If we do not perform our duty to our country, how can we expect our country to provide us with roads, schools, etc., and protect us?

Lesson Plan.

I. *To our country's rulers.* vs. 1–7. 1. Obedience. 2. Payment of taxes. 3. Reverence.

II. *To society*—love to our neighbor. vs. 8–10.

What are the most important practical bearings of this lesson? 1. It is the duty of every man to *know* what the laws of the land are. 2. It is the duty of every man to *know who the rulers and officers are.* 3. He should *obey* the laws and rulers. Why? (*a*) Because laws and rulers are ordained by God. (*b*) Civil rulers are sent to do us good, to put down crime and protect the good. vs. 3, 4. (*c*) We are to obey because it is part of our duty to God. 4. No man ought to complain of being obliged to pay taxes. vs. 6, 7. Why? Money is necessary to carry on the civil government. 5. Every one is to pay *honor* to the civil rulers. No sentiment is more important to be cultivated among our boys than a proper reverence and honor for those appointed by God to rule over them. 6. It is our duty to disobey the civil rulers if they command us to do anything contrary to God's law.

How can we bring home these duties to our scholars? 1. Remind your scholars that they will soon reach their majority, and be among the rulers of the country by their votes. 2. Impress on every scholar that he cannot escape the responsibility of performing his obligations to the rulers and laws of the land. 3. Hold up the example of eminent Christian men who do their duty to their country. 4. Show the folly of professing to obey God and Christ, unless they obey those whom God has set over them.

Points to be assigned for June 29th:

1. What places are mentioned in the last twelve lessons?

2. What Epistles did Paul write on his third missionary journey?

3. What are some doctrines taught in the last twelve lessons?

4. What are some duties enjoined in the last twelve lessons?

5. Trace on the map the third missionary journey.

6. Give the geography and history of Ephesus.

7. Let each one recite next Sabbath the last twelve titles and golden texts.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The Lesson Introduced.—A great many years ago, when Paul wrote the letter which we are studying to-day, he gave some commands. Who were they for? (Encourage discussion on this point. Develop by suggestive questions the fact that they were for "every soul." Does not that include your children?) What did he say every soul must do? (Let class answer, as in the words of the text.) What does "be subject to" mean?

Now let us see who are the higher powers of the child. Whom ought a child to obey? (If you study the art of questioning, you can call out the three powers best known to childhood—PARENTS, TEACHERS, GOD. Print these words on the board.) Draw from class the two little words which embody the commands of all these rulers, viz.: "DO" and "DO NOT." Print these on the board, making dots to stand for the line of directions following them. At the farther end of the board print the word "IF" in large letters. You have now a word-picture of the lesson.

The Lesson Illustrated by Story.—Print the words, "I'm Afraid." Tell of a child who was very much afraid of her mother, and tried to

hide so that the mother could not find her. Ask what the scholars think was the matter. Some will be ready to say that the mother was cruel, cross, unjust. Explain that she was a good mother, who loved her child. They will readily catch the thought that in such a case the child must have been doing wrong. Then read the statements of Paul: "If thou do that which is evil, be afraid."

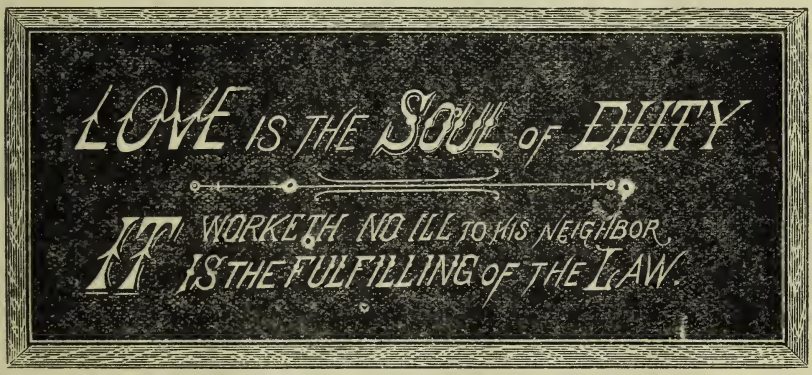
A teacher made a law that there should be no whispering in her school, and that those who whispered should be punished. Here is a boy who has not whispered once during the afternoon, do you suppose he is afraid of his teacher? Not at all. Why? Read v. 3.

Recall a recent lesson, wherein the children were made to see that they had broken God's law. Repeat the blackboard work used at that time; lines for the ten commandments; broken places in them. What was the remedy for the broken law? God's "IF" was, the same "If" that belongs to all broken laws, viz.: Punishment. How was it escaped? The children will recall the fact that Jesus bore the punishment for them.

Call for the words: "Love is the fulfilling of the law." How is it? To explain, make a picture of a little tree whose roots are all started from the word "LOVE." The branches grow up among those laws of God, on which all good human laws are founded. This tree is the picture of a little life given to Jesus. This child loves him, and because she loves him she will try every day to obey his laws, and in obeying them she will be obeying those of her parents and her teachers, for he has ordered that they too shall be obeyed. Now because this child loves, she tries, and because she loves, God forgives her failures, and counts her as having kept all the law, because Jesus kept it for her. Therefore, "LOVE" really fulfills or keeps the law.

Closing Thought.—Are your children afraid of God? Then it must be because they know they have broken his laws, and have not been to Jesus for help, and are not trying now to have all their actions start from the root of Love. Who will take a new start to-day, and live so that that great "IF" on the board need have no terror for them?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



SUGGESTIONS.—The political and social duties of the believer are here to be treated. They are both to be controlled by love. "In the one act of loving there is virtually contained the fulfilment of all the duties prescribed by the law. For a man does not offend, or kill, or calumniate, or rob, those whom he loves." Mark Hopkins well remarks: "Law and love are the two mightiest forces in the universe. Law is stern, majestic, and the fountain of all order. Love is mild, winning, the fountain of all rational spontaneity, that is, of the spontaneity that follows rational choice. Love without law is capricious, weak, mischievous; opposed to law, it is wicked. Law without love is unlovely." "Love leads to doing the things commanded by the law. Obedience from necessity, or from a mere sense of duty, never fully fills the law's command." Impress, then, that "Love is the soul of duty." It "worketh no ill to his neighbor," therefore "it is the fulfilling of the law."

Or present it as follows:

Love your country,
Obey its laws,
Value your privileges,
Exert your influence for its prosperity.

Erase all but the acrostic, and print "Thy neighbor as thyself."

Lesson XIII. **SECOND QUARTERLY REVIEW.** June 29th, 1884.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Lessons I., II. Th. Lesson VII.
T. Lessons III., IV. F. Lessons VIII., IX.
W. Lessons V., VI. S. Lessons X., XI.
S. Lesson XII.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus."—1 Cor. 3: 11.

REVIEW CHART.—Second Quarter.

Lesson Passages.	*Title.*	*Golden Text.*	*Lesson Plan.*
1.—Acts 18: 23-28; 19: 1-7.	Paul's Third Missionary Journey.	And when Paul had laid—Acts 19: 6.	1. Apollos of Alexandria 2. John's disciples.
2.—19: 8-22.	Paul at Ephesus.	And many that believed came—Acts 19: 18.	1. The apostle's work 2 The failure of the exorcists 3. The power of divine grace. 4. Looking toward Rome
3.—1 Cor. 1: 17-31.	Paul's Preaching.	We preach Christ crucified —1 Cor. 1: 23.	1. Foolishness to the world 2. Salvation to believers. 3 Glory to God
4.—8: 1-13.	Abstinence for the Sake of Others.	If meat make my brother —1 Cor. 8: 13.	1. Christian liberty 2. Christian love
5.—13: 1-13.	Christian Love.	Love is the fulfilling—Rom. 13: 10.	1. The importance of love. 2. The character of love. 3 The immortality of love
6.—15: 50-58.	Victory over Death.	Death is swallowed up—1 Cor. 15: 54.	1. The great change 2. The final victory. 3 The believer's duty.
7.—Acts 19: 23-41; 20: 1, 2.	The Uproar at Ephesus.	Why do the heathen rage —Ps. 2: 1.	1. The appeal of Demetrius 2. The excitement of the people. 3. The quieting of the uproar.
8.—2 Cor. 9: 1-15.	Liberal Giving.	God loveth a cheerful giver.—2 Cor. 9: 7.	1. A liberal church 2. Principles of Christian giving 3 The blessedness of liberality.
9.—Gal. 4: 1-16.	Christian Liberty.	Stand fast therefore—Gal. 5: 1.	1. The spirit of adoption. 2. The spirit of bondage.
10.—Rom. 3: 19-31.	Justification by Faith.	Therefore being justified by faith—Rom. 5: 1.	1. No justification by works. 2. Full justification by grace
11.—8: 28-39.	The Blessedness of Believers	We know that all things—Rom. 8: 28.	1. All things for their good. 2. God on their side 3. No separation from God's love.
12.—13: 1-10.	Obedience to Law.	Let every soul be subject—Rom. 13: 1.	1. Rulers God's ministers. 2. The obligation to obey them. 3. Love the fulfilling of law.
13.—	Review.	Other foundation can no man lay—1 Cor. 3: 11.	

REVIEW HINTS.

But little help can be given here for reviewing. Plans may be suggested, but no plan is best for every school. This is a lesson in which the teacher, if the review is taught in the classes, or the superintendent, if the exercise is general, must practice self-reliance. Know the lessons thoroughly. Have all the titles and golden texts as familiar as a b c. Know the Quarter's lessons as a whole, so as to tell the condensed story in a few bright sentences. Study the matter for weeks. Settle in your own mind the best way to teach the lesson. Inspire your class in advance with enthusiasm for the review. Try any device you may think wise in the way of questions distributed a week before, or in the way of blackboard or paper outlines. Then make the lesson just as interesting and successful as possible. Now is the test of your Quarter's work. What have your scholars learned that they really know and will know hereafter, as long as they live? What facts have they? What life-lessons?

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

1. Prepare with utmost thoroughness. Drill yourself on all that you expect to teach your scholars. It is scarcely to be expected that the scholar will make careful preparation if the teacher will not.

2. Well will it be for you on Review Sabbath if you have drilled your class or school week by week during the Quarter on the parts of the lessons you propose to bring out on this review. There is no other true preparation.

3. Do not attempt too many things. Select the method which time will allow you to pursue. Do not dwell too long on any one part of the review.

PLAN OF REVIEW.

I. Mention the number of each lesson. Request the scholar or class or school to give the titles. As each is announced, write on the paper or board the initial letters:

1. P. T. M. J.	7. The U. at E.
2. P. at E.	8. L. G.
3. P. P.	9. C. L.
4. A. for the S. of O.	10. J. by F
5. C. L.	11. The B. of B.
6. V. over D.	12. O. to L.

Drill on these until you erase the initials, and have class recite all.

II. In the same manner draw from the class or school the golden texts, placing on the board or paper the initial words:

1. And when Paul—
2. And many that—
3. We preach Christ—
4. If meat make my—
5. Love is the—
6. Death is—
7. Why do the—
8. God loveth—
9. Stand fast—
10. Therefore being—
11. We know that—
12. Let every soul—

III. Call for the geography of the review. 1. Have the route of Paul on the third missionary journey traced on the map. 2. Especially call for a halt at (*a*) *Galatia*. Call for its boundaries, and for all that is known of the Galatians. (*b*) *Ephesus*. Call for its location, its history, description of its theatre, temple, etc. 3. Call for the location and account of Rome and Corinth.

IV. Call for mention of the persons prominent in the Quarter's lessons, *e. g.*, Paul, Apollos, Aquila, Priscilla, Timotheus, Erastus, etc.

V. Call for the doctrines of the twelve lessons. (These will be found the most important parts of this review.) It may be best to mention the doctrine, and ask the class or the school to give you the number, the title and the golden text of the lesson in which it was prominent.

1. The baptism of the Holy Ghost. 2. God bore Paul witness by miracles. 3. Christ crucified is the substance of the gospel. 4. The queen of all the graces is Love. 5. There shall be a resurrection. 6. Christians are freed from the ceremonial law. 7. No man can be justified by his own good works. 8. Justification comes only by trusting Jesus Christ. 9. Justification is founded on Christ's death and righteousness. 10. God has predestinated his chosen people to eternal life and likeness to Christ. 11. All things work together for good to Christians. 12. All who are effectually called shall be finally saved. 13. Civil government is ordained by God.

VI. Call for the duties enjoined in these lessons. 1. What duty do we owe to young converts? What lesson teaches this? In what way? 2. We should hold up Christ crucified to sinners. 3. We should give up anything which makes our brother to offend. 4. We should totally abstain from intoxicating liquors. 5. We should put away impatience, envy, pride and self-conceit, discourtesy, selfishness, bad temper, evil speaking, discontent. 6. We should be patient, benevolent, modest, kind to others, generous, sweet-tempered, should think well of others, be hopeful, enduring and long-suffering. 7. We should be steadfast and immovable in laboring for Christ. 8. We should not fear what man can do unto us. 9. We should give money systematically and cheerfully for God's cause. 10. We should let no man put on us an unchristian yoke of bondage. 11. We should feel safe in God's love. 12. We should trust in Christ, and have no confidence in the flesh. 13. We ought to obey the civil government. 14. We ought to be wise and faithful patriots.

Points in the Lesson for July 6th:

1. Ask each scholar to review David's life up to this coronation by reading 1 Sam. 16–31 and 2 Sam. 1–4.

2. Give the histories of Abner and Ishbosheth.

3. How many and what warriors of Israel came to David's coronation? See 1 Chron. 12: 23–40.

4. Describe the stronghold Zion. Give its history and the story of its capture by David.

5. What promises of God were fulfilled in David's being made king over all Israel?

6. Of what great feast was the feast at Hebron a type? See Isa. 25: 6–10.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

We have been during the past six months making an effort to have our scholars learn in what book and chapter the lesson was to be found, and chapter and verse of the golden text. We propose on Review Sabbath to put on our blackboard twelve little open Bibles, with initials in each, of the book from which the lesson was taken, chapter and verse of golden text, and initials of title. These we shall cover, and call from class name and title of each, displaying, as the questions are answered, the blackboard Bible belonging to that lesson, calling on class to see if they agree with the answer just given.

As Paul is the central figure of the Quarter, we propose to use the letter P, made with blue crayon, to represent him, and make an enclosure on the board for each place mentioned. Thus:

1. Outline for *Ephesus*. P. for Paul, A. for Apollos. A. and P. in red, for Aquila and Priscilla. What do the children know about all these people?

2. The same Ephesus. Seven marks in the sin-color. A picture of a book.

3. Outline for *Corinth*. Print the name. Picture of an envelope, the letter P. on it, to show that it was written by Paul. A little cross on it, to remind what Paul wrote about.

4. The same Corinth. Another letter from Paul. Print on it, "I WILL," to remind of Paul's pledge.

5. Still Corinth. Paul's letter. Print on it the word "LOVE."

6. Corinth. Another envelope. Print on it the word "DEATH" in black letters, (fill in your envelope with white, then you can use black crayon on it,) and above the black, the word "VICTORY" in letters of gold.

7. Back to Ephesus. Letter P. for Paul. He is there in person. Many dots for people. Print the word "DIANA" in the sin-color.

8. Corinth. Another letter to that people—still from Paul. Print on it the word "GIVE," which is the key-note of the lesson.

9. Galatia. A letter to the people there from Paul. Print on it the word "LIBERTY."

10. Rome. A letter from Paul. Put his initial on the envelope. Print the word "FAITH."

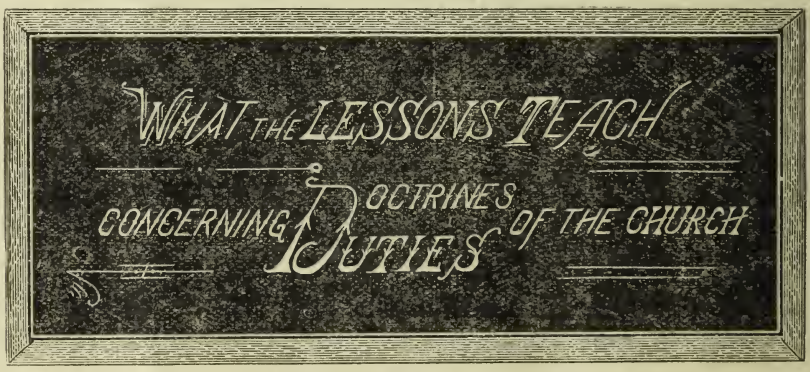
11. Rome again. Another letter. Print on it the words, "ALL THINGS."

12. Still Rome. The people receive another letter. Print on the envelope the word "OBEY."

I have left each teacher to supply his own personal applications; they must of necessity be those on which the teachers dwelt when they taught the lesson. In fact, I have simply told what we, in our class, propose to do.

N. B.—The critic, who is unfamiliar with childhood, will remark that envelopes and letters written in our alphabet on paper were unknown things in Paul's time. True enough, and each teacher will of course make the brief explanation necessary to teach this fact; but the critic must remember that while the roll of parchment suggests nothing to the child of this generation, the familiar outline of an envelope duly addressed, suggests instantly the known method of communication with the absent. And as Paul really wrote *letters* to the people of Rome, Corinth, etc., with messages in them pertaining to us, these are the facts which we wish to impress. The peculiar method of writing them is comparatively unimportant, so far as the children are concerned.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



SUGGESTIONS.—By word pictures, as suggested in previous reviews, get from the school the titles and golden texts of the Quarter's lessons. Then aim to teach the great foundation doctrines and duties of the Church as set forth in the lessons.

I. *Doctrines.* Lesson 1. The doctrine of the Holy Ghost. Less. 3. Christ the power of God. Less. 6. The resurrection from the dead. Less. 9. Adoption. Less. 10. Justification by faith and the atonement. Less. 11. God's sovereignty.

II. *Duties.* Lesson 2. Consecration. Less. 4. Self-denial. Less. 5. Love. Less. 7. Heed wise counsel. Less. 8. Liberal giving. Less. 12. Political and social duties.

Or if preferred, place on the board in large, bold letters—

THE POWER OF

1. Missionary work. 2. Divine grace. 3. True preaching. 4. Self-denial. 5. Love. 6. Immortal life. 7. Wise counsel. 8. Cheerful giving. 9. Liberty. 10. Faith. 11. Confidence. 12. Subjection to authority.

BUILDING ON CHRIST.

Early and earnest preparation is necessary to a satisfactory and profitable review. To condense the teachings of twelve lessons into thirty minutes of time is no easy matter, and every thoughtful superintendent will study the best method to ascertain what is remembered by his school, and to impress the central truths on the minds of his scholars. The above are given only as hints. The limited space will not permit a more extended plan.

REVIEW EXERCISE.*

Usual signal for silence.

Reading of Psalm 20.

Superintendent.—The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee;

Pastor.—Send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion;

Associate Supt.—Remember all thy offerings, and accept thy burnt sacrifice; Selah.

Teachers.—Grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel.

School.—We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up *our* banners: the Lord fulfil all thy petitions.

Pastor.—Now know I that the Lord saveth his anointed; he will hear him from his holy heaven with the saving strength of his right hand.

Supt.—Some *trust* in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.

School.—They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright.

All.—Save, Lord: let the king hear us when we call.

Singing.—Hymn No. 1, *Westminster S. S. Hymnal:*

Ye servants of God! your Master proclaim,
And publish abroad his wonderful name;
The name, all-victorious, of Jesus extol;
His kingdom is glorious and rules over all.

Salvation to God, who sits on the throne!
Let all cry aloud, and honor the Son:
The praises of Jesus the angels proclaim,
Fall down on their faces and worship the Lamb.

Then let us adore and give him his right,
All glory and power, and wisdom and might,
All honor and blessing, with angels above,
And thanks never ceasing, and infinite love.

Prayer.

Recitation of the Beatitudes. Matt. 5: 2–9.

Singing.—*Westminster S. S. Hymnal*, No. 95:

The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come
And take of the water of life!"
Oh blessed call!
Good news to all
Who tire of sin and strife!

REF.—The Spirit says, "Come!" The Bride says, "Come
And take of the water of life freely."
The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come
And take the water of life freely."

Yea, whosoever will may come:
Your longings Christ can fill;
The stream is free
To you and me,
And whosoever will.—REF.

Notices, Collections, etc.

REVIEW QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

LESSON I. **Superintendent.**—What countries did Paul first visit on his third missionary journey?

School.—He went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples.

Supt.—Who came to Ephesus?

School.—A certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures.

Supt.—What is said of his preaching at Corinth?

School.—He mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

II. **Supt.**—What was the effect of Paul's ministry in Ephesus?

School.—All they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.

III. **Supt.**—How has God honored the preaching of the gospel?

School.—After that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

IV. **Supt.**—What warning is given to those who by their example lead others astray?

School.—When ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.

Supt.—What rule of abstinence is here given?

School.—If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth.

Singing.—*Westminster S. S. Hymnal*, No. 51:

A crown of glory bright
By faith's clear eye I see
In yonder realms of light,
Prepared for me.

REF.—I'm nearer my home, nearer my home,
Nearer my home to-day—
Yes, nearer my home in heaven to-day—
Than ever I was before.

Jesus, be thou my guide;
Do thou my steps attend;
Oh, keep me near thy side:
Be thou my friend.
REF.—I'm nearer, etc.

V. **Supt.**—What is said of the importance of love?

School.—Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

Supt.—What is said of its immortality?

School.—Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

VI. **Supt.**—What shall take place in the last day?

School.—The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

* Extra copies of this Review Exercise furnished at 50 cents a hundred, on application to the Board.

Supt.—What counsel is given in view of the resurrection glory?

School.—Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

VII. **Supt.**—What effects did Demetrius the silversmith say had followed Paul's preaching at Ephesus?

School.—Not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands.

VIII. **Supt.**—What is the rule for Christian giving?

School.—Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

Supt.—With what thanksgiving does the lesson close?

School.—Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

Singing.—*Westminster S. S. Hymnal*, No. 143:

Give! 'tis the Saviour's precept—
Give from your bounteous store;
Give to the poor and needy:
Gladly your offerings pour!
Round us our hungry brothers
Ask of our kindly hand;
Ever the cry of sorrow
Echoes throughout the land.

REF.—Give! Give! Give to the poor and needy:
God will repay your love;
Give! Give! Give, and your blessed treasures
Lay ye up in heaven above.

Give, for your gifts are welcome;
Give, though the gift be small;
Give, for a willing giver
God loveth best of all.
None are so poor and needy
That they can nothing spare;
Hark to the cries for pity,
Hark to the orphan's prayer.—REF.

IX. **Supt.**—For what purpose did God send his Son?

School.—When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

X. **Supt.**—Can we be justified by the law?

School.—By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified.

Supt.—How, then, may we be justified?

School.—Freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ?

XI. **Supt.**—What does the gift of Christ secure to believers?

School.—He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give him all things?

XII. **Supt.**—What is our duty with regard to civil rulers?

School.—Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

Supt.—What is the law of love?

School.—Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

Singing.—*Westminster S. S. Hymnal*, No. 59:

Begone, unbelief!
My Saviour is near,
And for my relief
Will surely appear.
By prayer let me wrestle,
And he will perform;
With Christ in the vessel,
I smile at the storm.

REF.—By prayer let me wrestle,
And he will perform;
With Christ in the vessel,
I smile at the storm.

Though dark be my way,
Since he is my Guide,
'Tis mine to obey,
'Tis his to provide;
Though cisterns be broken
And creatures all fail,
The word he has spoken
Shall surely prevail.—REF.

Review-drill on Titles, Golden Texts, Lesson Plans, Review Questions and Catechism Questions.

Singing.—*Westminster S. S. Hymnal*, No. 128:

Awake, my soul! stretch every nerve,
And press with vigor on;
A heavenly race demands thy zeal,
And an immortal crown.

A cloud of witnesses around
Hold thee in full survey;
Forget the steps already trod,
And onward urge thy way.

Blest Saviour, introduced by thee,
Have I my race begun,
And, crowned with victory, at thy feet
I'll lay my laurels down.

Secretary's and Librarian's Distributions.

CLOSING SENTENCES.

Part of Psalm 145.

Pastor.—The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season.

Supt.—Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

School.—The Lord *is* righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.

Teachers.—The Lord *is* nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.

Supt.—He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.

School.—The Lord preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy.

All.—My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord: and let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever.

Silent Prayer.—One minute. School dismissed by the organ playing softly.

THE WESTMINSTER TEACHER.

VOL. XII. JULY, 1884. No. 7.

—Most of the articles in the first pages of this number are timely, having reference to the summer period.

—One good thing to do, if you are away this summer, will be to write frequently to your class, either class or individual letters. It will not cost you much exertion, and the value of your letters to your scholars you never can know.

—It is a good thing to seek every day to make at least one person happy. It is not by any means impossible to do it. There are always those within our reach to whom we can at very little cost or pains communicate relief, comfort, sympathy, cheer, or help in some form. When we remember that there are three hundred and sixty-five days in a year it is easy to see what a grand result this habit will foot up in an ordinary lifetime.

—The Pennsylvania State S. S. Association reports the following as the figures for the Evangelical Sabbath-schools of the State:

Sabbath-schools	8,147
Open all the year	4,678
Teachers' Meetings	1,853
Teachers and Officers	110,085
Scholars	821,650
Received to Church from Sabbath-schools	20,138
Population of State in 1880	4,282,891

The most surprising item in these figures is that which tells us that out of more than eight thousand schools less than nineteen hundred hold teachers' meetings.

—The spirit of Christianity can be learned in no way better than in the new meaning it has given to certain words. There is the word "cross," which, in the language of Christ's day, was the very symbol of shame. It gathered about itself all that was dishonorable and ignominious. But Christ has made it the symbol of all that is glorious, bright and precious. It is the most radiant star in the galaxy of language. There is the word "humility" also. Once it was a craven word. To be humble was to be unmanly. But now, in the catalogue of noble, Christ-like virtues, there is none brighter than humility. It is one of the most brilliant gems in the crown of Christian character. The word "serve" has, in like manner, been lifted out of the dust and exalted to highest honor. In worldly parlance it is despised. Men think it degrades them to serve, and that they attain to honor and rank as they rise above the need of serving and are served instead. But Christ took that which men called a chain and wove it into a jeweled crown. He is greatest who serves, he taught. The path to heavenly honor is the path of self-denying service.

—The "Lesson Questions" are popular. Teachers of older and adult classes especially find it a great help to have half a dozen questions to distribute a week in advance, requiring written answers. It leads the scholars to think about the lesson before they come to class, and then the answers when brought in may help much in the class. Teachers who so desire can grade the answers each week, and make these grades part of the class record. These "Lesson Questions" are put up in six-month packages at five cents a package. We subjoin a copy of the leaf for July 6th:

Westminster×Lesson×Questions.

LESSON FOR JULY 6TH, 1884.

DAVID KING OVER ALL ISRAEL.

2 Sam. 5: 1–12.

1. Why was not David made king over all Israel as soon as Saul died?

.....

2. Where are the accounts of David's different anointings?

.....

3. Why was David's conquest of Jerusalem so important?

.....

4. What was the secret of David's prosperity?

.....

5. What convinced David that the Lord was establishing him as king?

.....

6. In what points in this lesson was David a type of Christ?

.....

Write out answers to above questions, sign your name, and return this leaf to your teacher next Sabbath. The last two questions may be omitted by younger pupils.

Scholar's Name.....

Vacation With Christ.

THIS month of July brings vacation and a resting time to many Christian workers. When one has fairly earned a vacation by honest, faithful work, one should not feel called upon to make any apology for taking it. No one can work on incessantly, without break or pause, year after year, and do his best. There is much truth in the old hackneyed saying, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy;" and the saying applies to full-grown men as well as to boys, and to busy women as well as to men. All work and no rest takes the spring and bound out of the most earnest life. A bow always strung loses its power to send the arrow to its farthest point; a mind always bent on its tasks loses its elasticity, and works wearily and inefficiently. Time spent in judicious resting is not time wasted, but time gained. There is an old proverb which says: "Prayer and provender hinder no man's journey." It is just as true of rest. One of our humorists put a valuable bit of practical wisdom in a paradox when he said: "If you want to get there soon, go slow."

We hear a great deal about taking care of the golden minutes, and about never losing a day, and the counsel is wise. There are a great many minutes and whole days squandered and utterly wasted. There are not many people in the world who overwork. Far more need the spur than the rein. Yet some of those who never let go for an hour, who plod on day after day, with no pause, would be gainers in the end, and would accomplish more, if they were to drop everything for a little while, now and then, and take a thorough rest. They would do more and better work if they worked less. There are many excellent men and women who are always weary. They rise tired every morning, and they are tired all day. They complain that they never get rested. The best thing in the world for them would be to take time now and then to get thoroughly rested. They would come back with keener zest for duty, and with all their powers fresh and strong for better work. One may be too conscientious in sticking to one's post. There was a lad who was so busy, that when repeatedly called to dinner, he still worked away. His brother said: "I can bear almost all kinds of laziness; but I lose all patience with a man who is too lazy to stop working." These are not the men who actually accomplish the most. "Work when you work, and play when you play," is another of those old maxims which is full of practical wisdom. Many of these people that never have time to rest lose hours of time in weary loitering; if they would work with all their might for a proper time, and would then let go and play with all their might for a while, they would achieve more in a course of years. One can accomplish more in five hours of intense application with one's powers all fresh and at their best, than in ten hours of exhaustion.

Proper vacations are necessary, therefore, to really hard-working people. They are not lost time, any more than the hours of night which we spend in sleep are lost. They fill the exhausted fountain of life. They bring back the old elasticity both to mind and body, and we return to duty with fresh enthusiasm and re-invigorated powers to do better work afterward.

Of course we ought to earn a vacation before we take it. People who loiter through ten months of the year have no right to take the remaining two for rest. They have no need of rest, for they have done nothing to tire them. They cannot afford to rest, for their account of wasted time and unfulfilled duties is already too great to bear augmenting by added weeks or months of utter idleness. Be sure you first earn your rest, and that you need it, and then take it with a clear conscience.

How a Christian worker should spend a vacation after earning it, is also an important question. One of the first counsels is, to leave behind all business cares and all thought of ordinary work. Nothing tires like worry. Work when you work, and rest when you rest. Leave your shop at home. Throw down every burden. If you carry all your cares and anxieties with you, you might as well not go away at all. Exercise trust in God, and believe and practice what you have told other people so often, that God cares for you and your affairs, and while he calls you off to rest a while will look after the things you leave behind.

Another thing about spending a vacation is, that we should be sure not to go away from Christ to spend it. When the Master saw that his disciples were weary, needing a little vacation, he said most considerately and thoughtfully: "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place and rest a while." But he said, "*Come* ye;" not "*Go* ye." He would go with them, and they would rest with him. He is just as thoughtful and considerate toward his disciples now as he was toward those weary men. If you have been toiling hard for him, and are weary not *of* but *in* his service, he wants you to have a vacation, and to go apart into a quiet place to spend it; but he wants to go with you. Some people forget this, and leave Christ behind when they go off for summer rest. They lay off their religion with their working-clothes. They leave their Bibles at home. They give up

all their Christian work. They plunge into worldliness, making their vacation one round of amusement and gayeties.

This is not going apart to rest a while with Christ. Really it is not resting at all, for such a vacation fits no one for duty. There is no refreshing or re-invigorating in it; it sends people home again more weary than when they went away. Besides, there is no Christ in it. A true Christian is never off duty. He should be just as faithful and conscientious while in the midst of gay throngs of pleasure-seekers as when he is at home. Religion is not a winter cloak or overcoat to be laid off in July or August; it is a spirit, a life, a character, and is always and everywhere to be worn. Then no earnest Christian worker will want to be entirely idle through a resting-time. There is abundant opportunity for usefulness in all manner of summer resorts. We may let our light shine wherever we may be. We may have the quiet word ready to speak to the heart that hungers for it. We may look up the neglected child and lead it to the Sabbath-school. We may gather the servants of the hotel for a little service or Bible-reading. We may seek out the weary invalid and give the word in season. We may encourage the hard-working minister in the country church by thoughtful, appreciative word or act. We may help the discouraged superintendent by offering to teach a vacant class. We may do a thousand little things in Christ's name for the people we casually meet, doing them even unconsciously and without intention, out of a loving heart, and every one of them may prove a blessing to a life, whose full value we shall know only when the great final harvest is gathered.

"You know not all you give. Forgot,
Unrecognized, maybe, by you
Will be the truest good you do.
* * * * * *
Then be content; smile, spend and grant,
Doing your best deeds ignorant.
You may not pass that way again
Your whole life long, and see, but then
There will be for you sweet surprise
All the more blest in Paradise."

Summer at Hollywood.

BY ERNEST GILMORE.

"I WOULD not be hired to bother with a Sabbath-school class this hot weather, when I am away from home, so as to enjoy a rest, and a good time generally."

It was Susie Howe who said this to Ruth Daniels, and the latter answered, "That is why I am here, too, to have a rest and a good time, and I'm sure we're having both in this delightful little country village."

"Then why propose going into the Sabbath-school?" asked Susie impatiently.

"I did not propose it; it was the minister, who asked from the pulpit if there were any willing and able to do a little summer's work in the Lord's vineyard."

"Well, then, I, for one, am neither willing nor able; I am taxed enough all through the tedious winter and spring with my tiresome class. I have earned my rest."

"I think I will oblige the minister," Ruth replied seriously. "If I should not respond to his request, I believe his pleading face would haunt me afterward."

The next Sabbath, after morning service, Susie returned immediately to the cottage where she and Ruth were boarding, selected a book of light reading, and sat down in a cool, willow rocker to enjoy her rest, while Ruth lingered until the minister came down from the pulpit, shook her hand cordially, and inquired, "How are you?" "Very well, thank you, and ready to lend a helping hand," she said, smiling.

"Do you mean that you are coming into the Sabbath-school?" he asked, with brightening face.

"Yes, if you want me. I will take some runaway's place, and do the best I can."

"I'm sure we're extremely grateful to you," the minister said, leading the way into a large, pleasant room, and introducing her to the superintendent and the slim array of teachers there gathered. After the superintendent had conversed with her a few moments, he decided she was a first-class teacher, and assigned to her a class of large girls, many of them as old as herself.

"This is the young ladies' Bible-class," he said. "The regular teacher will be away until September, and, as they have already sat here two Sundays without a teacher, I know they will welcome you."

"I must prove first that I am worth welcoming, must I not?" said Ruth.

Ruth was so shyly sweet, as she took her position at the head of the class, that some easily impressed hearts were won at the start; but she grew so earnest and interesting as the lesson progressed, that before the school closed she had gained a hold on every heart; indeed, more than that, for having entered the class with an inward prayer to her Heavenly Father for strength, he had blessed her efforts in his service, even to the stirring of more than one soul.

"My, how hot you do look!" was Susie's greeting, as Ruth entered the cottage.

"I am warm, but not suffering from heat,"

was Ruth's cheery rejoinder, as she changed her street dress for a cool, white lawn; "I am hungry, though. I wonder if dinner will soon be ready."

"I suppose so, I can smell it, but the cook has had some trouble getting it ready. She's had to stop and spank Jakie, and pull his wool about a half-dozen times," laughed Sue. "Look out there, Ruth."

Into the large side-yard Ruth looked, discovering a black and white ball, cuddled up under a willow tree; and the black and white ball was sobbing dismally.

"Why, can that be Jakie? And what is the matter?"

"Yes, that's Jakie, in his clean, white linen suit, and the matter is, there were not enough papers to go 'round at his Sabbath-school, and 'though he got one, before he had time to read a word of it another little darkey grabbed it from him and ran away with it. What he desires to do is, to 'wring dat mis'ble niggah's neck,' and his mother will not let him because it is Sunday. A clear case of natural depravity, Jakie's is." And Sue laughed gleefully, seeing only the amusing side of the transaction.

Ruth, as usual, looked deeper.

"It was real hateful in that little darkey to steal Jakie's paper," she said, laughing a little at Jakie's comical appearance, as any one would, "and I am real sorry for the poor little fellow."

"Can't you shed some tears in his behalf?" asked Sue, sarcastically.

"No, thank you, I don't feel at all tearful."

"Better adopt Jakie, along with your Sabbath-school class," teased Sue.

"Thank you for the suggestion. I believe I will." And Ruth knelt down by her trunk, took out the tray, removed some articles of clothing, and brought out some Sabbath-school papers.

"Well, I do declare," exclaimed Sue, looking on with amused eyes. "I believe you must have thought Hollywood and Heathendom were synonyms, or you never would have brought those old papers. Confess now, or it may not go well with thee!" And Sue stood up, putting on a tragic attitude that caused Ruth to laugh.

"I thought nothing of the kind," she said, merrily; "I brought them along for an emergency."

"And the name of the present emergency is Jakie?" questioned Sue.

"Just so, Jakie and—*the boy who stole his paper.*"

"Why, I hope you would not connive at evil by giving that scapegrace of a thief a paper, would you?"

"I think Jakie will."

The dinner bell rang just then, and the two young ladies hastened down stairs, Sue going directly to the dining-room, while Ruth stepped out on the porch for a moment, waved her papers, and called to Jakie, whose tears were changed to smiles, and whose sobs were swallowed in thanks, as he said joyfully, "Oh, tank you, Missie Ruth."

"There are six of them, Jakie; three are for you, and three for some one else, but you can read them all first before you part with any of them."

In the twilight that evening Ruth sat out on the porch, with Jakie on a step at her feet. She had been talking with him earnestly, and had told him a sweet Bible story. Now, in conclusion, she said: "Jakie, do you know some one who has treated you unkindly, on whose head you would like to heap some such coals as I have been telling you about?"

"Yes, Missie Ruth."

"If you do, just give him these pretty papers, and then, perhaps, from your kind act, and from the good stories he will read, he may learn to be a better boy."

Jakie showed the whites of his eyes and his gleaming teeth, as he answered: "Missie Ruth, I dun know jess sech a sassy no account niggah; his name am Gawdge Wash'ton Sneak, an' I'll gib him dem papers afore I'se a day older. No one ever dun tole me afore dat dis was de way to heap coals ob fire on top ob folkes' heads."

I would like to trace for you, step by step, Ruth Daniels' little services for her Master during that summer, but the editor will not allow so lengthy an article, and I will close by giving you an extract from a letter written in the following October by the Hollywood minister to an intimate friend.

"Yes," he wrote, "we are in the midst of a revival, and I believe we owe it all—under God—to an earnest, young, summer visitor, who came to us for rest and recreation, but was not willing to fold her arms and sit idly—even under a blue summer sky. She sowed seed unobtrusively yet untiringly, and plants sprang up and blossomed into fruitage; and, lo! the harvest is here—our Master will find his image imprinted on many a soul."

How Old Must I Be?

BY THOMAS DOGGETT, D.D.

"MOTHER," a little child once said, "Mother, how old must I be before I can be a Christian?" And the wise mother answered, "How old will you have to be, darling, before you can love me?"

"Why, mother, I always loved you. I do now, and I always shall," and she kissed her mother; "but you have not told me yet how old I shall have to be." The mother made answer with another question: "How old must you be before you can trust yourself wholly to me and my care?" "I always did," she answered, and kissed her mother again; "but tell me what I want to know," and she climbed into her mother's lap and put her arms about her neck. The mother asked again: "How old will you have to be before you can do what I want you to do?" Then the child whispered, half-guessing what her mother meant: "I can now, without growing any older." Then her mother said: "You can be a Christian now, my darling, without waiting to be older. All you have to do is to love and trust and try to please the One who says, 'Let the little ones come unto me.' Don't you want to begin now?" The child whispered "Yes." Then they both knelt down, and the mother prayed, and in her prayer she gave to Christ her little one who wanted to be his.

Don't Omit the Religious Truths.

BY MARGARET MEREDITH.

SOME one in our teachers' meeting gave us an excellent idea; self-evident, it seemed, but we had never thought of it before: "Be careful not to put off the application till the end of your lesson; for you know how likely you are not to reach the end at all."

I woke up to a keen fear that thus I might have habitually left out the vital part of what I had prepared for my class.

We seldom do get through our lesson, if we and the scholars are interested. Important diversions and delays are certain to occur, and the bell taps many a time when we are only well under way.

Therefore the Sabbath-school lesson differs from any other literary production. The climax must come in all along, lest it never come in.

This requires attention. We must strew in the religious truths close upon each step of the Scripture incidents which we are trying to teach. Very seldom can it be as important to complete the narrative as to impress its spiritual significance, especially its personal bearing upon the scholars.

Let us earnestly strive for this. There is actually a risk that on some Sabbaths our laboriously prepared instruction may be nothing better than an exhibition, giving to children, whose opportunities of learning the way to Heaven are very small, elaborate exegesis and side lights, and not a thought of the truth as it is in Jesus, or of entreaty to come to Him.

Concerning Substitutes.

BY WALTER A. BROOKS.

THERE are few schools in which all the teachers are present for very many successive Sabbaths. Illness, absence from town, bad weather, and a great variety of circumstances sometimes make it quite impossible for the most faithful teacher to be at his post. In that case there must be a substitute. And the importance of the matter suggests the following words.

I. *To the regular teacher.*

1. Have a substitute as seldom as possible. Your place is not one to be left on slight occasion. Your reason for absence ought to be very good indeed.

2. If you must be away, secure your substitute yourself. Do not send word to the superintendent, just at the opening of the school, that "you cannot be there to-day, and he will please find some one to take your place."

3. Give your substitute reasonable notice. He cannot teach without preparation, any more than you can.

4. Furnish him with your lesson help.

5. Pray for him before he goes to your class, while he is teaching, and after he has finished.

6. In the name of Christian courtesy, never forget to thank him for what he has done.

II. *To the substitute.*

1. Understand in the beginning that you are undertaking difficult work. It is never easy to take another's place. It is impossible that you should know what sort of scholars you have, or what they need, meeting them only once. Do not be discouraged, therefore, if you find it hard to teach, and if it seems, at the end of the hour, as if you had done nothing.

2. You have a possible opportunity of doing great good. Your way of putting things may strike the attention of one who is accustomed to his teacher, and hears his words without heeding them. The Spirit may direct your arrow, shot at a venture, straight to a mark hitherto untouched.

3. Pray much before you go to the class.

4. Study the lesson. You cannot teach at hap-hazard, or on the strength of your general knowledge.

5. Never mind finding out "how the teacher does it." Get at the lesson and teach your own way.

6. Pray afterward for those who have thus been brought under your teaching.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

THIRD QUARTER.

1. July 6.—**David King over all Israel.** 2 Sam. 5: 1–12.
2. July 13.—**The Ark in the House.** 2 Sam. 6: 1–12.
3. July 20.—**God's Covenant with David.** 2 Sam. 7: 1–16.
4. July 27.—**Kindness to Jonathan's Son.** 2 Sam. 9: 1–13.
5. Aug. 3.—David's Repentance. Ps. 51: 1–19.
6. Aug. 10.—Absalom's Rebellion. 2 Sam. 15: 1–14.
7. Aug. 17.—Absalom's Death. 2 Sam. 18: 24–33.
8. Aug. 24.—The Plague Stayed. 2 Sam. 24: 15–25.
9. Aug. 31.—God's Works and Word. Ps. 19: 1–14.
10. Sept. 7.—Confidence in God. Ps. 27: 1–14.
11. Sept. 14.—Waiting for the Lord. Ps. 40: 1–17.
12. Sept. 21.—A Song of Praise. Ps. 103: 1–22.
13. Sept. 28.—Review.

Lesson I. DAVID KING OVER ALL ISRAEL. July 6th, 1884.

2 Sam. 5: 1–12. Memorize vs. 10–12.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him.—Ps. 89: 20.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 1 Sam. 16: 1–13 ....*David Anointed by Samuel.*
T. 2 Sam. 2: 1–11 .....*David King over Judah.*
W. 2 Sam. 5: 1–12 .....*David King over all Israel.*
Th. Ps. 89: 15–37.....*David Anointed by the Lord.*
F. Ps. 48: 1–14.....*Zion's Bulwarks.*
S. Ps. 101: 1–8.....*David's Resolution.*
S. Ps. 30: 1–12.....*David's Thanksgiving.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. Anointed by the People. 2. Reigning and Conquering. 3. Established and Honored.

Time.—B. C. 1048.

Places.—Hebron and Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 86. *What is faith in Jesus Christ?* A. Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the gospel.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

INTRODUCTORY.—Our last Old Testament lesson was on the sad death of Saul and Jonathan, who fell in most disastrous battle with the Philistines on Mount Gilboa. After this defeat the people of many of the cities of Israel fled, and their captors took possession. David, by divine direction, when he heard of Saul's death, came from Ziklag to Hebron, and here the men of Judah anointed him king over their own tribe. But Abner, commander of Saul's armies, took Ishbosheth, the son of Saul, and at Mahanaim made him king over Israel. War began between the two parties, and lasted for several years. Both Abner and Ishbosheth were assassinated, and with the loss of its leaders the opposition to David melted away, and at length the whole nation came under his rule.

1 Then came all the tribes of Is'ra-el to Da'vid unto He'bron, and spake, saying, Behold, we *are* thy bone and thy flesh. [1 Chron. 11: 1; 12: 23; Gen. 29: 14.]

2 Also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Is'ra-el: and the LORD said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Is'ra-el, and thou shalt be a captain over Is'ra-el. [1 Sam. 18: 13; 16: 1, 2; Ps. 78: 71.]

3 So all the elders of Is'ra-el came to the king to He'bron; and king Da'vid made a league with them in He'bron before the LORD: and they anointed Da'vid king over Is'ra-el. [1 Chron. 11: 3; 2 Kings 11: 17; Judg. 11: 11.]

4 ¶ Da'vid *was* thirty years old when he began to reign, *and* he reigned forty years. [1 Chron. 26: 31; 29: 37.]

5 In He'bron he reigned over Ju'dah seven years and six months: and in Je-ru'sa-lem he reigned thirty and three years over all Is'ra-el and Ju'dah. [1 Chron. 3: 4.]

6 ¶ And the king and his men went to Je-ru'sa-lem unto the Jeb'u-sites, the inhabitants of the land: which spake unto Da'vid, saying, Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither: thinking, Da'vid cannot come in hither. [Judg. 1: 21; Josh. 15: 63.]

7 Nevertheless Da'vid took the stronghold of Zi'on: the same *is* the city of Da'vid. [1 Kings 2: 10.]

8 And Da'vid said on that day, Whosoever

getteth up to the gutter, and smiteth the Jeb'u-sites, and the lame and the blind, *that are* hated of Da'vid's soul, *he shall be chief and captain.* Wherefore they said, The blind and the lame shall not come into the house. [1 Chron. 11: 6-9.]

9 So Da'vid dwelt in the fort, and called it the city of Da'vid. And Da'vid built round about from Mil'lo and inward.

10 And Da'vid went on, and grew great, and the LORD God of hosts *was* with him.

11 ¶ And Hi'ram king of Tyre sent messengers to Da'vid, and cedar trees, and carpenters, and masons: and they built Da'vid an house. [1 Kings 5: 2; 1 Chron. 14: 1.]

12 And Da'vid perceived that the LORD had established him king over Is'ra-el, and that he had exalted his kingdom for his people Is'ra-el's sake.

1 *Then came.* From chap. 2: 11 we learn that David's reign in Hebron over his own tribe was seven years and six months; this is, therefore, the time that has elapsed since the period of our last, and the death of Saul. *All the tribes of Israel.* See 1 Chron. 12: 23-40 for interesting details of the manner in which the tribes came to David at this time. There were in all 339,600 men who came, from both sides of the Jordan, and the occasion was one of festivity and gladness, evidently of great enthusiasm. *We are thy bone and thy flesh.* Blood relations. This is the first reason they gave for gathering about David.

2 *Also in time past.* The second reason they gave, that they knew by past experience David's fitness to be king. *And the Lord said.* This was the third reason. It was the will of God that he should be king; he had been divinely chosen for the position. See 1 Sam. 16: 1-12. *Thou shalt feed.* Literally, *Shepherd.* The word gives a beautiful picture of God's idea of the duty of a king or ruler of a nation. See Ps. 78: 70-72. *Captain.* Leader of the armies.

3 *All the elders.* The elders, that is, the chiefs of the tribes, acted for the people, although, as already seen (v. 1), there were many thousands of the people there besides. *Made a league.* A solemn contract binding both king and people; the king promising to reign according to God's commandments, and the people pledging him loyalty and allegiance. Compare 1 Sam. 10: 25 and 1 Kings 12: 3. *Before the Lord.* In the Lord's presence, though the ark was not there. The Lord was witness to their "league." *They anointed David king.* He had been twice anointed already, once secretly by Samuel, and a second time after Saul's death, when he was made king over Judah. 1 Sam. 16: 13; 2 Sam. 2: 4. Now he was anointed over the other tribes as distinct from Judah. Thus he became king of the whole nation.

4, 5 *Thirty years old.* That is, when he first became king over Judah. It is supposed that he was twenty when he slew Goliath. He was then ten years in the service of Saul and in his wanderings as an exile on account of Saul's envy. Thirty was the age at which young men usually entered public life. See Gen. 41: 46; Num. 4: 3; Luke 3: 23.

6 *The king and his men.* His warriors. This movement evidently was made at once after David became king of all the tribes, since, from v. 5, his entire reign over the whole people was at Jerusalem. He probably seized the moment of enthusiasm, when the fighting men of the whole nation were with him, to make the attack on this stronghold. *Jerusalem.* Till now Mount Zion, the highest of the summits on which the later Jerusalem was built, was held by a remnant of the original inhabitants of Canaan. It was called Jebus, and the people were called Jebusites. The place was thought to be impregnable. It belonged to the portion of Benjamin, and it was at least a piece of wise policy to make it the capital, thus honoring Saul's tribe. It was also by its central location, and by its strength as a military fortress, well suited to be the national capital. There is evidence, too, that Jerusalem was divinely chosen to be the seat of the kingdom. See Deut. 12: 5-21; 1 Kings 11: 36. *Except thou take away.* The proper rendering is, *Thou shalt not come in hither, but the blind and the lame would repel thee: as much as to say, David cannot come in hither.* The inhabitants were so confident in their fortress that they supposed even a garrison of lame and blind people could defend it.

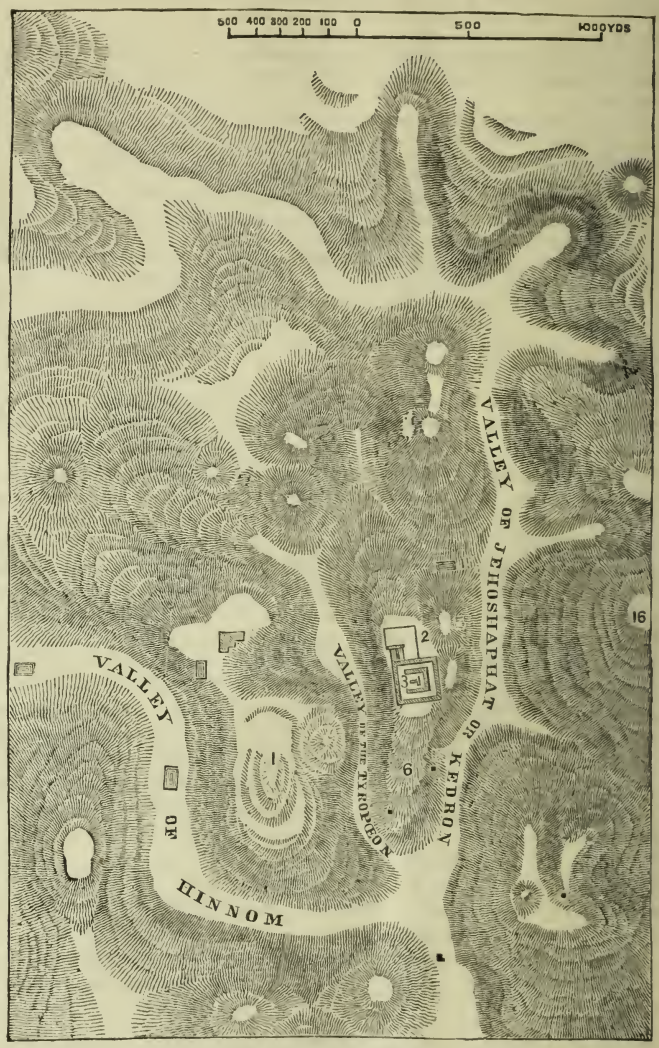
7 *Nevertheless, David took the stronghold.* The fortress or citadel. *Of Zion.* One of the hills on which the city afterward stood, probably that on which the temple was erected, although authorities differ. *The city of David.* Afterwards so called, and so known to the writer of this record.

8 The verse is obscure. The word rendered *gutter* is in Ps. 42: 7 *water spouts.* The probable meaning is, that the only way to reach the fortress was by climbing up the gutters, either the channels worn by the water rushing down, or possibly subterranean shafts, up through which the men had to climb. In 1 Chron. 11: 6 we have a different form of expression, and are told that Joab was the first to get up, and became chief. *Either the lame and the blind* were put to defend the citadel, showing the

contempt of the Jebusites for their enemies; or the garrison is called such out of contempt. *Wherefore they said.* Are wont to say; it became from this a proverb. See 1 Sam. 19: 24. *The blind and the lame,* because hated of David's soul, *shall not come into the house.* The Septuagint reads, "the house of the Lord," as if the blind and lame were excluded from the temple, but this does not seem to have been the case, though these classes could not minister. Lev. 21: 18. Some suppose the expression, "the blind and the lame," to stand for disagreeable and obnoxious persons in general; others regard it as an exclamation: "Blind and lame! he cannot come into the house!" that is, the blind and the lame are sufficient to defend the stronghold; he, the assailant, cannot come into it. The whole verse, however, is obscure.

9 *In the fort.* Same as "stronghold" in v. 7. *Built round about.* Houses and walls, made a city and fortified it. *Millo.* This seems to have been some kind of a fortress, part of the original Canaanite defence, probably protecting the city on the north or open side, the other three sides being protected by deep ravines. It is frequently referred to. See 1 Kings 9: 15, 24; 11: 27; 2 Chron. 32: 5. *And inward.* Millo was the outer limit of the city, and the buildings were within, so as to be under its protection.

10 *David . . . grew great.* Waxed greater and greater. *The Lord God of hosts.* The word "hosts" probably has its widest sense, including both earthly and heavenly hosts, and the name is a proclamation of the universal sovereignty of Jehovah. *Was with him.* This is given as the reason for his prosperity. The Lord favored him, and exercised his power for David's protection and advancement.



GROUND PLAN OF JERUSALEM.
1. Mount Zion. 2. Moriah. 3. Temple. 6. Ophel. 16. Mount of Olives.

11 *Hiram king of Tyre.* Tyre was the great Phenician city, celebrated for its wealth, its commerce, and its mechanical skill. It was about a hundred miles north of Jerusalem, by land, and there was much interchange of commodities between the two countries. The Hiram here mentioned was probably the father or the grandfather of the Hiram who helped Solomon so much in building the temple. *Sent messengers.* When he heard of his capture of the stronghold and his growing prosperity and power. Tyre drew its supplies of wheat and oil from Palestine, and it was natural and im-

portant that friendly relations should be maintained. *Cedar trees.* Cut in the forests of Lebanon and floated in rafts in the Mediterranean to Joppa, the seaport of Jerusalem. See 2 Chron. 2: 16. *Carpenters and masons.* The Israelites were deficient in skilled workers in wood and stone. *They built David an house.* This work covered a considerable time. See Ps. 30, which may have been written at the time of the completion of this house.

12 *David perceived.* From the many prosperous circumstances that attended his reign. He saw in these the hand of God, thus tracing all his success and power to the Lord's favor. *Had established.* He was satisfied that his kingdom was established, and that it was the Lord who had established it. *For his people Israel's sake.* Not for David's own sake, but for the elevation of Israel. He must use his power only to lift up his nation.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

Then came all the tribes of Israel to David. David had waited a long time, but at last was rewarded. The word of God, that David should be king of Israel, was fulfilled, although it was many years in ripening. God's promises are like flowers. They are buds at first, mere germs, wrapped up in many a close-sealed fold. Little by little they unfold, under the influences of sunshine and rain, until at length they burst out in full bloom. We cannot hurry the opening of the flowers; we must not hurry the fulfillment of God's promises. To attempt to do so is always to mar the blessing. David waited patiently for God, and the divine plan for his promotion worked out in due time.

"God's plans, like lilies pure and white, unfold;
We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart;
Time will reveal the calyxes of gold.
And if, through patient toil, we reach the land
Where tired feet, with sandals loose, may rest,
When we shall clearly know and understand,
I think that we will say, 'God knew the best.'"

When Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel. Worth reveals itself wherever it may be placed. When David was but a humble subject his wisdom and his noble qualities were recognized by the people. They saw the king in him even when he wore no crown and sat on no throne. He proved himself able and fit to rule before he was called to rule. It was by the sheer force of his own ability that he commended himself to the people and won their love and confidence. Of course God made him king, but the divine hand moved unseen, and we are concerned with the human side. The lesson to be learned is, that it is by worth and by faithfulness that men rise to places of influence and power. The way to become a prince among men is, to *be* a prince in character. True nobleness will not fail of recognition in the end. The way to rise is not to demand position and try to grasp by force, but to be faithful in the lowlier place, doing every duty well, and quietly waiting for promotion.

The Lord said unto thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel. It is a good thing always to be guided by what God has said, and to what he has mapped out for us. The people here helped David to fulfill his mission, and do the part in God's great Plan, which had been allotted to him. God has a plan for every one of our lives. There is some particular thing that he made us to do. It is not often that we can know in advance what this is, but we can find out if we will. If we simply do our present duty faithfully, day by day, never grasping for preferment, but ready to do whatever God in his providence gives us to do, we shall unconsciously walk in the way God marked out for us before we were born, and fulfill the mission, for which he created and redeemed us. It ought to be a great inspiration to every one of us to know that there is a part of God's great Plan allotted definitely and particularly to us, and it surely ought to be our most eager and intense desire to find out what it is and do it.

David made a league with them . . . before the Lord. It is a good thing to do all our work before the Lord. That does not mean that we shall be all the time on our knees or all the time in the church, but that we shall remember always that we are in God's presence, and do everything with reference to his approval, in a manner that will please him. It means, also, that we shall do everything for him, for his honor and glory. This gives a sacredness to the lowliest service.

"Who sweeps a room as to thy laws,
Makes that and the action fine."

Life would all have a new meaning if we did everything "before the Lord." We would do all our work honestly. There would be no more hypocrisies and insincerities in our conduct or professions. All shams would be abolished. We would stop all our lying. We

would keep all our engagements, for making them before the Lord we would not dare to break them; no oath would be more binding than the simplest word of promise thus witnessed.

The king and his men went to Jerusalem, unto the Jebusites the inhabitants of the land. These Jebusites have their modern representatives in the world and in every heart. There are evils which have intrenched themselves in their strongholds, and seem to defy the Church. There is worldliness which holds its strong places in the midst of the Church, and which it seems impossible to dislodge. It is the mortal enemy to spirituality. It slays millions of souls. It betrays Christ anew and crucifies him afresh, in the midst of his own professed friends. Intemperance is another evil that is intrenched in the very centres of Christian civilization, and bids defiance to the hosts of the Church. It has gotten up into its Jebusite stronghold, and built its walls and dug its trenches, and set guards to keep its gates. Christianity has taken possession of this country, but this unconquered stronghold remains, throwing its dark shadow over every fair scene, and sending down over all the land its unholy influence. In every Christian heart, too, there is apt to be some Jebusite hill with its yet unquelled power of evil. Sometimes it is a secret sin that lives on and refuses to yield to grace. Sometimes it is a remnant of the old nature, pride or wilfulness, selfishness, covetousness or malice.

The Jebusites . . . spake unto David . . . thinking, David cannot come in hither. So these modern Jebusites think, and so they talk with proud boasting. They hurl their threats of defiance down from their high walls. They have stood so long and withstood so many assaults that they have grown insolent. The forces of intemperance have had their own way so long that they think they never can be dislodged. So other evils and vices look down at the Church in derision as it moves on in quietness in its conquests. So the strongholds in Christian hearts hold out and mock the Spirit. But such defiance is not always to go on unanswered. These Jebusite fortresses are not to stand for ever in the midst of Christian civilization or in Christian hearts. When David comes they will have to succumb.

Nevertheless, David took the stronghold. The proud Jebusites could not stand against him and his valiant and determined men. David was a type of Christ. The citadels of sin and of evil that flaunt their ugly banners in the midst of Christian lands must yield in the day of his power. Worldliness must surrender to him, as his Church moves on to more complete triumphs. Intemperance is doomed. The seal of its destruction is already upon it. The Church is arousing now to the final and victorious conflict. The reason our battles have been so feeble and so futile is because we have been fighting without David, without Christ, and as scattered hosts. If the Church gathers under Christ as one, and unites her energies under him, victory will soon come. Without him we can do nothing; but we can do *all* things through Christ who strengtheneth us.

David said . . . Whosoever . . . smiteth the Jebusites . . . shall be chief and captain. There is always a chance for heroic deeds, with grand rewards. There are fortresses to take to-day, and brave men are wanted to climb up the walls and smite the enemy. It is a great thing to take part in Christ's battles in subduing the world to himself. Heroism is always fine; the history of the world has brilliant pages which tell of brave men and their heroic deeds for country or for religion. The great battles now going on against the world's sin afford splendid opportunities for valiant deeds, and those who achieve great things will receive a glorious reward. When the regiments march home after a war it is not the clean, bright, untorn flags and the full ranks that are cheered, but the flags that are riddled and torn, and the lines that are broken and thin. In heaven it will not be the soul that enters without a scar of battle that will receive the gladdest welcome and the brightest crown, but the soul that bears the marks of conflict and battle. The "marks of the Lord Jesus" are the highest marks of honor.

David perceived that the Lord had established him king . . . for his people Israel's sake. He saw the Lord's hand in the prospering events which attended his reign. We should learn to credit all our success to God. Does the wind waft us onward? God sent the wind. Do friends rise up to help us? God sent the friends. Are there favorable circumstances and happy outcomes? God arranged the circumstances and wrought out the outcomes. Do we get on in the world? God helped us on, giving us power to get wealth. It also will be noticed here that God helped him and exalted him, *for his people's sake.* We are not living for ourselves, or if we are, we are not living right. All the prosperity God gives us is bestowed in order that we may become blessings to others. A rich man has riches, that he may do good in the world. Another has mental gifts, is a poet, or a writer in some other line, that he may with his gifts scatter blessings. A woman has the sweet gift of song that she may with it

minister comfort, cheer, gladness and help to many others. So we see the responsibility of having money, power or gifts. Unless we use them to make the world better and happier, we shall have to tell why at God's Judgment-bar.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Patience and faithfulness are always rewarded. v. 1.

2. There is a time coming when all tribes and nations will own Christ as their King.

3. Christ is our "bone and flesh," and we ought all to accept and honor him as Lord.

4. Worth reveals itself in the lowliest stations, and finds its true place in due time. v. 2.

5. God's promises come true in the end, and his plans surely work out at last.

6. We should always seek to carry out God's plan, and help to do what he wants to have done.

7. Christ makes a "league" or covenant with his people, promising them eternal life and glory. v. 3.

8. We should do all our work and make all our engagements "before the Lord."

9. There are Jebusite strongholds all over our Christian land, and even in Christian hearts. v. 6.

10. Led by our David, Christ, the Church should conquer every stronghold. v. 7.

11. There are rewards for heroism in Christ's wars. v. 8.

12. When God conquers a heart, instead of destroying it, he dwells in it and builds up a glorious life. v. 9.

13. The secret of all true prosperity is God's favor. v. 10.

14. God should be recognized as the author of all favor and blessing. v. 12.

15. When God gives us power or prosperity, it is that we may bless the world.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

Returning to the Old Testament after six months in the New, it will be necessary to gather up again the threads of the story. What was the subject of our last Old Testament lesson? What were the causes of Saul's failure as king? Describe the manner of his death? What is the first glimpse the history gives us of David? What was the cause of Saul's bitter hatred of David? Of what portion of the nation was David made king at once after Saul's death? Who reigned over the other tribes? How long did this division continue to exist? What ended it?

I. *Anointed by the People.* vs. 1–3. A word about the place—Hebron—its history and associations.

1. Notice the long course of preparation through which David had been led, from the time when he was first anointed until he now receives the crown of the undivided kingdom. So Christ was prepared by his human experiences to be our King, and now on his throne understands all our sorrows, needs and struggles, because he has felt the same.

2. Notice how David waited for the fulfillment of God's promise. He did not do anything to hasten the coming of the kingdom to himself. He simply did his duty, first as a citizen under Saul, then as king of the one tribe, until the time came for him to become king of the whole nation. We are to wait patiently for God.

3. Notice that no promise of God ever fails. This promise to David was a long time in coming to fulfillment, but there was no failure.

4. Notice that people often have to try their own way, and fail in it before they will accept God's way. Had these tribes at once, at Saul's death, received David as their king, according to God's appointment, how much suffering, shame and loss it would have saved them! They find excellent reasons at last for making David their king (vs. 1, 2); these reasons existed at first, if they would have seen them. Many of us are in like manner slow to accept Christ as our King; we try other rulers first, and often it is only when we have failed to find happiness in our own ways that we are willing to come to Christ. It is the same, also, all through life.

II. *Reigning and Conquering.* vs. 4–9. Gather all the facts about Jebus, the stronghold in the heart of the land that had held out so long. The story of its capture by David will greatly interest the classes if graphically told. Compare the account in 1 Chron. 11: 6–9. (See the cut on page 250 of the ground plan of Jerusalem.)

1. The strongholds of this world and of sin offer just such defiance to the Church as Jebus did to Israel.

2. Every such stronghold must ultimately yield to Christ the great King.

3. When Christ conquers a stronghold of sin he changes it into a place of love and power. Illustrate by a wicked heart and life transformed into purity, holiness, love, joy, beauty; or by a heathen country changed by the gospel into a prosperous and happy land.

III. *Established and Honored.* vs. 10–12.

1. It is a great thing when one is growing great to have the Lord with one. Prosperity

that comes from the Lord is good and real prosperity.

2. When the Lord is with a man he makes even the world to help him. v. 11.

3. When God exalts any one it is for the sake of his Church. All our prosperity is given to us that we may be blessings to this world, and may advance Christ's kingdom.

Points in Lesson for July 13th, to be assigned:

1. Describe the ark of the covenant.

2. How did it come to be out of the tabernacle, and where had it been all the time?

3. Tell what were the sins committed in this removal of the ark.

4. Recall other instances in which the power of the ark was shown.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

BY J. HOWARD SEAL.

SUGGESTIONS.—"God's Plan Fulfilled," "David," "King," "There was Joy in Israel," to be placed upon the board previous to the desk lesson. Have a class read 1 Sam. 16: 1, 12, and print "Anointed," as in diagram. Have another class read 1 Chron. 11: 3. Have the school read v. 12 of the lesson, and print "Established," as in diagram. Show how God's plan was fulfilled, and as the result of it read 1 Chron. 12: 40 (last clause), "The tribes were now united; there was peace in Israel, and the smile of Jehovah rested on their union." So will all God's plans be fulfilled. Take David as the type of the Messiah. 1. Our King. Raised to this rank because (*a*) he is our minister, brother (v. 1 and Heb. 4: 15); (*b*) he is a victorious leader (v. 2 and Eph. 4: 8); (*c*) he is the promised one. v. 2 and Isa. 40: 11. 2. He conquers for us a place (v. 7), Jerusalem, the type of the new city and the new kingdom. Rev. 21. 3. The nations pay tribute (v. 11; Isa. 60: 3).—*Peloubet.* Used as a Bible reading, this outline from Peloubet's select notes will make an impressive closing of the lesson from the desk, erasing "David," and printing in its place "Jesus."

Suggestions for Coloring.—Top line, blue shaded with yellow; "David" and "King," in green shaded with red; lower line, brown shaded with orange.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

BY MRS. G. R. ALDEN—"PANSY."

Those of our children who have been with us for more than six months, will, I think, rejoice to hear of David again, and will greet him as an old friend. The lesson properly commences with a review of his history, especially the anointing by Samuel and the promise of God that he should be a great king over Israel.

Make an arch to stand for the promise. Make a letter "J" in Hebron to stand for the tribe over which David reigned, and eleven marks at the other end of the board to represent the tribes governed by Ishbosheth. Over the arch, outline a crown, so large that it shall reach from one end of the arch to the other, taking in all the tribes; but color two points of it with yellow, these over the letter "J." God sees the entire crown, but David does not—except with the eye of faith—and the people do not.

The years go by. There is that promise, still unfulfilled. Will God forget? Will he make a mistake? One year, two years, three years (make marks to stand for the years), still David has but one little tribe to rule over, and his enemy's son rules all the rest. Seven years pass since he was owned king by the tribe of Judah. They are in the midst of the eighth

year. One morning there was a company of men coming up this road to Hebron. They were men from each of the eleven tribes. What do they want? Listen: "In time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel; and the Lord said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be captain over Israel." (Read this to class from the large Bible.) Saul's son was dead, and the people wanted David for their king. Let me read you what they did: "And they anointed David king over Israel."

How many years since Samuel had anointed him? Now the time had come for God to show to others what he had known all the time—that his promise was sure. (Finish the crown in yellow. Call attention to the fact that it was outlined before; faint to the children, so that they could not see it; faint to the Israelites, but clear to God.) Read the tenth verse to class to show how royally God kept his promise; and, after talk about it, the first sentence of the twelfth, to show that David gave the honor of his kingdom to God. In each of these instances, I should first call the Bible answer from those scholars who have memorized it, and then read from the Bible (not from a *Lesson Leaf*) the *words*, for the benefit of those little ones who have not learned their lessons, and also to impress on all the fact that what they learned on their *Leaves* is the same as what is in the Bible. Constantly keep before the mind that we study the *Bible*, not a *Leaf*, or a *Quarterly*, or a card, but God's word.

Application.—Arches for promises. Print on one, "Day and Night." God's promise that each day should be followed by a night. Has he kept it? On another, "Summer and Winter." God's promise. Was there ever a winter not followed by summer? On another, "A Saviour." Promised many hundred years before Jesus was born. Did God keep that promise? On another, "I Will Come Again." This coming will be, not as a Saviour, but as a King. Do the children think he will keep that promise? Because the world has waited a long time for this, is it any proof that it will never be? What promise has God broken?

Story Illustration.—A father once promised his little girl that on the next New Year's day she should pick some roses out of the garden. The child, who lived in a region where the snow lay deep on the ground at New Year, and the flowers were gone, could not *see* how this could be, yet confidently reported it as something that *was* to be, because papa said so. The father, meantime, had all his plans formed for a winter in Southern California, and on the first day of the New Year fulfilled his promise.

Faith in the papa helped the child to rest on his promise. Faith in God helps his children to do the same.

Possibly the father might have failed in his plans. God *never* fails.

Lesson II. **THE ARK IN THE HOUSE.** **July 13th, 1884.**

2 Sam. 6: 1–12. Memorize vs. 11, 12.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"He blesseth the habitation of the just."—Prov. 3: 33.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Ex. 40: 17–38.. *The Ark in the Tabernacle.*
T. Josh. 6: 8–20.. *The Ark at Jericho.*
W. 1 Sam. 4: 1–11. *The Ark Taken by the Philistines.*
Th. 1 Sam. 6: 1–21. *The Ark Sent Back to Israel.*
F. 2 Sam. 6: 1–12. *The Ark in the House.*
S. 1 Chron. 15: 1–28. *The Ark Brought to Jerusalem.*
S. Ps. 132: 1–18 .. *David's Prayer at its Removal.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. Rejoicing around the Ark. 2. Death beside the Ark. 3. A Home Blessed by the Ark.

Time.—B. C. 1045.

Places.—Baale and the way to Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 87. *What is repentance unto life?* A. Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—Jerusalem was now the capital of the nation, and when David was established there as king his first thought was, to make it the place also of the national worship. The ark was the symbol of the divine presence, and the centre of the religious ordinances appointed by Moses. For many years the ark had not rested in the tabernacle. It had stood neglected at Kirjath-jearim since the Philistines had sent it back. 1 Chron. 13: 3. It was necessary that the ark should be brought to Jerusalem in order that the national worship should be re-established, and that the metropolis of the kingdom should also be the metropolis of the religious life. Preparations were made, therefore, for bringing the sacred symbol to the capital.

1 Again, Da'vid gathered together all the chosen *men* of Is'ra-el, thirty thousand.

2 And Da'vid arose, and went with all the people that *were* with him from Ba'al-e of Ju'dah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, whose name is called by the name of the LORD of hosts that dwelleth *between* the cherubim. [1 Chron. 13: 5.]

3 And they set the ark of God upon a new cart, and brought it out of the house of A-bin'a-dab that *was* in Gib'-e-ah: and Uz'zah and A-hi'o, the sons of A-bin'a-dab, drave the new cart. [Num. 7: 6, 9.]

4 And they brought it out of the house of A-bin'a-dab which *was* at Gib'e-ah, accompanying the ark of God: and A-hi'o went before the ark.

5 And Da'vid and all the house of Is'ra-el played before the LORD on all manner of *instruments made of* fir wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals.

6 ¶ And when they came to Na'chon's threshing-floor, Uz'zah put forth *his hand* to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook *it*, [1 Chron. 13: 9; Num. 4: 15.]

7 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uz'zah; and God smote him there for *his* error; and there he died by the ark of God. [1 Sam. 6: 19.]

8 And Da'vid was displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uz'zah: and he called the name of the place Per'ez-uz'zah to this day.

9 And Da'vid was afraid of the LORD that day, and said, How shall the ark of the LORD come to me? [Ps. 119: 120.]

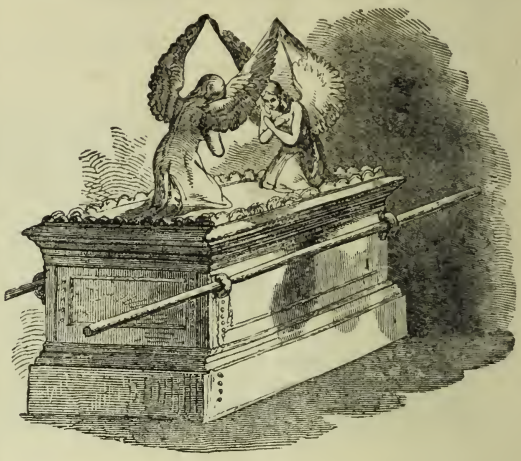
10 So Da'vid would not remove the ark of the LORD unto him into the city of Da'vid: but Da'vid carried it aside into the house of O'bed-e'dom the Git'tite.

11 And the ark of the LORD continued in the house of O'bed-e'dom the Git'tite three months: and the LORD blessed O'bed-e'dom, and all his household.

12 ¶ And it was told king Da'vid, saying, The LORD hath blessed the house of O'bed-e'dom, and all that *pertaineth* unto him, because of the ark of God. So Da'vid went and brought up the ark of God from the house of O'bed-e'dom into the city of Da'vid with gladness.

1 *Again, David gathered together.* "Again" refers to a former gathering of the men of war, either at the time of David's coronation (5: 1–3), or for the Philistine war. 5: 17–25. *Thirty thousand.* In 1 Chron. 13: 1, we learn that David consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds, and with the leaders, and proposed to them the bringing up of the ark. The proposition was pleasing to them, and all Israel was gathered. 13: 5. From the smallness of the number that took part in the ceremony, and the fact that they were "chosen men," it is probable that only representatives from all the tribes and families were present.

2 *From* (or, *to*) *Baale of Judah.* Kirjath-jearim, where the ark had rested since its return from the Philistines. 1 Sam. 7: 1, 2. Its former name was Baalah. Josh. 15: 9; 1 Chron.



THE ARK.

13: 6. *The ark of God.* The ark was a chest, whose lid was the golden mercy-seat overshadowed by figures of cherubim, and containing the tables of stone on which the commandments were written. It belonged in the Holy of holies of the tabernacle, but was taken out and carried to the battle-field in Eli's time, when it fell into the hand of the Philistines. Proving a curse to them they sent it back, and at last it was received at Kirjath-jearim. See 1 Sam. 6. *Whose name.* Rather, *Which is called by the name, the name of Jehovah of hosts, who sits upon the cherubim.* The ark was the symbol of the covenant, and it was over the mercy-seat, between the cherubim, that the Lord manifested himself in visible form to his people.

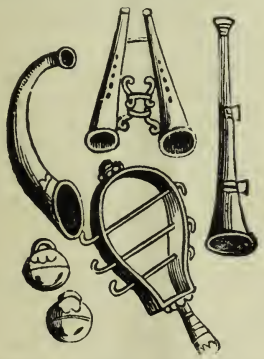
3 *Upon a new cart.* One that never had been used for any other purpose. So Jesus rode on an ass whereon yet never man sat, and was laid in a new tomb. Luke 19: 30; Matt. 27: 60. It was a violation of law, however, to carry the ark on a cart at all, as it was to be borne on the shoulders of Levites. Num. 3: 29–31; 7: 9. *The house of Abinadab.* Still called by his name, although he was scarcely living now, as the ark had been there for at least seventy or eighty years. *In Gibeah.* Rather, *On the hill;* which the word means; some elevation near Kirjath-jearim. *Sons.* Descendants in general.

5 *Played before the Lord.* Danced to vocal

and instrumental music. Compare 1 Sam. 18: 7. *Instruments made of fir wood.* In 1 Chron. 13: 8 the reading is, *with all their might and with songs,*

STRINGED INSTRUMENTS.

and this is probably the correct reading here. *Harps and psalteries.* Stringed instruments, whose exact form cannot be determined. Josephus says the harp had ten strings, and was played with a plectrum, a small ivory instrument with which the strings were struck, while the psaltery was played with the fingers. *Timbrels*, or tabrets, were kinds of drums or tambourines. *Cornets*—rather, *Sistra*, were instruments that were held by a handle and shaken. *Cymbals* were plates of metal held in the two hands and clashed together.



WIND INSTRUMENTS AND SISTRUM.

6 *Nachon's threshing-floor.* The locality is unknown. In 1 Chron. 13: 9 the name is *Chidon.* The threshing-floor was a level spot, prepared in circular form, perhaps fifty feet in diameter, beaten hard and made smooth. The grain was carried in small sheaves and spread out on this floor, and animals then trod over it until it was all threshed out. *Shook it.* The ark seemed to be in danger of falling off the cart as it rolled over the rough ground, or as the oxen stumbled, and Uzzah took hold of it to steady it.

7 *God smote him.* A similar act of irreverence once before (1 Sam. 6: 19) was also punished in a like manner. In explanation of what seems such a severe penalty for a well-meant act, we need but to remember how positive and explicit were the laws which secured the sacred ark from everything irreverent. The Levites were to *carry* it, but even they might not come near it until it had been covered by the priests; nor were they to touch it except by the staves provided for bearing it. See Num. 4: 5, 15, 19, 20. It is to be supposed that Uzzah was a Levite, and if so he ought to have known these divine rules. But the ark had been so long in his house that Uzzah regarded it with too much familiarity. The people, too, had lost their reverential feeling toward the ark. It was necessary, therefore, to reimpress the forgotten fact of the awful sacredness of the holy symbol.

8, 9 *David was displeased.* His feeling was of grief mingled with anger. *Made a breach.* Broke forth, implying suddenness. See Ex. 19: 22. *Perez-uzzah.* The breach of Uzzah. It was the custom to name places by the events occurring there, thus perpetuating the history of the events. *To this day.* To the time when this book was written. *Afraid of the Lord.* His feeling quickly changed.

10 *Would not remove the ark.* Abandoned his purpose, and would not take it up to Jerusalem. The death of Uzzah made him afraid to carry the awful symbol into his own city. *Unto him.* Showing that he was already living in "the city of David." See also v. 16. *The house of Obed-edom.* He was a Levite of the family of Merari. 1 Chron. 15: 18, 21, 24. He was a porter, and also a player on the harp. 1 Chron. 15: 18, 21, 24; 16: 38, 42. He is called a Gittite, it is supposed, from *Gath*-rimmon, in which he dwelt.

11 *The Lord blessed Obed-edom.* In what particular ways we are not told; probably both in temporal and spiritual things.

12 *It was told king David.* The people would watch with some solicitude, after that day's experience, to see what would be the result in Obed-edom's case of the presence of the ark in his house, and soon it began to be manifest that special blessings were coming from God upon him and his household because the ark was under his roof. *So David went.* His fear had vanished, and he was assured by what he heard that wherever the ark might rest blessings would come. So he went again and brought it into his own city. *With gladness.* With songs and

shouts and festal rejoicings. The details are given in the subsequent verses. Sacrifices were offered as the procession set out. In 1 Chron. 15: 26 it is said that "when God helped the Levites that bare the ark . . . they offered, etc." David was clothed in fine linen. There was a great company of singers, with musical instruments. The song sung on the occasion is given in 1 Chron. 16: 7–36 and Ps. 105. A new tent was prepared for the reception of the ark, the old tabernacle still standing empty at Gibeon. 1 Chron. 16: 39. This was a great day in David's life, and in the history of his kingdom. He celebrated it by offering burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, and by making gifts of food and wine to all the assembly.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

David gathered together all the chosen men. It is a sad thing when religion is neglected, whether it be in a nation, in a home, or in an individual life. For a long time this sacred ark, the symbol of the covenant and of the divine presence, had been left in obscurity, its mercy-seat unsprinkled, its blessings unsought. Those were dark and sad days for the nation. Disaster followed disaster. The neglect of religion always brings sorrow. This incident may be studied in homes where once was a family altar, but where now the altar is broken down, where the household gathers no more to worship God, where the voice of prayer is heard no more. Has the neglect of religion brought joy and prosperity? This passage may be studied also by individuals who once served God and followed him, but who have now suffered the altar to fall into neglect. The Bible is read no more. They bow no more morning and evening in prayer. They do not attend the sanctuary. The world has come in and Christ has been driven out. They are in the same condition as was Israel when David came to the throne. It is a sad condition.

David arose and went . . . to bring up . . . the ark of God. He had seen how the people were suffering through their neglect of God's worship. He had been doing many other things to elevate the nation. He had built a fine capital city and a palace of cedar for himself, and no doubt had instituted many reforms in the land. But something was yet wanting to bring full prosperity. He must restore the national worship. He must see that God was honored. Very commendable was David's desire when he gathered the people and set out to bring up the ark. The best blessing any one can give to a nation or to a community is, to set up God's altar in its midst. Nothing else that David wrought for Israel did so much for the nation as his re-establishing of the worship of God. Here is a community sunk in degradation. The people live in miserable hovels. They are idle and thriftless, sunken in sensuality and sin. One way of trying to lift them up is, to build them better houses and to put into their midst the refinements of civilization. Something may thus be done for their temporal improvement. Another way is, to bring the gospel into their midst, to start a Sabbath-school and preaching services, and to send the Christian missionary to their wretched homes to tell them of Christ. This will lift them up in reality. The best thing we can do for any godless household is to carry Christ there. The best help we can give to any unsaved person is to get him to receive the Saviour.

They set the ark of God upon a new cart . . . David and all the house of Israel played before the Lord. David had made a splendid pageant of this bringing back of the ark. The king led the procession in person, and directed all the details. Thirty thousand chosen men from all the tribes were present, in glittering robes. There were great choirs of singers and bands of players on instruments. It was a grand national fête day. It opened in splendor, but it closed in sorrow and disappointment. The lesson is, that God can be honored only by obedience. What did he care for David's brilliant pageant so long as David disregarded his commands? The hauling of the sacred ark on the cart may have seemed a small deviation from the prescribed way of carrying it, but it was a deviation, and it eclipsed in God's sight all the grand ceremonies. The lesson here is, that we must worship and serve God in the way he has marked out for us; otherwise, our costliest services and our most imposing ceremonies will be but an idle show in his eyes.

Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it . . . and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark. It seemed proper when the ark was about to fall off the cart for Uzzah to throw out his hand to steady it; and here we see how one disobedience leads to another. If the Levites had been carrying the ark on their shoulders—the only proper way—Uzzah would not have committed *his* sin. It is always thus. One irreverence prepares the way for another, almost makes the other necessary. The breaking of one command leads to the breaking of others. The first sin is like the little leak in the dyke. If we would be safe from the final ruin we must

guard against the beginnings of evil. The great lesson to learn here is, reverence for sacred things. Uzzah *touched* the ark. This was positively forbidden even to the Levites, who were to carry it by poles run through rings on its sides. His error brought the fatal stroke. How may we repeat his sin? When we treat carelessly the holy things of God's word and God's house, we are certainly guilty of the sin of irreverence. All who take the attitude of prayer and profess to pray, while there is no prayer in their hearts, are surely trifling with sacred things. It is irreverent to read the Bible carelessly or talk flippantly about its words. It is irreverent to trifle and talk in the church or Sabbath-school while God's worship is going on. It is irreverent to trample on the blood of Christ by rejecting it. See Heb. 10: 29.

David was displeased . . . David was afraid of the Lord that day. His feelings cannot be approved. He seems first to have been hurt by this divine interruption of his great pageant, and afterwards to have come to think of the ark as something too terrible for him to have near him; but there is no evidence that he thought at the time of his own errors which had brought all the sorrow of that day. There is no confession of sin. There is no inquiring of God as to what he would have him to do. His spirit is one of wounded pride. He abandons at once his idea of bringing the ark to Jerusalem and re-establishing the national worship. He drops the ark where it is, and hurries away. We need to mark well the teaching here—never to blame God when he has punished our sins; never to reject the sacred things of his grace, because misused they become the savor of death. When God punishes we should bow in penitence and ask what he would have us to do; and the true thing is, not to keep far from holy things and places lest our irreverence brings woe and curse, but to approach reverently and find blessing; for they are the savor of life to those who rightly receive and use them.

The ark of the Lord continued in the house of Obed-edom . . . and the Lord blessed Obed-edom and all his household. Obed-edom was not afraid to receive the ark into his house. He knew all the disasters that had attended its profanation. But he believed also that it would bring no curse if not irreverently treated. Very likely some of his neighbors tried to dissuade him from taking it in, but he had courage to do his duty. And the result justified his faith. Great and marked blessings came upon his home because the ark was there. This episode suggests the blessedness of true religion in a home. Some people think it is a great loss and self-denial to receive Christ into a house. It will stop many a pleasure. It will drive out many an amusement. It will interfere with many an ambition. But those who open their doors to Christ, the rejected and despised One, will surely be rewarded. Religion in a home always blesses the home. It sweetens the home life, enriches the home affections, deepens the home joys. It brings true prosperity, for the blessing of the Lord maketh rich. It brings protection, for the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him. When sorrow comes religion has wonderful comfort. When death comes and separates the household it gives assurance of a meeting beyond the grave. Wherever the ark is admitted God blesses the home.

It was told king David, saying, The Lord hath blessed the house of Obed-edom. . . . So David went and brought up the ark. No doubt the people watched to see trouble in Obed-edom's house, but soon it became evident that the Lord was blessing him. The news spread, and all the people heard of it. Thus his faith blessed all the nation. David's fear and anger passed away, and he looked into the law and saw how he had broken God's commandments before. No doubt he confessed his sin, and sought and obtained forgiveness. Again his heart turned to his former purpose, and this time he took care to bring up the ark in *God's* way, not his own. Thus Obed-edom's faith and blessing restored the king's faith, and secured blessing for the nation. We never can tell the influence of one consecrated household. If we are true and faithful to God our example may inspire many others, a whole community, and the blessing that comes upon us may lead many more to seek the same blessing in the same way.

LESSON POINTS.

1. It is a sad thing for any nation, home or individual, when the "ark" is lying neglected.
2. The best blessing we can give in such a case is to get the ark back into its place again. v. 1.
3. It is good to enlist all the people in religious work. vs. 1, 2.
4. In serving God we must be careful to do it as he has prescribed. v. 3.
5. God despises pageant and show if he is disobeyed.
6. One disobedience leads to another. v. 6.
7. It is a terrible thing to violate God's holiness. v. 7.
8. The very ark of mercy becomes an ark of death to the disobedient; so the rejected cross is a savor of death.

9. When God smites we should not be angry, but seek out our sin and ask for forgiveness. vs. 8, 9.

10. Wherever religion is admitted it blesses the home and all the household. v. 11.

11. The influence of one family that obeys God and receives his blessing leads many others to the same course. v. 12.

12. We should serve God obediently and with gladness.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

The manner of introducing a lesson in the class is always important. The attention must be caught and interest awakened at the very beginning. As a rule, no two consecutive lessons should be introduced in the same way; at least, no teacher should have a stereotyped introduction. In this lesson there are many ways in which the attention of the class may be gained from the beginning. If a model of the ark, or a good picture is accessible, it may be shown. This will lead to the history of the ark, when and where it was made, the materials, what was in it, and where it was to stay, its meaning, how it came to be taken out of its place, where it had been since the day of Eli's death, what strange things had occurred wherever it was taken. (See cut, page 256.)

Or, without using a model or picture, the lesson may be introduced by asking, How many arks are spoken of in the Bible? Who made the first? What was its use? Who made the second? Describe it. What was in it? Where was it to stay? Where was it now? How had it gotten there? Bring out by rapid questions the history of the wanderings of the ark.

I. *Rejoicing Around the Ark.* vs. 1–5. For what purpose did David gather so many men? In whose house was the ark? How long had it been there? Why did David want it brought to Jerusalem? What was the appointed way of carrying the ark? How was it carried now? Notice that it was carried in the *Philistine way* (1 Sam. 6: 7), and not in *God's way*. We are always in danger of conforming our religious life to the world's tastes and maxims rather than adhere inflexibly to the precepts of Christ. Show that if the ark had been carried in the right way Uzzah would not have been tempted to the sin which brought death upon him; thus one sin makes others easy, sometimes almost necessary. Bring out the fact that all David's music and rejoicing did not please God while the ark was being carried in a forbidden way.

II. *Death Beside the Ark.* vs. 6–9. What did Uzzah do? Why was this wrong? How was he punished? Why was so severe a penalty visited on him? Recall other times when the ark caused trouble and calamity. What are the great lessons we should learn from this? [See Notes.] We should not fail to teach here reverence for sacred things, for God's name, his word, his house, his worship. No lesson is needed more. What were David's feelings when he saw Uzzah smitten dead? We ought not to be angry with God, even when his judgments fall, for his ways are always just and good. Nor ought we to be afraid of God, for it is only when we sin that he is terrible.

III. *A Home Blessed by the Ark.* vs. 10–12. Who opened his door to receive the ark when the king abandoned it? Speak of the faith of this good man. What was his reward? Give other instances of the ark as a power for blessing and good. How can we have the ark of God in our homes? What blessings does religion bring to a household? What were the good results of Obed-edom's faith and blessing? It soon became evident that the ark was bringing him a blessing. This encouraged David to go again for the ark. See the influence of one good example. Notice, too, that David had the ark carried next time in the right way, and that no calamity came.

Points in Lesson of July 20th, to be assigned:

1. Gather all that is known about Nathan.
2. Why was Nathan's first answer to David so different from that which afterward he gave?
3. Find all the reasons why David was not permitted to build the temple.
4. What was "God's covenant" with David?

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The Lesson Introduced.—A blackboard picture of the ark. Its size and appearance described; its contents explained; its absence from its proper place accounted for. All these points can be briefly taught, provided the teacher has a very clear idea of the facts.

Now for the lesson story. The class should tell this, aided by the teacher, who marks out the road for the ark, and make dots or initial letters for the persons employed. The special difficulty will be to explain the greatness of Uzzah's sin.

Unless careful teaching is done, the average child will feel that the punishment was greater than the sin deserved. To help the class to realize the solemnity of the hour three things will be necessary.

1. To teach that the ark was their sign of the

presence of God, and that any disrespect shown to it was counted as shown to him.

2. That God had said that whoever touched the ark should die.

3. That Uzzah having had long familiarity with the ark knew this law, and directly disobeyed God, apparently with the belief that there would be no danger in doing so, or that, in other words, God would not be true to his promise.

This lesson, then, teaches distinctly two things.

1. That God will have perfect obedience.

2. That he will be true to his word.

As the story continues, we find another truth plainly taught. For the first time in his history David seems to be afraid of God, afraid of the ark which is the sign of his presence. What is the matter? Why, David, too, has been doing wrong. Who will receive the ark?

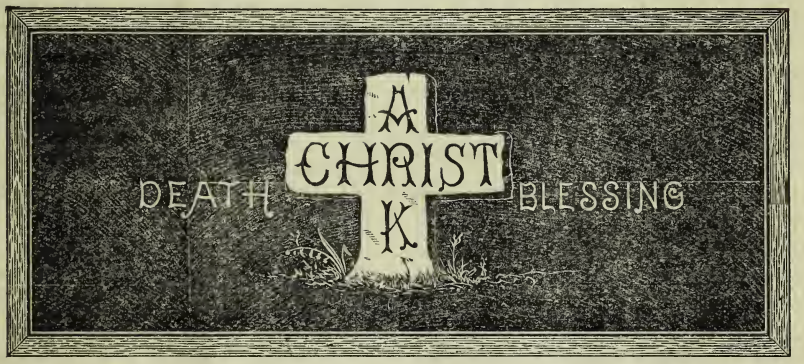
Here appears a new character—Obed-edom. He wants the ark, and it is carried to his house. Now mark the result: "The Lord blessed Obed-edom and all his household."

The difficulty with this story, so far as little children are concerned, is, that it teaches too many things at once. However, the teacher who weaves it into story form, will bring in all these truths incidentally, leaving the facts themselves to make their own impression.

Practical Application.—The ark was the sign of God's presence with his people. What signs have we? How can we tell a Christian home? Encourage the children to think out answers to these questions. Lead them by your further questioning to the true answers. Bible reading, family worship, blessing asked at table. Perhaps these three signs will be sufficient for one teaching. What has God said about the Bible? He has told us to search it, to study it, to read it every day. Do we obey? What was David's sin? When children kneel down to pray, having their hearts busy with other thoughts, or when they whisper and even laugh while some one is speaking to God, of what sin are they guilty? Teach the word "Irreverence," the meaning of it, and lead your scholars to feel that it is the sin of which Uzzah was guilty.

What if God should punish all disobedience and all irreverence now as he punished Uzzah's? He will surely, some time, punish all those who do not ask his forgiveness and accept of Christ's perfect obedience.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



SUGGESTIONS.—Have the words "Death" and "Blessing" on the board before commencing the lesson from the desk. Describe the ark, its purpose and place in the tabernacle; the mode of its conveyance from place to place. It was the symbol of God's presence (1 Sam. 4: 7); "as such none could look at it (Num. 4: 20; 1 Sam. 6: 19), much less lay hold of it, without peril of life. For transportation, therefore, it was covered up by the Levites, to whom it was committed, and that with faces covered (Num. 4: 15, 20), and carried on staves." Uzzah's error consisted in touching the ark. It was a rash act, with an awful penalty. Seek to impress how Christ is God's Ark.

1. He is our Advocate. 1 John 2: 1; Heb. 7: 25; Rom. 8: 34. (Print Advocate.)
2. He is our Redeemer. Gal. 3: 13; 4: 4, 5; Rev. 5: 9. (Print Redeemer.)
3. He is the King of kings. Rev. 17: 14; 19: 16; 1 Tim. 6: 15. (Print King of kings.)

After impressing these lessons, have school read Luke 23: 38–43. Erase all but the acrostic, and the words "Death" and "Blessing." Print "Christ" as in diagram. Draw the cross, and show how there was death on one side of it and blessing on the other. Apply, urging all to take Christ as the penitent thief did, and as Obed-edom took the ark into his house, and not treat him irreverently, as the scoffing thief did, or as Uzzah treated the ark.

Lesson III. **GOD'S COVENANT WITH DAVID.** July 20th, 1884.

2 Sam. 7: 1-16. Memorize vs. 13-16.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Thy throne shall be established for ever."—2 Sam. 7: 16.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Gen. 12: 1-8.....*God's Covenant with Abraham.*
T. Gen. 28: 10-22...*God's Covenant with Jacob.*
W. 2 Sam. 7: 1-16...*God's Covenant with David.*
Th. 2 Sam. 7: 17-29..*God's Covenant Love Praised.*
F. Ps. 72: 1-20..*God's Covenant Goodness Foreseen.*
S. Acts 13: 16-37.*God's Covenant Fulfilled in Christ.*
S. Ps. 45: 1-17.....*Christ and His Kingdom.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Temple Proposed. 2. The Service Declined. 3. A Covenant Made.

Time.—B. C. 1042.

Place.—Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 88. *What are the outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption?* A. The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption are, his ordinances, especially the word, sacraments, and prayer; all which are made effectual to the elect for salvation.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—David has now been established on his throne as king over all Israel. He has taken the stronghold of the Jebusites, and fixed his capital there. He has built a palace for himself and a city about it. He has brought the ark to Jerusalem, placing it in a provisional tent. And now there starts in his heart a desire to build a temple for the Lord, a place in which the ark might rest, and which might become a fitting centre for the worship of the nation. His thought is made known, but God forbids him to build the temple, promising, however, that David's son should build the house. The parallel account is in 1 Chron. 17: 1-15.

---

1 And it came to pass, when the king sat in his house, and the LORD had given him rest round about from all his enemies; [1 Chron. 17.]

2 That the king said unto Na'than the prophet, See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains. [2 Sam. 5: 11; Acts 7: 46.]

3 And Na'than said to the king, Go, do all that *is* in thine heart; for the LORD *is* with thee. [1 Kings 8: 17, 18.]

4 ¶ And it came to pass that night, that the word of the LORD came unto Na'than, saying,

5 Go and tell my servant Da'vid, Thus saith the LORD, Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in? [1 Kings 5: 3; 8: 19.]

6 Whereas I have not dwelt in *any* house since the time that I brought up the children of Is'ra-el out of E'gypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle. [1 Kings 8: 16; Ex. 40: 18, 19, 34.]

7 In all *the places* wherein I have walked with all the children of Is'ra-el spake I a word with any of the tribes of Is'ra-el, whom I commanded to feed my people Is'ra-el, saying, Why build ye not me an house of cedar? [Ps. 78: 71, 72.]

8 Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant Da'vid, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Is'ra-el: [1 Sam. 16: 11, 12.]

9 And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great *men* that *are* in the earth. [1 Sam. 18: 4; Ps. 89: 23.]

10 Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Is'ra-el, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime,

11 And as since the time that I commanded judges *to be* over my people Is'ra-el, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the LORD telleth thee that he will make thee an house. [Judg. 2: 14; Ps. 106: 42.]

12 ¶ And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. [1 Kings 2: 1; 8: 20; Ps. 132: 11.]

13 He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. [1 Kings 5: 5.]

14 I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: [Heb. 1: 5.]

15 But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took *it* from Saul, whom I put away before thee. [1 Sam. 15: 23, 28.]

16 And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever. [Ps. 89: 4, 29, 36, 37.]

1 *When the king sat in his house.* See v. 2. David had already built his own palace. The time at which the purpose to build a temple was formed is not definitely marked, but it was probably not long after the bringing of the ark to Jerusalem. *The Lord had given him rest.* It was after his battles with the Jebusites and the Philistines; he had been victorious, and for a time enjoyed peace.

2 *Nathan the prophet.* Here we have the first mention of this man who performed such an

important part in the reigns both of David and Solomon. Of his personal history nothing is known. As a prophet he was the messenger of God to David on this occasion; also when he had committed his great double sin. Chap. 12. He was active in securing the throne to Solomon. 1 Kings 1: 22. He wrote a history of the reign of David, and of part, at least, of the reign of Solomon (1 Chron. 29: 29; 2 Chron. 9: 29); and it is supposed that a large portion of the books of Samuel, Kings and Chronicles is from his hand. *A house of cedar.* Implying that his palace was very costly. *Within curtains.* See chap. 6: 17. This tent was not the old tabernacle, which was at Gibeon (1 Chron. 16: 39), but a new one that David had prepared. His feeling was that the ark of God should at least have as beautiful a home as he himself had.

3 Nathan personally approved and sanctioned the thought and plan of David, but he had not yet received the Lord's message.

4 *The word of the Lord came.* The word that Nathan had spoken to David was his own private opinion; here is the divine commission.

5 *My servant David.* A designation indicating peculiar favor, and that in a very special sense David was the servant of the Lord, as Moses and Joshua had been. See Num. 12: 7, 8. *Shalt thou build?* The question implied a negative reply. See 1 Chron. 17: 4.

6 *I have not dwelt in any house.* This is given as one reason why David should not build a house. *Have walked.* Referring to the frequent moving of the tabernacle. *In a tent and in a tabernacle.* The different parts of the tabernacle made by Moses are here described, "tent" referring to the outer covering of skins, etc., and "tabernacle" to the wooden framework which composed the inner part.

7 *Spake I a word?* Implying that God never *had* spoken a word in the way of request that a permanent house should be built for him. *The tribes.* See 1 Chron. 17: 6. *Judges.* Here, however, the reference probably is to the tribes from which the judges came who fed the people. *To feed.* Including all care, as a shepherd tends his sheep. *A house of cedar.* Cedar was a costly wood, and implied not only a permanent but a luxurious house, in allusion to David's words. v. 2.

8 *So shalt thou say.* The Lord's gentleness, as here displayed toward David, is very beautiful. *The sheepcote.* Rather, "pasture," referring to David's employment when first anointed to be king, and to the lowly position from which he had been called. *Over my people.* In covenant relation.

9 *I was with thee.* Giving him success. *Have cut off.* The wars of David were the Lord's wars, and it was he that had given victory. *A great name.* David's fame was of the Lord's making.

10, 11 *I will appoint.* Rather, "*Have* appointed." There is no change in the tense. The reference is to the planting and establishing of Israel in their own land, which work had been completed in the consolidation of the kingdom in David's hands. *Move no more.* Or, be no more disturbed. They had gotten full possession now of the land of promise. *Children of wickedness.* Wicked men. The Canaanites and the other tribes had for a long time vexed and troubled them very greatly, but they were at last subdued. *Beforetime.* In the early periods of their history. *And as since.* In the troublous times during the rule of the Judges, and down to the present. *The Lord telleth thee.* Or, *Hath* told thee, that is, by the mouth of Samuel. 1 Sam. 25: 28. *He will make thee a house.* A royal house, establishing his kingdom.

12 *When thy days be fulfilled.* When his work was done and his life ended. *Sleep with thy fathers.* Die and pass to thy rest. *I will set up thy seed.* A promise of royal succession in David's family. The reference is primarily to Solomon, who should build the house, but also to Christ the seed of David. See Acts 2: 29–31; 13: 22, 23.

13 *He shall build a house.* The work which David had proposed but which God had not permitted him to do, David's son should do. See 1 Kings 8: 16–20. *For my name.* The name of God stands for God himself, so far as revealed to men. The temple would be built for God himself, and the promise that he would put his name there was a pledge that he would be present there and would there reveal himself.

14 *I will be his father.* This implied the promise of peculiar watchfulness, care and love, such as a father bestows upon a child. *He shall be my son.* Implying the duties of sonship on the part of the king toward God, especially faithfulness and obedience. In Ps. 89: 26, 27, similar words are applied to David himself. In 1 Chron. 22: 9, 10; 28: 6, David quotes this promise with reference to Solomon. In Heb. 1: 5 these words are quoted and applied to Christ, showing that the seed of David here referred to embraced not Solomon only, but took in Christ also. *If he commit iniquity I will chasten him.* This is part of a father's duty to a child. See Prov. 3: 12; Heb. 12: 5–10. *With the rod of men.* With such chastening as men inflict, to correct and reclaim their

children. Compare Ps. 89: 30–33, and 1 Kings 11: 34–39.

15 *But my mercy shall not depart.* Though he would chasten him he would not abandon him.

16 *Established.* Made sure. See Isa. 55: 3. *For ever . . . for ever.* This expression occurs in v. 13 and twice here, and its repetition shows that the promise did not refer merely to the succession of kings of David's house that reigned in Judah, but extended so as to embrace Christ. See the words of the angel in Luke 1: 31–33. *Before thee.* It is probable that the true reading is "Before *me*," as all this future history could not unfold before *David's* eyes.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

The king sat in his house, and the Lord had given him rest . . . from all his enemies. It is God that allots our life for us. When we have times of struggle and burden-bearing, it is he that gives them. When periods of quiet and peace come, they are from him. This ought to give us great comfort in life's experiences. Surely God knows what is best for us, and under what influences our graces will best ripen. Winter is as necessary to the earth as summer, and hardship and suffering and struggle are as essential in most lives as quiet, ease and peace. However, it is a blessed ground of confidence that God is ordering all things in our lot, and will make no mistake.

I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains. He does not chide himself for having built his house of cedar. There was no sin in that. It was the proper kind of house for a king to live in. It would have been a very unfit thing for him to live in a tent, or in a hovel, since the Lord had given him such a position. He does not feel that he has done wrong in erecting such a fine and costly house. But his thought is, that since he has such a luxurious home he ought also to provide something better than curtains for the ark of God. We are not to teach, therefore, that it is wrong for Christians who grow rich and prosperous to build fine houses for themselves; but that at the same time they should increase their offerings to the cause of God. When they can live in richly furnished homes they should be moved to do as liberal things at least for Christ as for themselves. Sometimes, as people prosper and begin to live more expensively, their contributions to good causes are diminished. They withdraw from God's portion to spend upon themselves. They leave the ark in curtains that they may live in a cedar palace. This is all wrong. We should never add to our luxuries when we have to rob God to do it. On the other hand, when we can afford a better house or finer furniture, we ought to afford to increase our gifts to the Lord in the same proportion. When we build the cedar house for ourselves we ought to bring cedar also to God's altar.

The word of the Lord came . . . Go, and tell my servant David, Thus saith the Lord, Shalt thou build me a house? The Lord does not reprove David for his desire to build him a temple. Elsewhere we learn that he said distinctly, "Whereas, it was in thine heart to build an house unto my name, *thou didst well that it was in thine heart.*" God approves of good intentions, even when he does not permit us to carry them out. This ought to be a cheering thought to those whose plans God interrupts and sets aside. He is satisfied sometimes with the thought, the intention, the will. There are many other important suggestions in this refusal of the Lord to have David build the temple. One is, that every one has his own particular and definite part to do in the Lord's work. David was not to build the temple—that was Solomon's mission—but he had other things to do which were equally important. He had to fight the battles of the nation and subdue the strongholds. Then he had another work to do far greater than the building of the temple. He was the Psalm-writer of the ancient Church. The value of this service never can be estimated. The influence of his songs in all ages since has been most wonderful, and is going on yet, extending and deepening, wherever the Bible goes. Who thinks that it would have been a grander thing for David to build a temple of stone and gold and cedar? That gorgeous house—where is it now? Not a stone is in its place. But David's psalms are living everywhere and sung everywhere. His mission was grand enough, though he was not permitted to erect the temple. Solomon built the temple, but could never have written David's psalms. To every man his work.

Another thought here is, that it is the part of some to plan and prepare while others carry out the plans and complete the work. The temple was born in David's heart; it was one of his thoughts. Then he made most immense and costly preparations for it. He gathered gold and silver in vast abundance, and stored them away for the work. Solomon had little to do but to build the house; the materials were ready to his hand. Thus David's part in the

temple was after all very large. We are apt to undervalue preparatory work. It is like the foundations of a building. It is buried away, and no one sees it or admires it. Yet we know that there can be no house for men to praise unless there is first a foundation strong and secure. It is the part of many people to do preparatory work. Others complete the pile and get the glory, but they are forgotten. We talk about Solomon's temple, and say David was not allowed to build it, though David conceived the thought and really did a great portion of the work, and without his part it is not likely that there would have been a temple at all. The same thing goes on continually. One sows, another reaps. One plans, another executes. One gathers a church, another takes it and builds it up. I know a teacher who says her mission is to bring scholars in the rough into a mission-school, and when she has them tamed to pass them over to another teacher and to go out and look for more. "To every one his work."

I will set up thy seed after thee. . . . He shall build a house for my name. Men pass away, but God's work goes on. One falls with his plans unfulfilled and his hands full of work; but another is raised up to perform the unaccomplished tasks. The succession never is broken in God's ministry. He has one great Plan, which embraces all his servants from the beginning to the end. Our plans may be set aside, but it is because God has a plan which is better. Nothing will fail if we each do but our own little part; another will be ready to begin where we leave off.

Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever. As men read history this promise was not fulfilled. David's throne was not established for ever. No one can find it now. Antiquarians are searching amid the ruins of centuries for the landmarks of David's and Solomon's reigns, but no throne is there to-day, nor has there been for ages. But Bible lovers know well that the promise has been gloriously fulfilled. It did not refer alone to an earthly succession. Christ was the "seed" promised in its full and final meaning. His was the "kingdom" and his the "throne" that should be "established for ever." So the fulfilment passed from earth up to heaven. Christ came of the seed of David, and the throne which we would search for in vain in the city of David stands amid the glories of heaven, and all the redeemed worship and bow down before it.

David . . . said, Who am I . . . that thou hast brought me hitherto? v. 18. Read the story through to see how David behaved when he heard this message. No doubt the disappointment was sore when he learned that he was not to be permitted to build a temple, but he submitted quietly. God's plan was the best, and the king's must be yielded. There is no one of us who shall not some time have our plans vetoed by the Lord. We plan for prosperity, and God sends adversity; for health, and he sends sickness; for success, and failure comes; for long life, and death knocks. Let us see to it that we never rebel. God *has* a plan, and it is all-wise and good, good for each one of us, too; let us always lay our little plans at his feet, glad to carry them out if he wills it so; content to have them set aside if he so ordains. It was a thought of overwhelming joy to David here, that while his plan was not to be carried out, the Lord had better things in store for him than his own desires. It is always so. When God refuses to give us what we want, he gives us something better. When he declines to let us go a certain way, he takes us a better way. When he withholds the things we seek, he sends richer blessings. When he thwarts our little plans, it is because his own plan for us is better and far more glorious.

LESSON POINTS.

1. It is the Lord who allots our life to us. v. 1.

2. When we are prospered we should do the more for the cause of God. v. 2.

3. God sometimes declines our offers of service even when he approves them. v. 5.

4. To every one God gives a definite part in his work.

5. The part some have given them to do is preparatory work.

6. There is a time for everything; the temple could not be built till the nation was well settled. v. 10.

7. Men die, but God's work goes on; through all our little broken plans his great plan moves on. vs. 12, 13.

8. It may be ours only to start a good thought, and others may carry it out to fulfilment. v. 13.

9. God does not allow his children to be lost, but chastens them when they sin, and brings them back. v. 14.

10. Chastening is a mark of love. v. 15.

11. Christ's throne is established for ever, and all the nations must bow to it. v. 16.

12. When God declines to give us our requests he gives us better things.

13. We should always submit to God's will, even when it crosses ours. v. 18.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

One way of introducing this lesson would be to have a talk about covenants—the covenant with Noah, with Abraham, etc. For example, with small scholars, start with the questions: When did you see a rainbow? Where in the Bible are rainbows mentioned? Of what is the bow a pledge? Thus lead up to the covenant with Noah, and make clear the meaning of the word. What covenant have we in this lesson? What verses tell of this covenant?

Or the lesson may be introduced by a brief review of the last one. Who fell dead beside a cart? What caused his death? What was David doing? Why did he give up his plan? Where was the ark taken? Where was it carried at last? In what kind of house was it placed? In what sort of house did David live? This leads up to the lesson.

I. *The Temple Proposed.* vs. 1–3. What kind of a house had David built for himself? What made him think of building a temple? He began to compare his own rich and beautiful house with the plain tent in which the ark of the Lord stood, and his heart smote him. It seemed wrong that he should do so much for himself and so little for the Lord. Here is a good opportunity for some very practical teaching. Are *you* doing as much for God's cause as for yourself? Have you a beautiful home? Do you spend money for ornaments? No harm in this, if you can afford it and do it honestly; but what are you doing meanwhile for the house of God, for missions, for the poor, for the relief of distress? It is a bad thing to be liberal toward ourselves and stingy toward God. It will be noticed that David did not sell his palace and move into a tent. It was proper that he should live in a palace. But his feeling took the other direction, that of doing generously toward God's house. Christian people who are rich need not live in poor hovels, but they should give for God's service on as liberal a scale as they live themselves.

II. *The Service Declined.* vs. 4–11. Call for the facts about Nathan—all that is known of him. Why did Nathan when first informed by David of his intention approve the plan, and why did he afterward as prophet forbid it? What were the reasons why David's offer was not accepted? Notice these points in God's answer:

1. He had never dwelt in a house, but always in a tent. v. 6.

2. He had never commanded any one to build him a house of cedar. v. 7.

3. David was not to build a house, because he had been a man of war. 1 Chron. 22: 8; 28: 3. Mark, however, that David is not blamed for his wars, for these were necessary, but a war period was not a period for temple building. David's mission was war, the conquest of the country and the establishing of the people.

4. The time would come when the conquests of David should bring the nation into a settled condition; then would be a fit time for building a temple. vs. 9, 10.

5. God approves the thought and accepts the intention for the service itself. v. 11.

III. *A Covenant Made.* vs. 12–16. It was not David's work to build the temple, although the temple was to be built. "To every man his work." One man is to cut down the forest, and another follows to build the city. God has a plan for each of our lives; happy will we be if we find out what it is and then fulfill it. How can we? Is not this question answered here? David had *his* plan, but instead of rushing into it he laid it before the Lord. The Lord told him that *he* had other work for him to do, and that Solomon should do this which David had proposed. Then David accepted the Lord's plan instead of his own. So we are to make our plans, but are then to lay them all before God. If they accord with God's plans we are to carry them out; if not, we are to do instead what God has marked out for us. We should not fail to show that all our own plans ought to be brought to the Lord and laid before him for his approval and then given up if he has something else for us instead. The points here are:

1. God would establish David's kingdom. That must be done before a temple was built. That was David's mission.

2. David's kingdom would not end with himself: his son should reign. v. 12.

3. Solomon should build a temple for the Lord. v. 13.

4. God would not cut him off as he had Saul, but should chasten him if he went astray, and bring him back. vs. 14, 15.

5. The promise stretches on and takes in the Messiah. v. 16.

Points in Lesson of July 27th, to be assigned:

1. What were the beautiful qualities in the friendship of David and Jonathan?

2. Gather all that is told of Mephibosheth, the accident that lamed him and the story of his life.

3. Mention any other instances in the Bible of beautiful friendships.

4. How was David's treatment of Mephibosheth like Christ's treatment of the sinner?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

SUGGESTIONS.—The lesson to be placed on the board before the school session, but not exposed until the superintendent's review from the desk. David's plan for God was to erect for him a permanent temple. But there were reasons why David should not be permitted to do so. 1. The time had not yet fully come for it. 2. David was a man of war. 1 Chron. 22: 8; 28: 3. "The temple, as the symbolical representation of the kingdom of God, was also to correspond to the nature of that kingdom, and shadow forth the peace of the kingdom of God." So while David's intention was good and commendable, he was not permitted to carry out his plan. God's plan was better. He would first build David a house, and then establish his throne for ever. "The house is the royal authority in Israel, which is assured and established for his family. God built for David a house—even a temple—by the incarnation of Christ, who came from his seed. For Christ calls his own body, which he took from the blessed Virgin Mary, *of the seed of David*, a temple." John 2: 19–21. The prophecy reaches its highest fulfillment in Christ. Are we members of his body? Then are we subjects of his kingdom, which being established for ever, assures us of everlasting peace and joy. Bless God for his gracious plan.

Suggestions for Coloring.—"David's . . . for God," white shaded with blue; "God's . . . for David," green shaded with yellow; "Plan," bold letters, brown shaded with white; lower line, green shaded with red.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The Lesson Worked Out on the Blackboard.—Draw with white crayon a straight line to stand for "David's Plans." (Print those words over the line.) On it, print with green crayon the words, "I Will ——."

Call the story from class. Add whatever particulars are necessary in order to make the story plain. Impress the fact that David's plans seemed to be good and right. Nathan the prophet thought they were, but neither of them had as yet asked for God's direction.

Make a blue arch over the straight line. Print over it the words, "GOD'S PLANS." As the story develops, print a large "NO" on the straight line in such a manner that it will obscure the words, "David's Plans" and "I Will." This is God's "NO," and it spoils all human plans.

Poor David must have been disappointed. He wanted to honor God, and he thought he had chosen a right way to do it. But God's plans were all different. Still he is not angry with David for trying to do this thing, and he did not leave him without comfort. Look at the arch. What words shall we print on it to show God's love? Print the words "I WILL," and for every time that these words are repeated in this lesson make a tiny star under the arch. Wonderful promises! The grand one is in the golden text, which call for from class.

What about it? David is gone; his throne has apparently passed away, yet there is the promise.

A picture of a chain, starting from David's crown, each link representing a generation, until you reach the name "Jesus," will help to make this thought clear to the children. To this last link attach a crown. Print on it the name "JESUS," and over it the words, "Established For Ever."

Two practical thoughts: 1. All our plans must be taken to God. He may often see fit to keep us from doing the things which seem to us good and right. This need not discourage us.

2. Are we subjects of this King whose throne is established for ever? What an honor to belong to the royal family!

Another point in the lesson, and one of very great importance, especially in the teaching of little children, is the one involved in the word "IF," which might be added to the blue arch. "If he commit iniquity I will chasten him." In child-language, "If he do wrong I will punish him." Not King Jesus, for no wrong-doing could ever attach to him, but all others, even though they belong to God. The punishment will not be that dreadful one which Jesus bore for us; but the truth to be taught is, that God will chasten his children, even as a good earthly father must punish his children, because he loves them. A little child once said to me that it did not matter how naughty she was every day, for she belonged to Jesus, and she always asked him at night to forgive her, and he did!

It is to guard against this idea, so prevalent in the minds of children who have been taught the doctrine of the atonement, that I would call the attention of the teachers to God's "IF" in this lesson. It is as truly a promise from him as is the "I Will ——;" and the truth to be taught is, that transgression reaps its own reward.

Each teacher must decide which of these prominent lessons should be most earnestly held up to her class.

Lesson IV. KINDNESS TO JONATHAN'S SON. July 27th, 1884.

2 Sam. 9: 1-13. Memorize vs. 6, 7.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not."—Prov. 27: 10.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 2 Sam. 9: 1-13...*Kindness to Jonathan's Son.*
T. Prov. 27: 1-12...*"Forsake Not."*
W. 1 Sam. 18: 1-12..*David and Jonathan.*
Th. 1 Sam. 20: 1-17..*Jonathan's Love for David.*
F. 2 Sam. 1: 17-27..*David's Lament for Jonathan.*
S. Prov. 17: 1-17...*Born for Adversity.*
S. John 15: 1-16....*His Life for his Friends.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. Jonathan's Friendship Remembered. 2. His Son Honored for his Sake.

Time.—B. C. 1040.

Place.—Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 89. *How is the word made effectual to salvation?* A. The Spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially the preaching, of the word, an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners, and of building them up in holiness and comfort, through faith unto salvation.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—We have a pleasing incident for our present study. David's love for Jonathan is well known. These two men had made a solemn covenant of friendship in Jonathan's lifetime, and David had sworn to be true to his friend and also to his house for ever. Now when his kingdom has been established, his faithful heart begins to recall this covenant, and he inquires whether or not any of Jonathan's family still live, to whom he may fulfill the promise he made to his friend. He learns of one, and at once takes measures to prove his faithfulness. The incident is very beautiful, and throws a rich light upon David's character.

---

1 And Da'vid said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake? [1 Sam. 18: 3; 20: 14-17; Prov. 27: 10.]

2 And *there was* of the house of Saul a servant whose name *was* Zi'ba. And when they had called him unto Da'vid, the king said unto him, *Art* thou Zi'ba? And he said, Thy servant *is he.*

3 And the king said, *Is* there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may shew the kindness of God unto him? And Zi'ba said unto the king, Jon'a-than hath yet a son, *which is* lame on *his* feet. [2 Sam. 4: 4.]

4 And the king said unto him, Where *is* he? And Zi'ba said unto the king, Behold, he *is* in the house of Ma'chir, the son of Am'miel, in Lo'de-bar. [2 Sam. 17: 27.]

5 Then king Da'vid sent, and fetched him out of the house of Ma'chir, the son of Am'mi-el, from Lo'de-bar.

6 Now when Me-phib'o-sheth, the son of Jon'a-than, the son of Saul, was come unto Da'vid, he fell on his face, and did reverence. And Da'vid said, Me-phib'o-sheth. And he answered, Behold thy servant! [1 Chron. 8: 34.]

7 ¶ And Da'vid said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jon'a-than thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually.

8 And he bowed himself, and said, What *is* thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I *am?*

9 ¶ Then the king called to Zi'ba, Saul's

servant, and said unto him, I have given unto thy master's son all that pertained to Saul and to all his house. [2 Sam. 16: 4; 19: 29.]

10 Thou therefore, and thy sons, and thy servants, shall till the land for him, and thou shalt bring in *the fruits,* that thy master's son may have food to eat: but Me-phib'o-sheth thy master's son shall eat bread alway at my table. Now Zi'ba had fifteen sons and twenty servants. [2 Sam. 19: 17, 28.]

11 Then said Zi'ba unto the king, According to all that my lord the king hath commanded his servant, so shall thy servant do. As for Me-phib'o-sheth, *said the king,* he shall eat at my table, as one of the king's sons.

12 And Me-phib'o-sheth had a young son, whose name *was* Mi'cha. And all that dwelt in the house of Zi'ba *were* servants unto Me-phib'o-sheth. [1 Chron. 8: 34.]

13 So Me-phib'o-sheth dwelt in Jerusalem: for he did eat continually at the king's table; and was lame on both his feet.

1 *Is there yet any?* David does not seem to have known of any member of Saul's family alive. Ishbosheth, who survived and reigned for a while after the death of his father and brothers, was murdered by two of his own captains. 4: 5–7. *For Jonathan's sake.* For the love he bore to Jonathan, and for the sake of the oath of friendship which he gave to him. See 1 Sam. 20: 14–17, 42.

2 *A servant whose name was Ziba.* He probably had been an old family servant in Saul's household; who had become free at his master's death, and was now a man of means. See v. 10. For other references to Ziba see chaps. 16: 1–4; 19: 17, 18. His record is not unblemished.

3 *The kindness of God.* Jonathan had pledged David to show him "the kindness of the Lord." 1 Sam. 20: 14. The expression means such kindness as God shows, free, unsought, unfailing. *A son which is lame.* In chap. 4: 4 we learn the origin of his lameness. He was a child, five years of age, when Saul's last disastrous battle was fought, and when tidings came of the disaster on the field of Gilboa his nurse took him up and fled; and in her haste she stumbled and fled, laming the child for life.

4 *In the house of Machir.* Supposed to have been a man of position and influence. He lived near Mahanaim, on the east side of the Jordan. He may have taken charge of the lame boy at the death of Jonathan. David made him his friend by this act of kindness, and when the king's trouble came and he was driven away by Absalom from his home and capital, Machir was one of those who generously made provision for him. See chap. 17: 27–29. *Lodebar.* Near Mahanaim, east of the Jordan, but its site is not identified.

6 *Mephibosheth.* Called also in 1 Chron. 8: 34 *Merib-baal.* It is probable that he had been anxious to remain hidden, afraid of becoming known, lest David should take his life. His fear is indicated also by his behavior when he came into David's presence.

7 *Fear not.* He was evidently in dread of David, supposing that the king had hunted him out only to treat him as Oriental usurpers usually treated all that belonged to the family of their predecessors. He never dreamed of the kindness that David meant to show him. *The land of Saul.* The private estate of Saul at Gibeah, which had passed into David's hands either as his wife's right, or by confiscation. *Thou shalt eat bread at my table.* The highest mark of honor in the East is to take one to one's table; it is also a pledge of lasting friendship, for eating together is the seal of a covenant of faithfulness. After being thus received to David's table as a guest, Mephibosheth would no longer fear any harm at his hand. *Continually.* Not for a day only; he was to dwell in David's household as long as he lived.

8 *He bowed himself.* In reverence. *A dead dog.* Dogs were objects of contempt in the East, and a *dead* dog was the most contemptible object that could be named. Mephibosheth's words expressed a feeling of deep humility, even of painful servility, to be accounted for in part by the sensitiveness produced by his lameness, and in part by his fear of David.

9, 10 Ziba seems to have been already in charge of the lands that were Saul's, returning to David the fruits of the fields; he was still to continue to occupy them, but was henceforth to bring the fruits to Mephibosheth instead of to the king. *That thy master's son may have food.* Mephibosheth himself would eat always at David's table, but his family and household would be nourished from the fruits of Saul's estate. *Fifteen sons and twenty servants.* Mephibosheth would thus have a retinue worthy of the son of a king.

11 David's wishes were carried out by Ziba, and Mephibosheth took his place as a member of the king's own family.

12, 13 *A young son.* At the time he came to Jerusalem. The words indicate the extreme youth of the child. *Micha.* See 1 Chron. 8: 35–40; 9: 40–44. *Lame on both his feet.* Indicating the extent of his misfortune and of his helplessness. He was so badly crippled that he could not walk at all; therefore he was entirely unable to do anything for himself. This fact adds to the nobleness of David's act in proving such a friend to Mephibosheth.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake? Here we have another glimpse of that old friendship we learned to admire so much in David and Jonathan. It has been years since Jonathan died, and meanwhile David has passed through many strange experiences. He has had many wars. He has risen to great honors. A whole united and prosperous nation loves him and owns him as king. But the old friendship is not dead. Deep in his heart through all his vicissitudes he has carried fresh and green the memory of Jonathan and his love for him. That is *faithful* friendship which remains warm and true year after year; and that is the kind of friendship we should have for those we love. Of what worth is friendship that lives only while we are present, and dies out as soon as we are absent? Christ is our example in this as in all things, and he "sticketh closer than a brother;" he "loveth at all times;" he loveth "unto the end." Don't make friendships too quickly, but when you have chosen a friend love him to the end. Be faithful. Never let your love die out. Even when your friend is gone from earth cherish his memory and honor his name and be kind to his children.

The king said, Is there not yet any . . . that I may shew the kindness of God unto him? There is a pathetic and oft-told story of an orphan child whom a gentleman found sorely weeping. He spoke kindly, and the child asked in glad surprise, "Are you God?" The friend said "No," then inquired of the little one why he had asked this strange question. The child told him of his mother's death, and of her promise that God would come and take care of him when she was gone. Again the child looked up with intentness into the gentleman's face and asked, "*Are* you God?" He replied that he was not, but that he was one of God's friends and servants, and that God had sent him now in his place to do something for the orphan child. The little one said, "I am very glad, but weren't you a long time coming?" We are inclined to think the same of David's help shown to this poor Mephibosheth. Jonathan had been dead three-quarters of a score of years, and this lame child had been getting on as best he could, away over at Lo-debar. Surely David was a long time coming to show the kindness of God to his old friend's son. A good many more of us show the same tardiness in performing our kindnesses. Sometimes we never show them at all; sometimes we wait till the person is dead, and then send flowers for his coffin. But it would be better to send the flowers beforehand, while he lives to enjoy them. Is there any one waiting now somewhere in the shadow for us to come to show the kindness of God? If there is, shall we not hasten away to do our part?

Jonathan hath yet a son which is lame on his feet. We turn back a little and learn how he came to be lame. When he was a little child the nurse fell with him in her arms, and he was crippled for life. There are a great many men and women lamed for life by somebody's stumbling when they are young. They may not limp on the streets; the lameness may be in their souls, but that is worse than bodily laming. This lesson is particularly for parents and teachers and older persons who are influencing children in their daily life, by example or by teaching. It is a terrible thing for any one by a moment's carelessness or by a misstep to send a man lame and helpless through life; it is worse still by carelessness or a misstep to cripple a life, a character, for eternity. We cannot be too careful how we live.

The king said, . . . Where is he? Then king David sent and fetched him. Here we see the disinterestedness of David's friendship. It was shown in his thinking at all of the house of Saul, and asking if any one remained. That broken-down house could not be of any service to David. Especially could not this poor lame young man be of any use to the king. It was the pure friendship of David's heart for Jonathan that hungered to show kindness to some one that had belonged to Jonathan. Friendship is true just in proportion as it is disinterested. If we only care for a person and do things for him for what we expect or hope to get in return, let us not desecrate the sacred name of friendship by applying it to our regard. We must love our friends for their sake, not our own; and we must love them in spite of their misfortunes, even as poor Mephibosheth's lameness did not prevent David's taking him to his heart and home and showing him kindness. We see this disinterestedness in many homes where an invalid wife, child, brother or sister, is loved and cared for by the whole household with almost divine tenderness. The misfortune that mars the beauty and makes the loved one a burden, not a help, only makes the love the stronger, truer, gentler. All friendship must have the same disinterestedness.

When Mephibosheth . . . was come unto David he fell on his face. He seems to have been afraid. Oriental monarchs were usually cruel men. Especially was a new king apt to be jealous of any surviving members of a former king's household, and ready to kill them. This

accounts for Mephibosheth's hiding so long, and also for his fear when sent for and led into David's presence. He naturally dreaded death. He did not know of the great, rich, tender love in David's heart for Jonathan, which for his sake overflowed upon Mephibosheth. Is it not so that many of us misunderstand God's feelings toward us, and think of him as stern, cruel and vindictive, ready to destroy us? And are not David's feelings toward Mephibosheth a hint to us of God's toward sinners. There is no beauty in them to admire, just as there was none in him. They are lame and helpless, just as he was. Yet there is love in God's heart for them, love faithful, disinterested, rich, tender, all-sacrificing. Many people dread to come into God's presence, thinking that he will punish them, while all the time his heart is yearning for them, and is eager to bless them and do them good.

David said, Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan's sake, and will restore thee all the land . . . and thou shalt eat bread at my table. What a beautiful illustration is this of the grace of God and the blessings it brings to the sinner! The sinner comes trembling and afraid, with lurking enmity in his own heart and imagining enmity in God's heart. The first divine word is, "Fear not." That was the first word of the angel to the shepherds the night Christ was born. God wants us to believe in his love for us. He wants us to trust him, and have the spirit of children toward a father. The next thing is, that the kindness is shown for the sake of another. It was David's love for Jonathan that brought the kindness to Mephibosheth. It is for the sake of Jesus Christ that God lavishes mercies upon the sinner. We are saved because of him. The next point of comparison is, the *restoration* to Mephibosheth of what he had lost by the rebellion of his house. So to the saved sinner God restores the lost estate. He takes him back again into his family, and makes him an heir to all the glorious inheritance. David took Mephibosheth into his own house and to his own table, not for an occasional meal, but to be permanently a member of his household. To take another to one's table implied, in the East especially, most intimate fellowship. This again illustrates God's grace as shown to the sinner. In all his deformity God takes him into his own family and to his table, into the closest fellowship, into all the privileges of a child. The illustration fails, however, as all earthly illustrations of divine things do fail. Mephibosheth is still continually lame and helpless in David's house and at his table; but the maimed and deformed soul that is received into God's family is renewed by grace and transformed into beauty, at last into the image of Christ.

LESSON POINTS.

1. True friendship is *faithful* through all changes and vicissitudes. v. 1.

2. True friendship when elevated to honor and greatness *thinks still of the lowly*, and seeks to help them.

3. True friendship is *earnest* in seeking and reaching its object to give help. vs. 2–5.

4. True friendship is *disinterested*. vs. 3, 4.

5. True friendship is *active*, and is not satisfied with mere good wishes.

6. True friendship is not *broken by the misfortunes* of those it loves. v. 7.

7. True friendship is *generous*, and shows large-hearted kindness. v. 9.

8. True friendship takes its object into close relations of intimacy. v. 13.

9. Christ is the truest Friend. Note some points of illustration in this incident:

(*a*) Mephibosheth illustrates the sinner's condition, lame, helpless, friendless, fallen from kingly honor.

(*b*) Though exalted to eternal glory Christ thinks of the lowly and seeks them.

(*c*) Christ is not repelled by our misfortune and our need.

(*d*) Christ receives us with love, restores all we had lost, and takes us into his own household.

(*e*) Christ takes us into closest fellowship of love.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

The story of the nurse stumbling with the baby in her arms will make a good starting-point. See chap. 4: 4. Whose child was it? How did the nurse come to stumble? How was the child hurt? How long did the effect of the injury continue? What has this story to do with this lesson? Here is quite a bit of romance. Once there was a great battle. A king and his son were killed. The king's son had a little child at home five years old. When the news came that the father was killed in battle and the army defeated and fleeing, the nurse picked up the child and ran with him. In her haste the little fellow fell, and became lame for life. A new king was on the throne, and this crippled boy lived in obscurity, hiding away, lest the king might want to destroy his life. But one day he is sent for by the king and taken to the palace, where he lives ever after as a member of the royal family. Our lesson tells how it came that he was thus sent for and honored.

I. *Jonathan's Friendship Remembered.* vs. 1–4.

What inquiry did David make? Why *for Jonathan's sake?* Recall the beautiful story of the friendship of David and Jonathan, which casts such a radiance on the name of the unfortunate prince. What covenant had David and Jonathan made? See 1 Sam. 20: 14–17, 42; 23: 17, 18. What had David sworn to do for Jonathan's children? It had been about fifteen years since the death of Jonathan when David remembered his promise and oath to his old friend, and bethought him to inquire whether there was any one left to whom he might show kindness. It seems to us, as we read the story, that *he was a long time in keeping his plighted word.* Of course he was very busy. For a number of years the old house of Saul fought against him, and he could do nothing then. Since peace was made his hands had been very full with his battles and internal improvements. Yet it certainly seems that he might have hunted up the lame boy a little sooner. The lesson is, that we should not forget our old friends, even if we are busy; that we should show kindnesses promptly. "Better late than never," but better early than late; and sometimes "late" *is* "never," for the one that needs the help may not be alive, or within our reach, to-morrow. In this case, however, the kindness though tardy was still opportune, and by its munificence atoned in part at least for its slow coming.

The other lesson must not be overlooked, however, that old friends should be remembered. David was but a poor shepherd lad when Jonathan first became his friend. He was a poor, persecuted exile when the covenant was made. Now he is a king, great, rich, powerful, prosperous; yet in his greatness he remembers the friend of his poverty and misfortune. If we become rich and famous we should not forget those who have befriended us in our lowliness and obscurity.

When the person is dead who has shown us favor or helped us we should show our kindness to his children, or to any of his family that remain. Gratitude for favors shown should *never* die.

II. *His Son Honored for His Sake.* vs. 5–13. What did David learn about this son? Yet the fact that he was a cripple and could not be of any service to the king did not check the generous purpose. This shows the *disinterestedness* of David's friendship.

What did the king do? He did not merely make inquiries and find out about the lame son, but sent messengers to bring him to his own house. This shows the *practical character* of his friendship. We should make sure that our good feelings and intentions of gratitude take some shape of actual helpfulness. See James 2: 15, 16; 1 John 3: 17.

What did David do for Mephibosheth when he had brought him to his own house? It would have been a great kindness to have given him a house in the same city, or to have made him a royal officer of some sort; but David exceeded all ordinary kindness by taking him into his own household and to his own table. Here we see the *munificence* of David's friendship. Some one who received a large gift from Alexander was overcome by its value and said: "This is too much for me to receive." "It is not too much for me to give," was the reply. David's kindness to Mephibosheth no doubt seemed to the young man too much for him to receive; but it was not too much for David to give.

One of the most interesting applications of this lesson is the miniature picture it gives of Christ's friendship for the sinner. See the Notes and Lesson Points.

Points to be assigned in Lesson of August 3d:

1. Gather from this psalm all the words of *confession.*
2. Gather all the different prayers for pardon and cleansing.
3. Gather all the vows and promises that are made to God in this psalm.
4. Explain in your own language what *repentance* is.
5. What psalms are called "the penitential psalms?"

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Blackboard Illustration—as it will appear at the close of the lesson. A crown to represent king David. A white arch to stand for the promise between David and Jonathan. Three links in a chain to represent the generations, Saul, Jonathan, Mephibosheth. Marks to stand for the number of years between the making of the covenant and its ratification to Jonathan's son. A blue arch to stand for God's covenant with his people.

Let the crown be on the board at the opening of the lesson. Question class: Who is king? Over what does he reign? (Call out the story of David's greatness.) One day he asks about Saul's family—are any of them left? Who was Saul? (Call out the story of his bitter enmity to David.) What does king David want to do, now that he is in power? Does he think the time has come for him to take revenge? (After awakening curiosity as to what David wanted, read from the Bible his reason, *i. e.*, to show kindness.) Why? Let class answer, "For

Jonathan's sake." Who was Jonathan? As you call out the prominent points in his story, make the links in the chain, which represent Saul and Jonathan, putting their initials in the links. Recall the promise made by David to show kindness to Jonathan's house for ever. If this is new to class, teach the fact. Make the white arch to stand for the promise. Print the word "COVENANT" on it, explaining its meaning. Let one end of the arch rest on the link bearing Jonathan's name, and the other on a link bearing David's name. Make marks for the intervening years (about fifteen). Print the name "MEPHIBOSHETH." Who is he? When class have told, make his link in the chain. Then tell his brief, sad story, how, when five years old, his nurse dropped him, and so injured him that he was always lame.

The remainder of the lesson-story the children will supply. How the lame man was sent for and given a home in the palace, and a seat at the king's table, for Jonathan's sake.

Applications.—A true man always keeps his promises, unless he has made one that he thinks ought to be broken. Sometimes one has to wait years before he can do what he has promised, but he will do it as soon as he can.

Make the blue arch which stands for God's covenant with his people. Print on it the words, "Everlasting Covenant." It pledges that the lame and the blind, and the sad and the sinful, shall all at last sit down in the King's palace and eat at his table, for Jesus' sake.

Final Thought.—Suppose Mephibosheth had refused the king's kindness? He could have done so had he chosen. Suppose your children refuse the offer of God? Then they cannot come under the arch of his covenant, but have left themselves out.

For sub-divided classes I would introduce with the picture of the crown and the white arch; calling from class the explanation, and instructing the division teachers to make on their class slates the rest of the diagram as they taught, the leader at the close reviewing their work, and letting scholars give her the outline that shall complete the blackboard work, closing with the blue arch and the personal thought.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD

SUGGESTIONS.—Place the word "Friendship" on the board, and let it be exposed to view of school during the class studies. David now remembers the noble Jonathan's kindness to him, and seeks to reward it. Have the school read the brotherly covenant made between them (1 Sam. 18: 3; 20: 14–17), and have a single voice recite the golden text. Show how David's gratitude now finds expression some fifteen years after Jonathan's death, and print "Remembered" on the board, as in diagram. Show how Jonathan's friendship is appreciated and rewarded, and print "Rewarded" as in diagram. Compare Jonathan's friendship for David with our friendship for "David's Greater Son," Jesus, and teach that if it is as tender and holy as his was, it will be *remembered* and *rewarded* when the Lord Jesus shall come with all his holy angels. "David can see neither Saul's blood, nor lame legs in Mephibosheth, while he sees in him the features of his friend Jonathan; how much less shall the God of mercies regard our infirmities, or the corrupt blood of our sinful progenitors, while he beholds us in the face of his Son, in whom he is well pleased!" Remember we have a Friend, who, in his present exalted state, thinks of the humble and lowly ones whom he died to redeem, *and seeks them out*, to give them a place in his kingdom and a seat at his table. How are we treating this loving friend?

Suggestions for Coloring.—"Friendship," blue shaded with yellow; "Remembered," white and red; "Rewarded," orange and green.

ABOUT NEW BOOKS.

..A gentleman well able to judge pronounces the tract, WHY I DID NOT BECOME A BAPTIST, recently published by the Presbyterian Board, "the most effective thing he has ever read on the subject." As a bit of personal experience it has a directness and reality that do not belong to mere argument. If you are interested in the subject, send five cents to the Board for a copy of it.

..GREEN PASTURES FOR THE SHEPHERD'S LAMBS. Compiled and arranged by Rose Porter. This is another of those exquisite little books of devotion of which the same publisher sends out so many. It is arranged for daily readings for a month, each day's page containing Scripture texts and a stanza of a hymn. New York: Anson D. F. Randolph & Co. Price, 35 cents.

..CHRIST'S PRAYER FOR THE GLORIFICATION OF HIS REDEEMED. A gift for mourners. By Prof. Samuel Harris, Yale Theological School. A tender discourse on our Lord's prayer that his own may be with him where he is to behold his glory. It will be suitable to give to Christians who are sorrowing over their believing dead. American Tract Society.

..Few little books have had a greater or a better deserved popularity than CHRISTIE'S OLD ORGAN. It has been translated into twelve different languages, viz.: German, French, Flemish, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Greek, Hungarian, Bohemian, Bulgarian, Chinese and Japanese. The publishers have brought out an edition in stout paper covers at $15.00 per hundred (or 15 cents per copy) net. The edition in cloth has been reduced to 40 cents. Robert Carter & Brothers, New York.

..THE LIFE AND WORK OF THE REV. G. THEOPHILUS DODDS. By Horatius Bonar, D.D. Mr. Dodds is known in connection with his work in the McAll Mission, in France. He is remembered in this country by many who heard him speak in 1880 as the translator of M. Réveillaud. The story of his life is told in this volume by one who loved him as a son, and who had every opportunity to know both his inner and outer, both his private and public, life. This biography begins with his birth and education, lingering on his student life, then tells of his choice of field as a missionary in Paris. The account of his work in the McAll Mission is made up largely from his own letters and journals, and therefore gives the reader a good understanding of the character of that wonderful mission-work, one of the most wonderful of modern times. Mr. Dodds' death was very sad. Running away to the country to seek a few days rest, he was poisoned by eating mushrooms; his system was so exhausted that he could not rally, and he died far from home. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. 12mo, pp. 446. Price, $2.00.

..THE BLACK SHIP, with other Allegories and Parables. By the author of "The Schönberg Cotta Family." A collection of pleasant little sketches in the form of allegory and parable, written in the author's usual style, and both interesting and instructive. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. Price, 50 cents.

..LIFE AND WORKS OF THOMAS GUTHRIE, D.D. Few more eloquent preachers have lived in recent days than Dr. Guthrie. His memory is precious, not only in his own land, but over all the world. His published sermons are well known, and his autobiography is a most interesting story of Scottish life, told in wonderfully graphic manner, as charming in its sparkle and vivacity, and its bright, quick play of incident as any romance. This new edition of his life and works is gotten up in excellent style. The eleven volumes comprise his autobiography and memoir (2 volumes), with the various collections of sermons heretofore published. They are issued in uniform style, and are sold in a set or separately. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. 11 volumes, 12mo, in a box, $10.00; or $1.00 a volume singly.

..THROUGH THE NARROWS. By the Rev. W. W. Everts, D.D. A parable of life based on the "Narrows" leading out from New York. It is full of valuable suggestions concerning the voyage of life. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. Price, 50 cents.

..THE PERIOD OF THE REFORMATION. 1517 to 1648. By Ludwig Häusser. Edited by Wilhelm Oncken. Translated by Mrs. G. Sturge. This volume consists of notes of lectures delivered at Heidelberg by the late eminent German historian. It contains a spirited sketch of the history of the Reformation in Germany, Switzerland, France, Denmark, Sweden and England, with a survey of its influence on the course of thought and action during the period. The book is a valuable contribution to the history of the Reformation. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. 12mo, 702 pp. Price, $2.50.

..HANDS FULL OF HONEY, and Other Sermons, preached in 1883. By C. H. Spurgeon. This volume contains the latest sermons of the distinguished preacher, which show that there is no waning of vigor or power in him as he advances in years. There is a ripening, a mellowing of character which shows itself in his utterances. There is a deepening of Christian experience which is seen in increased knowledge of actual life. There is a growth, if not in intellectual vigor, certainly in mental culture and refinement, and in knowledge of books, as well as in the graces of the Spirit. Mr. Spurgeon is nearing his fiftieth birthday; his health is broken, apparently, yet it is to be hoped that he will live many years more to preach the blessed gospel. This volume is uniform with the series recently announced. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. Price, $1.00.

..RIGHT TO THE POINT. From the writings of Theodore L. Cuyler, D.D. Selected by Mary Storrs Haynes. With an Introduction by the Rev. Newman Hall, LL.B. There was scarcely any necessity for going away to London to get a man to *introduce* Dr. Cuyler to American people. Quite a number of them have heard of him. Few of our ministers are so well and so widely known, because few of them have written so much as he. His articles go out every week in various papers, and are read by thousands. This book is not new, but consists of brief selections from all that he has written. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. "Spare Minutes Series." Price, $1.00.

..A POCKET SYSTEM OF THEOLOGY, for Sabbath-school teachers and church members generally. By the Rev. John Reid, author of "Voices of the Soul Answered in God." With an Introduction by the Rev. John Hall, D.D. This little book is just what many teachers and others need who desire compact and yet simple statements of theological doctrines. Perhaps the best notice of it at this time is the following letter

to the author by Dr. W. G. T. Shedd, the distinguished professor of Theology in Union Theological Seminary, N. Y. Prof. Shedd writes: "I have taken the first opportunity afforded me to read carefully your systematic statement of Biblical doctrine. It has been instructive and interesting reading to me—all the more so, that for so many years I have been traveling the same road. You have been remarkably successful in condensing all the essential truth into a concise, lucid and finished form. I can easily believe you, when you say that you have written the work over three or four times. Such qualities as the above-mentioned cannot be produced *currente calamo.* I am much mistaken if your compendium of theology does not prove to be very popular, as well as solid and instructive. I believe that your work will be welcome. It presents the common Calvinism of our denomination in a manner that must be satisfactory to all parties, and will help to strengthen the faith of the Church by increasing its knowledge." Presbyterian Board of Publication. Price, $1.00.

..Encyclopædia of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, including the Northern and Southern Assemblies. Alfred Nevin, D.D., LL.D., Editor, assisted by a large corps of able ministers. This large volume contains a whole library of information concerning the Presbyterian Church. It has sketches of a great number of the ministers, elders and prominent laymen, who have been, or are now, active in the work of the denomination. Sketches are also given of many prominent churches, with narratives of their origin, growth, influence and work. The principal doctrines of the Church are also set forth in carefully prepared articles. The various Boards and charitable institutions of the Church have their place. In short, the book is a thesaurus of facts concerning persons, places, doctrines, methods of work and movements in the Presbyterian Church, so pigeon-holed that the seeker after information can readily find what he wants. The work is issued in one volume of 1,248 pages, which is gotten up in substantial and attractive style. It is embellished with more than three hundred illustrations, portraits and pictures of churches and other edifices. The volume is sold only by subscription, but all applications by mail to the publishers will receive attention. Presbyterian Encyclopædia Publishing Company, Philadelphia. Price, $10.00.

..The Last o' the Luscombs. By Helen Pearson Barnard. The story of a wanderer from his mother's home who comes back, after thirty years, seeks out his old home, and finds his aged mother at last. The incidents of the story are striking, and the final chapter, telling of Joe's home-coming and his revealing himself to his feeble mother, is full of tender interest. Boston: Congregational Sunday-school and Publishing Society. Illustrated; pp. 437. Price, $1.25.

..The Heritage of Peace; or, Christ Our Life. By T. S. Childs, D.D. This little book tells how the sinner may obtain the heritage of peace. It begins with the state of nature—condemnation, and closes with the fullness of grace—assurance. Presbyterian Board of Publication. New edition. Price, 50 cents.

..The Parables of Jesus. A book for the young. By the Rev. J. Wells, M.A. This is a treatment of the parables of our Lord, adapted to young people. The different chapters are simply addresses that were actually delivered at monthly Sabbath services for the young. The writer has certainly succeeded well in his task. The lectures are full of suggestion and instruction. No better book can be named to mothers for Sabbath home reading to their children. It will interest and will at the same time deeply impress the Scripture truths taught in the parables. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. 12mo, pp. 361. $1.50.

..The Public Ministry and Pastoral Methods of Our Lord. By William Garden Blaikie, D.D., LL.D., Professor of Apologetics and of Ecclesiastical and Pastoral Theology in the New College, Edinburgh. This is a new treatment of the life of our Lord. It is in large part composed of the author's lectures on Homiletical and Pastoral theology. It is a study of Christ as a preacher and pastor, and is full of valuable truths and suggestions for those who would follow in the steps of the Master in proclaiming his gospel and shepherding his flock. The book is designed chiefly, of course, for Christian ministers and those preparing for the ministry, but any thoughtful student of Christ's life will find much in it that will instruct and edify. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. 12mo, pp. 347. Price, $1.50.

..The Voice of Christian Life in Song; or, Hymns and Hymn-writers of Many Lands and Ages. By the author of "The Schönberg Cotta Family." This is not a book of hymns, but a history of the great hymns of the ages, beginning with the hymns of the Bible and coming down through the various periods of the Church. It is exceedingly interesting to know what different ages and countries have contributed to the volume of song, and who the singers were and where and when they lived to whom we owe the majestic hymns that come down from the past. This little volume is full of information, much of which will be new to many; and these hymns of many lands and ages show to all the unity of faith and love that binds the Church of the world and of all time in one holy communion. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. Price, $1.00.

..*The Congregationalist* has this to say of the Index of Presbyterian Ministers: "If this be a volume in 'highly figurative style,' it has wonderful adaptations of usefulness for certain students and purposes. Since 1706, 'Minutes' have been annually published of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. The present volume indexes all those records, and is intended to contain (1) all names of Presbyterian ministers found in the records from 1706 to the organization of the General Assembly; (2) all names found in the Minutes of that Assembly, as originally published, from 1789 to 1881; (3) those found in the list of home missionary appointments to 1837; (4) those found in the reports of membership by the Presbyteries; (5) those found in the necrological lists and reports. All these names are digested into alphabetical order, with reference in each case to the year and the page of their mention. That it would be dry reading, if taken so many pages a day consecutively, may be conceded. That it will make an unspeakably helpful volume to investigators of many sorts, and to all whose occasions lead them to seek to identify the position and labors of good men long since gone to their reward, will be obvious upon a moment's consideration." Presbyterian Board. Price, $5.00.

Any of these books may be ordered from the Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1334 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.

WHAT OTHER PEOPLE SAY.

DO THEY KNOW?

Is it not well and timely to raise the question as to whether the members of our churches—we mean, of course, any fair and creditable proportion of them—are aware of the vast work that the Presbyterian Church is doing, and interested in what is going forward?

Do they know that our Board of Foreign Missions has about twelve hundred preachers and teachers (paid wholly by the Board) serving Christ in our name in heathen lands, the islands of the sea and among the Indians of our own land, and that we need for this work seven hundred thousand dollars a year?

Do they know that our Board of Home Missions has about fourteen hundred preachers and teachers in its employ, paid in part or wholly by the Board, requiring six hundred thousand dollars per year? That these fourteen hundred persons are sowing the good seed from New Hampshire to New Mexico, and from the Atlantic to Alaska?

Do they know that our Board of Sustentation uses some fifty thousand dollars per year to aid churches in our own land who are nearing self-support to become self-sustaining, and thus cease to ask aid from our Board of Home Missions?

Do they know that our Freedmen's Board has some two hundred preachers and teachers in its employ, and that we need for this most urgent and important work two hundred thousand dollars per year?

Do they know that our Board of Publication, in its missionary work (for Sabbath-schools largely), employs about one hundred men, and that we need for this work of disseminating a grand Christian literature about seventy-five thousand dollars a year?

Do they know that our Board of Church Erection helps a large part of the one hundred and fifty churches that are in process of construction every year, and that we need some one hundred thousand dollars for this good work of helping the weak to secure church homes?

Do they know that our Board of Education is assisting some four hundred and fifty young men in obtaining an education for the service of our Church in the ministry, and that to aid them (according to our promise) we need some seventy-five to one hundred thousand dollars every year? A meagre sum this for so great and imperative a work.

Do they know that our Board of Ministerial Relief needs for the use of those who have by reason of age or other cause, become disabled and dependent, while serving us for a bare support, about one hundred and fifty thousand dollars each year?

Do they know that our Permanent Committee on Temperance asks for barely one thousand dollars this year to introduce a work important alike to Church and State, and in the prosecution of which they could use to great advantage ten thousand dollars instead of one?

And last, only because latest in the field, Do they know that our new Board of Aid for Colleges and Academies, just fairly beginning work, can use to great advantage some two or three hundred thousand dollars per year?

Do they know that the above nearly three thousand persons employed by us and representing our Church, have the most sacred of claims on us all for the fulfilment of our promises to them?

Do they realize that for this immense work we need about two millions of dollars per year?

Do they reflect that if the members of our churches (not counting five thousand or so who may be wholly dependent) would give *three dollars* each per year, or twenty-five cents per month, we should have *all* the money we need for all these Boards. D. M. S.

THE PASTOR REBUKED.

A minister who neglected his pastoral duties was once reminded of his delinquency by a sharp rebuke. A poor old deaf man resided in Fife, and was visited by the new minister shortly after his coming to the pulpit. The minister said he would often call and see him; but time went on, and he did not visit him again until two years after, when, happening to go through the street where the deaf man was living, he saw his wife at the door, and could do no other than inquire for her husband.

"Well, Margaret, how is Tammas?"

"None the better o' you," was the curt reply.

"How! how! Margaret?" inquired the minister.

"O ye promised twa years syne to ca' and pray once a fortnight wi' him, and ha'e ne'er darkened the door sin' syne."

"Weel, weel, Margaret, don't be so short. I thought it was not very necessary to call and pray with Tammas, for he's sae deaf ye ken he cannot hear me."

"But, sir," said the woman, "the Lord's not deaf."

It is possible that the reading of this story may give a profitable twinge to the conscience of some of our Sabbath-school teachers. It is of the highest importance that we visit the

members of our classes, whether we have promised to do so or not; but after promises let us see to it that the promise is kept.—*Ex.*

NOT WORTH RAISING.

A man often deserves more credit for holding on to a dwindling school, or a scanty teachers' meeting, or a thinning class, than if he held on where things moved briskly and numbers were at their highest. Any worker, in a live Sabbath-school or in a dead-and-alive one, ought to do his best to secure an *improvement* in his charge; but the poorer the condition of the school the greater the need, and hence the possible value of his work. It is a shame for a Sabbath-school worker to close a school, to suspend a teachers' meeting, or to give up a class, on the ground of its sickliness. The writer once visited a poverty-stricken home, where he saw an emaciated little child lying in evident neglect on an uncleanly bed. Asking the mother if a physician had seen that child, he learned that nothing was being done for the little one. "And why not?" he inquired. "Ah! it's a sickly one. It's not worth the raising," was the cool-blooded response. *That* mother did'nt propose to waste her strength on a dead-and-alive little one. And she was of much the same spirit as a Sabbath-school worker who abandons his charge because of its sickliness.—*S. S. Times.*

THE best system of keeping a Sabbath-school library is the simple one of a division for each volume, and numbered as the volume. Into this division, the card of the drawer is put when a book is taken out, and there it remains until the book is returned. The best books for a library are such as combine literary merit with decidedly moral teachings. It is not enough that they are merely not immoral. They should be such as will create an interest in religious reading as well as religious life. The distribution of the books by the librarian should never interfere with the lesson teaching or general exercises of the Sabbath-school. The librarian should be, if possible, a wise and prudent Christian, a good organizer, and of quick discernment of character, faithfully making himself familiar with his volumes.—*C. M. Eames, in Christian Union.*

THERE are reasons why a paid superintendency will never meet with general favor. Outside of large communities, the duties of the office are usually neither onerous nor absorbing, while the spiritual rewards, not to speak of the pleasure derived from such preferment, is ample compensation for the time and effort bestowed. But when the requirements are many, and the burden is heavy, as in large city schools, there is no just reason why the work should not be paid according to its value. Then the superintendent will have his true position as an active assistant of the pastor, ready to answer special calls of the latter, not in courtesy, but as a duty, and none the less a pleasure because a duty.—*Baptist Superintendent.*

THE superintendent who is to be a real spiritual power in his school must be a man of true Christian dignity, and not given to trifling, though he may at the same time be on intimate and familiar terms both with the teachers and the pupils. While intellect is by no means to be despised, it must be remembered that the real fountain of permanent and commanding spiritual power must be in the heart and not in the head. The man who feels down in his heart that the chief end of his work as a superintendent is to gather the scholars into the fold of Christ, is sure to have spiritual power in his work.—*The Congregationalist.*

A CHURCH OF ENGLAND clergyman (Haslam), going into Scotland, gives this testimony as to what he found there: "Coming from the south, I was surprised to find so much Bible knowledge, especially among the working classes. I believe that this early planting or teaching of God's truth, coupled with the daily reading of the Bible, is the secret of Scotch stability and influence. Even in secular matters, it helps to form that steadfast and indomitable character which distinguishes this people from the English, the world over, and still more from the Irish."

WRITE your scholars at least one letter this year about their personal salvation. The advice which Dr. Kirk, in time of war, gave to the soldiers, may well be given to teachers: "If your scholar does not know Christ, go into your closet with the book that has Christ's likeness in it. Gaze on it till your heart is all aglow with admiration. Read the story of the manger, the garden, and the cross, until you cannot be reconciled to having one you love refuse to love him. Then put the burning coals in a letter, and send it to the scholar."

THE object of the Sabbath-school library is the same as that of the Sabbath-school itself; namely, the teaching of the Word of God to the end of saving souls and nurturing them in the Christian life. The principles of selection are involved in the object sought. No book should be admitted, unless it ministers with considerable directness and effectiveness to the one result in view.—*Rev. L. T. Chamberlain, D.D.*

THE BOARD'S LATEST ISSUES.

Their Married Lives.

12mo. Price, $1.50.

A Pocket System of Theology,

FOR SABBATH-SCHOOL TEACHERS AND CHURCH MEMBERS GENERALLY.

16mo. Price, $1.00.

The Heritage of Peace.

Square 18mo. Price, 50 cents.

Qualifications for Membership in the Presbyterian Church.

32mo Tract. 36 pages.

Ecce Terra.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "ECCE CŒLUM."

16mo. Price, $1.25.

The Westminster Assembly.

ITS HISTORY AND STANDARDS.

BEING THE BAIRD LECTURE FOR 1882.

12mo. Price, $3.75.

Wildwood.

12mo. Price, $1.50.

Sunshine Mary.

16mo. Illustrated. Price, $1.15.

THE WESTMINSTER TEACHER.

VOL. XII. AUGUST, 1884. No. 8.

—Your place will be empty by-and-bye. How much will you be missed? Are you living so that the world will be poorer when you are gone? Will the poor miss you? Will the troubled and sorrowing miss you? Will the church miss you?

—The harvest days ought to have their suggestions of hope and encouragement for all earnest and faithful Christian workers. The language of the reaping machine to such is, "Be not weary in well-doing; for in due season ye shall reap, if ye faint not."

—The American Baptist Publication Society is going into a line of publication that it will be able to hold without competition from Presbyterians, Methodists or Episcopalians, as we learn from the *National Baptist*, which announces that the Society "furnishes a very superior quality of baptismal pantaloons, that will be made to any measure." Shades of John the Baptist, to what are we coming!

—True Christian culture looks first after the heart and not after the traits and qualities of the character. It reaches the latter through the former. The leaves of a window plant were beginning to curl and a gentle hand poured a cup of water about the root. "Why did you pour it there?" asked a little child; "Why didn't you put it on the leaves?" The answer was that the best way to reach the leaves is through the roots. The same is true in life-culture. When the graces begin to languish, the trouble is in the roots and the right thing is to get the heart flooded with the love of Christ.

—In the churches on the Continent of Europe it is customary to have the numbers of the hymns to be sung in the service designated on blackboards, with white movable figures, hung on each side of the pulpit and elsewhere, so as to be visible to all of the worshipers. Sometimes the psalm to be read, or the Scripture portion, is similarly made known. It is an excellent practice, and one that can be advantageously followed in Sabbath-schools. Frames for this purpose, and the necessary letters and figures, can be had in almost any of our cities. In the absence of such apparatus, the blackboard can be used for the same purpose. Every teacher and scholar should then be required to have the place found without other notice.

—There is an unreasonable demand for "thrilling incidents" from our foreign missionaries. One excellent worker, urged to furnish such means for stirring up the indifferent at home, pithily replied: "Suppose I should write to superintendents of Sabbath-schools in America for incidents to arouse the Chinese boys and girls in our native schools to greater diligence and self-denial; would the mail be burdened with replies? And yet it would be as easy to comply with one request as the other." It is so natural, and so easy, to fancy that great things can be done by those who are laboring ten thousand miles away from home, that we forget that we, in this land of abundant light, should expect to see the wonders of grace to a far greater extent than those who are laboring among the ignorant and the heathen.

The Summer Assemblies.

THIS is the month in which many of the summer assemblies are held. The formidable programmes which are announced for some of these at least do not give much promise of "recreation." From early morning till late evening the hours are provided for, and not always with the lighter classes of mental food, the mere fruits and desserts, but with very solid aliment, requiring considerable intellectual exertion if the student is to derive any real benefit from the lecture or study. However, if the "overworked" people who flock to these classic shades in midsummer, gasping for fresh air and rest, can only imagine that they are at play, while going through these closely linked hours of lakeside or forest school exercises, perhaps the benefit will be none the less.

The theory of many hard workers in these days is, that the best rest is not rest at all, but work in some new line. They say it is not work that kills, but routine, and, therefore, that the best recreation is some change of occupation for a time, that will call into play a set of faculties hitherto not overworked, while those in ordinary daily service, and consequently exhausted, shall have a period of relaxation. According to this theory, those who have been intensely busy for ten or eleven months in hard bodily toil, will find most exhilarating rest in a

month's study of Hebrew or Greek, or in a summer school of philosophy, where Kant and Hegel, and all the distinguished philosophers of the world, form the delightful themes for daily pastime.

Indeed, the suggestion might be extended almost indefinitely. There are a great many people whose brains are not excessively overworked in their ordinary duties, and all such will certainly find most profitable rest and recuperation by taking a period of hard study in some of the many excellent summer assemblies. Or, in case this is not practicable, by reason of remoteness, or financial inability, or other sufficient cause, all people with tired bodies and unworked brains might gather together a number of volumes of standard works on philosophy or theology and go out into the woods for a few weeks' close application to study. There is no doubt that this recreation would bring ample rest to their wearied and exhausted physical powers, while it would be, at the same time, of decided benefit to their inadequately occupied brains.

All great truths have many applications. Possibly there may be a valuable suggestion here for a certain class of good Christians. We refer to those who are not ordinarily active in any religious work. It is very evident that the point at which they are exhausted and need rest is not that of Christian ministry. It follows also that one of the best ways of summer resting for them will be to give up for a time some of their duties, in which they feel weariness and exhaustion, and take as substitutes the classes of absent Sabbath-school teachers. This will be a change of work, and will bring into activity powers which have not been in exercise, while their overtasked faculties take a well-earned vacation. This method of resting would be a most welcome one to many perplexed superintendents who in midsummer are put to their wits' end by the annual flight of most of their teachers to places of rest. We would like to have the plan introduced and well tried, and will be glad to receive reports of the success of the experiment.

Returning again to the subject of summer assemblies, the harvest is the proof of the sowing. "By your fruits ye shall know them." The autumn work will be the test of the summer rest. Knowledge is power, to be sure, but only when it becomes assimilated in the life. Knowledge lying in the brain unassimilated is nothing better than is an undigested dinner, lying in the stomach, to one's body. You have learned a great deal this summer. You have been studying this and that ology, and hearing this and that distinguished lecturer. You have passed through this famous summer school or that grand university, and have your certificate or diploma, saying that you are now very learned and wise. You have been in normal training for five or six weeks, and have heard many splendid addresses on the Bible, and how to teach it. Very well; you will be expected to do a great deal better teaching in the autumn days when you return than ever before. You will have more earnestness, more skill, more wisdom of method, more power over your scholars. All learning must be tested by what it does for us, and it is only fair, therefore, to apply this test to the summer school.

No doubt the institution has its uses. It inspires a desire for knowledge which in many cases will not rest satisfied with the meager instruction possible in the brief time allotted to study. It sets ajar the doors into the great temple of knowledge. It gives a measure of instruction which in itself is valuable to those who can do more. Its chief benefits, however, are in the contact with trained minds which it affords, the impulses which it gives in the seeking of further knowledge, and the stimulus for better work which one is almost sure to get from attendance upon enthusiastic conferences of this sort. If you go to the summer assembly, go to learn. Gather something from every speaker or participant. Seek for heart-warming as well as head-filling. Guard against all surfeiting. Take only as much of each day's programme as you can make your own, and choose the parts that will help you most in preparing for your work. Then when you return home let your improved teaching show that for you at least the summer assembly is a success.

Absalom.

ABSALOM holds a large place in the studies of the month. It will be worth while to study his character, not only in its development, but in the influences which helped to form it; and which throw light upon his peculiar traits and the actions growing out of them. He was the son of David by Maachah, daughter of the king of Geshur, one of the numerous wives whom the king of Israel gathered into his harem, in imitation of the manners of Oriental monarchs. From boyhood he was distinguished for his beauty, inherited probably from his mother as well as from his father, and also by vanity, ambition and a recklessness that stopped at no crime in the pursuit of his aims. His personal fortunes were determined and darkened by the fact that he was the son of one of David's numerous wives.

Polygamy is a sin against the family as well

as against God. David's polygamy cursed his home and himself. Rival interests sprang up in the circle that God meant for a unit. David's eldest son, Amnon, who dishonored his half-sister Tamar, and was in consequence murdered by her full brother Absalom (2 Sam. 13: 29), was the son of Ahinoam. David's second son, by Abigail, disappears from history and probably died young. Absalom, the third son, owned a third mother, Maachah, daughter of a Syrian prince, "the king of Geshur." Doubtless David sought by this alliance greater security, changing his troublesome neighbors in the rocky Lejâh, on his north-eastern border, from foes to kinsmen. But discord entered David's household. Amnon might well aspire to the throne by virtue of priority in birth, whilst Absalom, son of a king and with a king's daughter for his mother, would despise the son of the humble Jezreelitess, wedded by David whilst yet but a private person. But it was yet another son of another mother who was chosen by God to succeed his father on the throne. Here entered discord, jealousy, enmity, to sow the seeds of strife and assassination.

Absalom did not inherit from his mother his peerless beauty alone. From her, no doubt, he caught the traits of the Syrian of the Lejâh. Reckless, cunning, ambitious, passionate, he reflected the characteristics of the heathenism which David brought into his harem. If the mother determines the formative years of the boy where the family is a unit, much more will she have this power where each mother is the head of her own inner circle, and where the father to that circle is but a fraction of a father. When with his father, Absalom was the spoiled boy of beauty—the petted, the fondled, the indulged, but not the disciplined son. Thus he grew to manhood, with the elements of evil stored away in his soul, and ready in a moment to combine and to burst into fearful violence.

A spark at length dropped on the magazine. Hitherto, Absalom had been the brilliant, handsome, fascinating prince. The cruel wrong done his sister Tamar by his elder brother Amnon was the spark. But the explosion did not immediately follow. With true Oriental power of repression, for two long years he locked his purpose of revenge within his own breast. Month after month the avenger's anger kept hot, whilst outwardly all was calm. At length his opportunity came. Amnon ceased to be on his guard, and the knives of his brother's retainers were in his heart. 2 Sam. 13: 1–29.

Absalom's flight to his Syrian grandfather's fastness secured his life, but did not mend his morals. Three years at a heathen court, with nothing good to do, might spoil a better man than Absalom. He returned to Jerusalem, to wait yet two years for permission to enter his father's presence, and to brood over his exclusion. At length, by a contrivance of Joab, he was admitted again to the presence of the king. 2 Sam. 14. But no sooner was he received at court than he began to plot for the usurpation of his father's throne. When the plot was sufficiently matured he repaired to Hebron and caused himself to be proclaimed king. Ahithophel, a man of great political sagacity, became his counselor, and advised a prompt movement against David before he could make proper preparations for defence. Had this counsel been followed, humanly speaking, his success would have been certain. David, however, had prayed that the counsel of Ahithophel might be defeated, and through Hushai, the secret friend of David, Absalom was prevailed on to delay, by which he lost the opportunity of completing his revolution. 2 Sam. 17.

David retired to the east of the Jordan, and made his stand at Mahanaim, near the ford of the torrent Jabbok. At the end of three months Absalom moved upon his father's army, and an engagement took place in the wood of Ephraim, which resulted in the defeat of the rebellious son.

A company of David's men came upon him riding on his mule. He turned aside to escape, but his head was caught and jammed between the branches of a great terebinth tree—Josephus says, entangled by his flowing hair—so that he was held fast, while the mule passed from under him and left him hanging "between heaven and earth." This situation was speedily reported to Joab, who seized three javelins, and, coming to the place, thrust them into the swaying body, and was soon followed by his armor-bearers, who gave the finishing-strokes.

Joab with the trumpet gave the signal for a halt, and withdrew the army. The rebellion ceased in the death of the rebel, and no more blood was to be shed. The body of Absalom was thrown into a pit, and stones were cast upon it. 2 Sam. 18.

The name of Absalom is execrated alike by Jew, Mohammedan and Christian. Having no male children, he had erected in the King's Dale, near Jerusalem, a column to perpetuate his memory. A monument called "Absalom's Pillar" is now shown in the valley of Jehoshaphat, which is unquestionably a structure of much more modern date than the times of Absalom, but may stand on the site of the original monument. Every Jew who passes casts a stone at it in abhorrence of the memory of the unnatural prince.

How Mothers Can Help the Primary Class Teacher.

BY HOPE LEDYARD.

IT is astonishing how little the average mother knows of the teacher to whom she entrusts much of the religious training of her little one. No care is taken in the selection of the class; either the child goes to the church school as a matter of course, or some little friend, with hopes of the prize offered to the scholar who exhibits the strongest "drawing" qualities, coaxes mamma to let Tot go with her, and—the matter is settled. Many mothers do not even know the name of the infant-class teacher; certainly the majority know nothing but her name. Now the child, the teacher, and the mother would each be the gainer by a different course.

Let me cite one case, by way of illustration, where a mother of four children feels she owes a duty to her youngest, who is just old enough to go to "Sunny-cool"—a suggestive name for an infant-class.

There are six Sunday-schools within walking distance of the home; the mother visits them all, noting the advantages in each case. She decides that a certain class has the teacher that will be most successful with little Daisy. The room is well ventilated, there are assistants to see that the little ones have their wraps removed, the singing is hearty, and, above all, the teacher seems an earnest Christian. The decision made, Daisy is taken to the school by mamma, who surprises Mrs. Merlin by asking for her address, "that she may have the pleasure of calling on her."

Every Sunday, before Daisy is tucked up for the night, mamma finds out what the little one remembers of the lesson; and each night during the week the golden text of the previous Sunday is repeated, and some little point of the lesson enforced by song or story.

One Sunday Daisy spends at grandmamma's, and Mrs. Merlin receives a note from mamma explaining the child's absence, and regretting that the little one should lose anything of the plan Mrs. Merlin is pursuing.

Now Mrs. Merlin has no plan! The note pricks her conscience. One mother, at least, expects her to have a thought running through her lessons, and she resolves to study and prepare herself more carefully. A call from Daisy's mamma a week or two later helps Mrs. Merlin most wonderfully. How it encourages her to have even one mother really grateful for her care of her little one! Lesson helps are talked over, and Mrs. Merlin hears for the first time of the Saturday class for primary teachers, and is only too glad to accept her new friend's offer that they attend it together.

Now and then mamma visits Daisy's class. She takes keen note of the disadvantages Mrs. Merlin works under. What a small blackboard! How unnecessarily the superintendent interrupts the class. Knowing one or two who are influential in the church, mamma drops a hint here and there, and by-and-bye the infant-class has a new blackboard, while the kindly visits are more wisely timed.

"Teacher wasn't there to-day, mamma," Daisy reports one Sunday; "she's sick."

"Then we must call on her to-morrow, and you shall leave her some flowers."

The next day a dainty little bouquet is handed to Mrs. Merlin, and with dimming eyes she reads the card: "With Daisy Dapper's love." Is it any wonder that Daisy's name is often mentioned when her teacher prays?

I could tell you more, but have I not given enough by way of suggestion? Will not some mother be roused to her duty toward the primary teacher? But one word farther—I dare not leave it out. Pray for the teacher—for her personal growth in grace; that she may be wise and winning. It may be your little one's heart may be won for Christ by her word; if not yours, surely other children, who are dear to the Lord. Let us pray for the teacher of our little ones.—*S. S. Times.*

What One Person Can Do.

THERE is no limit to the amount of good one person can do, even a plain and uneducated person, who draws on God for daily wisdom and strength. A colporteur of the Board of Publication in Pennsylvania tells how he lately met a book-keeper of a mining company, and found him an earnest Christian. This good man brought his religion with him, and makes it felt by the ignorant and irreligious miners around him. He has founded a Mission Sabbath-school, which he has well-equipped with a library, with Sabbath-school papers and lesson leaves, and of which he is the superintendent. Through his efforts preaching services are held every Sabbath. The results of his individual efforts have become clearly apparent in a better tone of morality in the community and in the general discontinuance of drinking and Sabbath-breaking. A Presbyterian church will soon be gathered there, and a house of worship built. The colporteur found everything delightfully prepared for his work. He visited every family, there being about two hundred of them, gave them tracts, had religious conversation and prayer in their houses,

and started a weekly prayer-meeting with a good attendance. His visits will powerfully advance the work so well begun by the pious and faithful book-keeper.

Discouragement.

BY A TEACHER.

IT is not always possible to keep ourselves from becoming discouraged in the prosecution of Christian work; and yet every Christian worker knows how the hands hang down and the knees are rendered feeble by discouragement, more than by almost any other cause. One finds so many obstacles without, in the ignorance, indifference and wickedness of those upon whom labor is bestowed; so many within, in lack of earnestness, ability and want of physical strength, that there do come times when we are almost disposed to give it all up, and feel that it is useless even to try to do anything. We labor and pray, often without any apparent results; we see no fruit, and the old cry comes surging up from the wearied heart: "I have labored in vain, and spent my strength for naught."

Oh, tired worker, weary, not *of* your work, but *in* it—how do you know? God has said, and he cannot lie, "My word shall *not* return unto me void, but shall accomplish that which I please, and shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." What right have we to doubt our Lord when we have his word of honor pledged to us, his servants, for the success of his work? How dare we, in the face of his promise, say that such work is a failure? It often does appear so; but cast forth your eyes upon nature and learn a lesson of faith and patience, where, indeed, our Lord himself has sent us to find it. "Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience; be *ye* also patient: stablish your hearts." Look in January at a field of winter wheat as an object-lesson. Think of the time and labor spent on that one field, the fertilizing processes through which it has passed, the plowing and harrowing and sowing; and yet, here it lies, covered over with frozen snow, and looking as if all were lost. Ah! that icy covering which seems enough to kill out every tiny rootlet of wheat is the very thing that insures, in God's wise and gracious plan, a rich and golden harvest when his time for it has come.

Sometimes the writer has found all refuges fail but one, upon which it has been necessary to fall back in a sort of dogged determination; the thought that, always and everywhere, a soldier's first duty is, to obey orders, whether anything comes of it or not. Let us get that sort of military instinct into our spiritual lives, and many a time it will keep life moving when otherwise it would utterly stagnate. Results are most desirable, and it is better, oh! so much better, to be on fire with love to the Master, so that we cannot be idle; but when faith and hope and love and zeal fail, as they often do, steady endurance will win the day, and this habit of obedience to orders, whether we feel like obeying or not, whether it looks as if it is hopeless or not, will be found by any tired, discouraged worker, either in Sunday-school or other work, an anchor when others fail. Results, while very precious, are not ours to measure—our duty as good servants of Jesus Christ, is first, last, always, obedience to orders; and even if it were possible that nothing else should come of it, he who calls for the obedience, seeing that, will say: "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Looking After the Books.

DO our teachers feel any great responsibility for the use made of the Sunday-school library by the members of their classes? If they do not, they should do so. The books taken out by the boys and girls are their confidential companions and instructors. From these books they are to receive impressions, and may receive impressions of immense value if the books are what they should be and are properly distributed. But as the library will contain books intended to meet the wants and the conditions of persons of every age, from the youngest scholar to the oldest teacher, and of every station in life, there is a very great risk, indeed a positive certainty, of the scholars drawing books entirely unsuited to their tastes and needs, if they receive no guidance from those older than themselves. Just here is a point where the teacher may be very helpful. He should make it a rule to take out a volume from the library every week, and to read it with a view to studying its adaptation to the circumstances of his pupils. His opinion of a book will have great weight with them. If he says to one of his boys, "I have just been reading this book, and I know you will like it," and if he gives the boy an inkling of something of interest in the book, it will pretty certainly be called for and also read by that boy. The teacher can learn by thus reading one book every week what there is in the library that will be useful to those committed to his care, and, with a little ingenuity, will be able to guide them in their reading. It is not necessary to expand this suggestion; its bearing will be caught at once by intelligent teachers.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

THIRD QUARTER.

1. July 6.—David King over all Israel. 2 Sam. 5: 1-12.
2. July 13.—The Ark in the House. 2 Sam. 6: 1-12.
3. July 20.—God's Covenant with David. 2 Sam. 7: 1-16.
4. July 27.—Kindness to Jonathan's Son. 2 Sam. 9: 1-13.
5. Aug. 3.—**David's Repentance.** Ps. 51: 1-19.
6. Aug. 10.—**Absalom's Rebellion.** 2 Sam. 15: 1-14.
7. Aug. 17.—**Absalom's Death.** 2 Sam. 18: 24-33.
8. Aug. 24.—**The Plague Stayed.** 2 Sam. 24: 15-25.
9. Aug. 31.—**God's Works and Word.** Ps. 19: 1-14.
10. Sept. 7.—Confidence in God. Ps. 27: 1-14.
11. Sept. 14.—Waiting for the Lord. Ps. 40: 1-17.
12. Sept. 21.—A Song of Praise. Ps. 103: 1-22.
13. Sept. 28.—Review.

Lesson V. **DAVID'S REPENTANCE.** August 3d, 1884.

Ps. 51: 1-19. Memorize vs. 9-12.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"My sin is ever before me."—Ps. 51: 3.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Ps. 51: 1-19.....*The Prayer of the Penitent.*
T. Luke 15: 1-24....*The Return of the Penitent.*
W. Luke 18: 9-14....*The Pardon of the Penitent.*
Th. Ps. 116: 1-19.....*The Gratitude of the Penitent.*
F. Ps. 6: 1-10.....*Mercy Sought.*
S. Ps. 38: 1-22.....*Supplication in Distress.*
S. Ps. 32: 1-11.....*The Joy of Forgiveness.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. A Cry for Forgiveness. 2. A Prayer for Inward Cleansing. 3. A New Consecration.

Time.—B. C. 1034. **Place.**—Writen in Jerusalem by David. (For the historical account, see 2 Sam. 11, 12.)

Catechism.—Q. 90. *How is the word to be read and heard, that it may become effectual to salvation?* A. That the word may become effectual to salvation, we must attend thereunto with diligence, preparation, and prayer; receive it with faith and love, lay it up in our hearts, and practice it in our lives.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

INTRODUCTORY.—The account of David's great sin and his confession and forgiveness is found in 2 Sam. 11, 12. Not only did he take Uriah's wife, but he made a plot to secure Uriah's death in the battle. For a considerable time he seems to have made no confession of his sin to God. Then Nathan the prophet was sent to him from the Lord, and by the parable of the rich man and the poor man's one ewe lamb showed to David his sin. At once he stood convicted and penitent before the prophet, confessing his sin. At once he was forgiven, and this psalm, written at that time, tells the inner history of his repentance, confession, forgiveness and restored joy and favor.

1 Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. [Isa. 43: 25; 44: 22; Col. 2: 14.]

2 Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. [Heb. 9: 14; Rev. 1: 5.]

3 For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin *is* ever before me. [Ps. 32: 5; 38: 18.]

4 Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done *this* evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, *and* be clear when thou judgest. [Rom. 3; 4.]

5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. [Ps. 58: 3; Rom. 5: 12; Eph. 2: 3.]

6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden *part* thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. [Lev. 14: 4-6, 49; Heb. 9: 19.]

8 Make me to hear joy and gladness; *that* the bones *which* thou hast broken may rejoice. [Matt. 5: 4.]

9 Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. [Jer. 16: 17; v. 1.]

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. [Acts 15: 9; Eph. 2: 10.]

11 Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. [Rom. 8: 9; Eph. 4: 30.]

12 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me *with thy* free Spirit. [2 Cor. 3: 17.]

13 *Then* will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

14 Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: *and* my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness. [Ps. 35: 28.]

15 O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

16 For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give *it:* thou delightest not in burnt-offering. [Ps. 40: 6; 50: 8; Isa. 1: 11.]

17 The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. [Ps. 34: 18.]

18 Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

19 Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt-offering and whole burnt-offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar. [Ps. 4: 5.]

1, 2 *Have mercy.* David's first cry is simply for mercy. There is no plea of extenuation; he confesses his sin, and casts himself utterly upon the divine graciousness. *Loving-kindness.* The word means more than *mercy*, having in it also the idea of fatherly affection and tenderness. It was this thought of God that gave him hope. *According unto the multitude.* Thus confessing that his guilt was too great to be forgiven by anything less than a *multitude* of tender mercies. *Blot out.* The reference is to the custom of writing on tablets, and he asks that the writing against him may be erased, entirely rubbed out. This is a prayer for forgiveness, for justification, for the taking away of the guilt. *Wash me throughly.* This is a prayer for the removal of the *defilement* of sin. The word implies repeated or continuous washing, until the last stain is removed. Notice the three different words used in these verses to represent sinfulness. The first—*transgression*—describes a stepping over the boundary, a breaking of law; the second—*iniquity*—refers to the crookedness in the nature, the inner depravity, which leads to the evil doing; the third word—*sin*—means in its root, missing the mark, failing in an aim, or tripping in walking; then, in its spiritual application, any deviation from the divine requirements.

3 *For I acknowledge.* He does not try to excuse his sin, but makes full confession, uncovers all and hides nothing. The word "acknowledge" strictly means "I know." He was deeply and fully conscious of his own sin. He did not hide it from himself. The same thought is expressed in the next phrase—"My sin is *ever before me.*" There is no true confession until the sinner knows, is conscious of, his own sin, sees it in its true colors. Then confession follows. See Ps. 32: 5; Prov. 28: 13; 1 John 1: 9. *My sin is ever before me.* Notice that it is the sin itself that is before him, not the dread of punishment. So in vs. 1, 2, it is the blotting out and the washing from his sins, and not the removal of the penalty, for which he prays.

4 *Against thee, thee only.* He had sorely injured and wronged others in his great sin, yet it was *God's* laws that he had broken, and thus the sin was really against God only. Besides, the wrongs done to men were so slight in comparison with the evil toward God that they were lost sight of. *That thou mightest be justified.* David would admit the justice of whatever sentence God might pronounce upon him. *When thou speakest.* As a judge, pronouncing sentence.

5 *Behold.* He does not throw the blame of his sinfulness upon another, but says that not only was he a sinner by his own acts, but was born of sinful parents, inheriting from them a sinful nature.

6 *Truth in the inward parts.* In the deepest parts of the nature, in the heart. *Thou shalt.* God only can give that inward holiness which he himself desires.

7 *Purge me with hyssop.* Referring to the use of the hyssop branch in the cleansing of lepers and those who had been defiled by touching a dead body. See Lev. 14: 4–6; Num. 19: 18. It is a prayer that God would cleanse him with atoning blood. *Whiter than snow.* Snow represented the utmost whiteness of earth; this is a prayer for *perfect* purity. See Isa. 1: 18.

8 *Make me to hear joy and gladness.* The joy that comes only when one is forgiven, and which only God can give. *The bones which thou hast broken.* Referring to the anguish and suffering which his sin had brought upon him. See Ps. 32: 3, 4.

9 *Hide thy face from my sins.* Do not look upon them. This really is the way God forgives. He puts our sins behind his back (Isa. 38: 17); he remembers them no more (Jer. 31: 34); they are so put away that they cannot be found. Jer. 50: 20. The way God hides his face from our sins is, by covering them with Christ's atonement. See Ps. 32: 1.

10 *Create in me.* The word describes the divine act of creation, and defines the spiritual work which is done in the believing and penitent heart. It is a change equivalent to a new creation, and one that God alone can produce. See Ezek. 36: 25–27. *Renew a right spirit.* A steadfast spirit, one firm and constant. See Isa. 26: 3. "Renew" implies that he had possessed such a spirit before, but had lost it for the time.

11 *Cast me not away.* Do not banish me for ever though I have wandered so far away.

Take not thy Holy Spirit from me. See 1 Sam. 16: 13. After his anointing the Spirit of the Lord came upon him. This Spirit had not yet left him, but his prayer is, that he may not be taken away. No doubt he remembered how the Spirit had departed from Saul, and felt that because of his sin he was in danger of a similar calamity.

12 *Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation.* The joy which the consciousness of God's love and favor gives. He had lost this. v. 8. *Uphold me with thy free spirit.* "Let a free or willing spirit uphold me." The reference is not to the Spirit of God, but to David's own spirit. He prays for a spirit that will freely and spontaneously serve God, a spirit of simple consecration.

13 *Then will I teach.* The words imply a deep and earnest longing to teach others, one of the truest evidences of genuine repentance. His own experience also would fit him especially for speaking to others of the danger and awfulness of sin, and the safety and blessedness of God's ways. Compare Christ's words to Peter. Luke 22: 32. *Converted.* Turned back to thee, restored. He is speaking not of the conversion of the impenitent, but of the returning of those who have wandered.

14 *Deliver me from blood-guiltiness.* Referring to the guilt of Uriah's blood, and praying that its accusing voice may be silenced. See Gen. 4: 10. *My tongue shall sing.* "A great sinner pardoned makes a great singer." *Of thy righteousness.* All through this psalm there is the most perfect justification of God's righteousness, and when we understand the divine forgiveness through the atonement, no other work of his displays more strikingly this attribute.

15 *Open thou.* His guilt had closed his lips, but God's forgiveness and the restoration of joy would open them again for thanksgivings.

16, 17 *Thou desirest not sacrifice.* That is, the sacrifices of animals would not cleanse his guilt, nor be accepted by God in place of penitence. *The sacrifices of God.* That God approves. See 1 Sam. 15: 22.

18, 19 Here we have a prayer for God's blessing on the nation. *Do good.* He is thinking of his plans for enlarging and building the city of Jerusalem, and he asks God to prosper him in these plans. He thought, too, of the evil wrought in the nation by his sin, and he here implores God not to send calamities but to do good, promising that his gracious kindness would not be forgotten.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

Perhaps the best help in applying this lesson can be given by gathering its principal lessons under several distinct heads. It should be observed that this psalm was written after David had received the assurance of forgiveness. The deepest sense of sin is produced by the revelation of God's mercy.

Notice David's *thoughts of God.* He saw him as a God of mercy, of loving-kindness, a forgiving God. In all the poignant sense of guilt that pressed upon his soul there was not a shadow of despair. The moment he saw his sin there burst upon him also a glorious disclosure of God's love. God was merciful. The multitude of his tender mercies none could count. From this glimpse of the divine character hope flowed at once. Had he not seen God in this light utter darkness would have overwhelmed him, and he would have been lost in the gloom. It was thus with Judas, after he had betrayed his Lord. When the terrible tide of conviction swept over his soul, he saw no ray of hope in God, and in his dark despair went out and hanged himself. On the other hand, when Peter had denied Christ, and when, beneath the grieved look of that holy Eye, a deep sense of sin overwhelmed him, he went out and wept bitterly; but through his tears he saw God as a God of mercy and love, and instead of despair hope sprang up in his soul, and he found forgiveness and was restored, living to be a glorious apostle. It is most important that the convicted sinner see God in his true character, as David and Peter saw him.

Notice David's *thoughts of his sins.* First, they appear to him as *many*—"transgressions"—and then as *one*—"sin." They came before him one by one, each separate one requiring forgiveness; then, as he thought of them, they all appeared as one, springing from one root. Another thought which we find all through the psalm is, that his sin is *his own.* "*My* transgression," "*Mine* iniquity," "*My* sin," "*I* have sinned." He does not try to lay part of the guilt on some other one, as did our first parent. He does not plead the peculiar temptation, and try to excuse himself. He frankly takes the whole burden on himself. This shows the reality and sincerity of his penitence. We must not forget either that our sins *are* our own in a most terrible sense. We need not try to put the responsibility off on any tempter or on any circumstances. Others may *tempt* us, but no one can *compel* us to sin. There is no sin in

being tempted; the sin begins whenever we yield. Christ was tempted in all points like as we are, but it was without sin. "Resist the devil," we are taught, "and he will flee from you." Hence our sins are *our own.* We are responsible for them, and must bear the burden of them ourselves until they are forgiven. We must also personally seek and find forgiveness for our own sins. No intercessor can obtain pardon for us unless we are penitent ourselves. Christ's expiation for us is accepted, but even his pleading for us will not bring forgiveness if we do not personally repent and seek mercy. Our sins are *our own.* There is instruction here also in the three different words David uses to designate his wrong-doing. Each word gives a distinct thought about sin. (See Explanatory Notes.) Another of David's thoughts about his sin was that it was *against God alone.* "Against thee, thee only have I sinned." The smallest wrong thing we do is against God. If we speak a rude or impatient word to a beggar, it strikes God's heart. If we are unkind to a beast, we sin against God. Our unholy thoughts which we think harm no one grieve him. Every sin is a personal offence to him. We may injure others and do wrong and injustice to them, but we *sin* only against God. It is *his* law we break, no matter what evil thing we do. We stand in such relation to God all the time that every act, word or thought affects him personally, either pleasing him and meeting his approval, or grieving him and receiving his disapproval. One other thought of sin in David's mind was that it was *inborn.* v. 5. Sin is not a habit which we acquire. It is not the result of bad education. It is not a little soiling of our nature from the outside by contact with a bad world. It is in the heart, and it was *born* in us. Human nature is fallen.

Notice David's *thoughts of the mercy he needed.* Let us carefully study his words, for the correction of our superficial ideas of divine forgiveness. First there is the simple cry for mercy. v. 1. He offers no justification. He is guilty, and asks for mercy. The next expression represents his transgressions as all written down against him as in a book of accounts, and he pleads to have them *blotted out*, erased, rubbed from the page. There is something very startling in this thought about sin. Our sins are all written down against us, and unless we can get the record expunged we shall have to meet the penalty of every wrong act. But the precious truth here is, that sins *may be blotted out.* See Isa. 43: 25; 44: 22; Col. 2: 14. The third word represents sin *as a stain* on the soul, and the prayer is that it may be washed off. v. 2. That is, sin not only writes its record of guilt on God's book, but it also defiles and pollutes the life. We need not only to have the guilt removed (justification), but we need also to have our souls cleansed and made white (sanctification). The word "throughly" means repeatedly. The stains are deep, and the purifying process must go on until they are all removed. The ancient method of washing was by beating or treading; and David asks God even to tread him down if necessary to remove the foul spots. We should pray God to make us clean, to wash us until every stain is taken away, whatever the needful process may be. See Isa. 1: 18; Rev. 7: 13, 14. The fourth word is similar, yet with a different shade of meaning. "*Cleanse me* from my sin." It is the word used of cleansing lepers. The word "wash" referred to garments and surface stains; this refers to sin as a disease, a leprosy in the soul. This prayer is, therefore, for the cleansing and healing of the very nature. There is still another expression in v. 7—"*Purge me* with hyssop." The word "purge" refers to atonement. Blood was sprinkled with the hyssop. We cannot read into this prayer all the New Testament knowledge of Christ's sacrifice, and yet the idea is certainly present, and, read in the light of gospel teaching, it means cleansing by Christ's blood. See 1 John 1: 9.

David's *thoughts about inward renewal* should be noticed. When the love of God streamed into his soul he saw how much he needed to have done in him to make him what God would have him to be. First, he had a new conception of what God required: "Thou desirest *truth* in the *inward parts.*" Truth is genuineness, sincerity, rightness. God does not want shams; he despises hypocrisy. No mere external reformation will avail while the heart remains wrong. With this lofty conception of the divine ideal of character, there is a beautiful evangelicalness in David's prayers for renewal. He pleads for the application of the blood of atonement (v. 7), then for the assurance of forgiveness, to bring back the lost joy. vs. 8, 9. Next he prays for renewal. "*Create in me a clean heart.*" He has discovered the black well-head of sin in his life, pouring up its defiling waters and polluting all his soul. He cannot himself staunch it, and he brings it to God. The word "*create*" shows that he understood the necessity of a new birth. In this prayer for renewal he pleads also that the *Holy Spirit* may abide with him. v. 11. He remembered Saul, and his terrible fate when God took his Spirit from him (1 Sam. 16: 14); and as he thought of his own sin he pleaded that

the same awful calamity might not fall upon him. While he prays for the continuance with him of God's Spirit, he prays that his own spirit may be *constant*, *steadfast* (v. 10) and *free* (v. 12), that is, willing; in other words, he desires a spirit of entire consecration to God's will and service, a spirit of loving obedience. Then, once more, he asks for the restoration of the *joy of salvation*. v. 12. He had lost this joy when he went into sin, and had not found it since, and could not until he was forgiven and restored.

Last of all, we have David's *thoughts about serving God*. v. 13. *Then*—there is a strong emphasis on this one little word. *Then—when?* When he has been forgiven, cleansed; when the Spirit has resumed his place, and when the joy of salvation has come back—*then* he will be ready for service. While sin lies on the conscience, while there is no joyful assurance of salvation, there can be no hearty service. But the heart that feels the thrill of forgiveness is ready for work. Notice here also the *kind* of work he will do. "I will teach transgressors *thy ways*." He has been a transgressor himself, and knows the experience. He will teach them *God's* ways; no other ways lead to blessedness. Here is a whole volume on Christian work—it is, to teach *God's* ways to men who are off the path; and the result will be—the conversion of men *unto God*.

LESSON POINTS.

1. The holiest men do not know what depths of sinfulness there are yet in their nature, nor what possibility of falling there is in them.

2. Sin is a terrible thing. It is ingrained in our very life-fibres. It is inborn. It is a leprosy.

3. There is mercy for those who have wandered the farthest away, even after knowing the most of divine communion. If they truly return God will still receive them.

4. Not mercy only, but the highest privileges of children of God. No sin, however dark, should drive one to despair. Remember what David reached after his fall, and Peter also.

5. Our only hope is in God, in his mercy and grace, in the blood of Christ, in the cleansing and renewing of the Holy Ghost.

6. A forgiven and restored life should be a consecrated life.

7. If we have been away from God and then return, we should seek to build up again what we have torn down.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

BY JAMES A. WORDEN, D.D.

APPROACH.

The wisest method of reviewing the details of David's terrible fall is that suggested in the psalm. Ask the scholars to read 2 Sam. 12: 1–14. How did Nathan apply the parable of the ewe lamb? What elements of sin were in David's conduct toward Uriah and Bath-sheba? What is true repentance? 1. Sense of sin. 2. Sight of the mercy of God in Christ. 3. Grief and hatred of the sin, and an earnest purpose and endeavor to forsake sin and live unto God. Where are we taught that we must *confess* our sins? Ps. 32: 5, 6; Prov. 28: 13; James 5: 16; 1 John 1: 9.

DIVIDE.

The Penitent's Prayers. vs. 1–12.
The Penitent's Vows. vs. 13–19.

I. THE PENITENT'S PRAYERS. 1. Bring out each of the petitions, asking for the meaning of each. How must we look upon sin when we pray for pardon and cleansing? We must realize that our sins ought to be punished; therefore we must have forgiveness. We must know that we are polluted by our sins; therefore need cleansing. We must know that we cannot help ourselves, that none but God can pardon us. In dealing with v. 7 bring out the reference to the blood of Christ. See Rev. 1: 5; Heb. 9: 19; 1 John 1: 7; Rev. 7: 14.

2. David's acknowledgment of sin. vs. 3–5. (*a*) It was frank and full. (*b*) He had the bitter load ever on his heart. (*c*) It was the bitterest drop in his cup, that his sin had been committed *against God*. (*d*) His sin showed him the horrible depths of the sinfulness of his nature. Such was David's repentance. How can we obtain repentance unto life? Show that repentance is God's gift. Zech. 12: 10; Acts 5: 31; 11: 18; 2 Tim. 2: 25. How can a hard-hearted sinner obtain true repentance? If you want to melt ice, bring it to the fire. If you want to melt your heart, do not take it to the law, but bring it to the fire of Jesus' love.

II. THE PENITENT'S VOWS. Why must a person first repent and be forgiven before he can teach others? Why will a forgiven sinner desire to teach others? What "blood-guiltiness" had David brought upon him? What does he promise God if he will deliver him from blood-guiltiness? What if he shall open his lips? What are the most acceptable sacrifices we can offer to God? Our pride and self-righteousness and self-confidence must be ground to powder. King Henry II. despised

his son's repentance. The king was besieging his rebel son in a city in France. The son was sick, and sent word to see his father and confess his wrong. But the stern king refused. The son said: "I am dying; take me from my bed and let me lie in sackcloth and ashes in token of my sorrow for my sin against my father." When Henry II. heard that he cried, "Would God I had died for him." So God yearns over a broken and contrite heart.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

SUGGESTIONS.—The words "True Repentance" to be placed upon the board previous to the opening of the school. This wonderful "prayer of the penitent" shows us in what true repentance consists. (1) There must be a recognition of guilt and of the justice of its punishment. Nathan's parable opened David's eyes to the enormity of his sin. Print as in diagram, "Sin Recognized." True repentance begins when sin is recognized *and felt*. This will lead (2) to a confession of sin. Have a scholar read 1 John 1: 9, and a teacher read Job 33: 27, 28. Speak of David's humble confession, and print "Sin Confessed." Recognizing sin and confessing it, it will be deplored by the true penitent. With vs. 3, 5, have some one read Ps. 38: 17, 18, and print "Sin Deplored." Recognizing our guilt, and confessing and deploring it, we will forsake it. Read Isa. 55: 7, and print "Sin Forsaken." David's prayer was not only for pardon, but for *purity*, and he not only prayed to be made clean, but to be *kept* clean. Through sin we lose the joy of salvation. Sin recognized, confessed, deplored and forsaken, joy is restored. "When we deal seriously with our sin, God will deal gently with us."

Suggestions for Coloring.—"True Repentance," green shaded with red; the rest yellow.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

BY MRS. G. R. ALDEN—"PANSY."

Two thoughts should stand out prominently in the teaching of this lesson to little children, viz.: That even good and great men sin, and that there is but one way to be forgiven.

I met last winter a skillful primary teacher, who suggested the following object-lesson for teaching the story of sin and its cure: She placed a large white paper heart in a frame, covered it with glass, smeared the glass with some dark mixture not soluble in water. These spots, of course, seemed to be on the white heart, and were to represent sin. Having talked with the children about the ugly stains which wrong-doing had made, she took water and tried to wash them off. Of course she failed. This was to illustrate the truth that tears will not wash away sin.

"Weeping will not save me;
Though my heart were bathed in tears,
That could not allay my fears,
Could not wash the sins of years;
Weeping will not save me."

She then took alcohol (or possibly turpentine, prepared for her at the druggist's, and colored red), and washed the glass clean, the white heart showing pure underneath. This, of course, represented the blood of Christ, which David knew would wash him "whiter than snow." This suggestion is perhaps open to criticism on the ground that one would not like to seem to simulate the blood of Christ; though when the criticism was suggested, another worker replied that it simply typified it, as the wine at communion did. I think, perhaps, it is like many

other objects; in the hands of careful and experienced teachers, used clearly and only as types, they are valuable, and in unskilled hands they may become mischievous.

A blackboard method of presenting the portion of this lesson which I should teach in the primary class, is as follows: Make in the sin-color a pair of hands. They have been doing wrong—David's hands. What was the matter? How came David to do wrong? Outline—still in the sin-color—a heart that shall include the hands. The thought of the heart came first, and the hands carried it out. Print the word "SIN" in the heart. This story is true of David not only, but of every child in your class. All have sinned.

But the lesson is about David's repentance. What does that mean? He is sorry; he wants the sin blotted out. He wants to turn away from it and do wrong no more. He says, "My sin is ever before me." It keeps him from being happy. Whom does he trust to help him? Listen to his prayer: "Create in me a clean heart, O God." "Wash me and I shall be clean." What is the whitest thing you can think of? (It will be well to let little children discuss this, and offer suggestions. Last winter, when you were out with your sleds and your skates, what was the whitest thing you saw? Now listen to David: "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow!"

With what must he be washed in order to be clean? If your class know the Bible answer, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin," let them give it while you outline the heart and hands with red crayon, calling attention to the fact that when the heart is washed the hands also are clean.

This thought has been successfully taught by the aid of three hearts—a black, a red, and a white. The black represents the unpardoned sin. The red, the cleansing blood, laid over the black, covering it, then the white laid over the red, to show how white in God's sight is the heart that has been cleansed in Christ's blood.

Whatever way you teach it, the central truth remains the same—David sinned, I have sinned. David knew only one way to be made clean. No other way has ever been found. David said, "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." But before David offered this prayer he felt bitterly sorry for his sin, and determined to turn away from it. So I must feel sorry for sin, must resolve to turn away from it, must ask God to wash me, and then I shall certainly be clean in his sight.

Lesson VI. **ABSALOM'S REBELLION.** August 10th, 1884.

2 Sam. 15: 1-14. Memorize vs. 4-6.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."—Ex. 20: 12.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 2 Sam. 13: 23-39...*Absalom's Exile.*
T. 2 Sam. 14: 1-24...*Absalom's Recall.*
W. 2 Sam. 14: 25-33...*Absalom's Restoration.*
Th. 2 Sam. 15: 1-14...*Absalom's Rebellion.*
F. Ps. 3: 1-8.....*David's Lament.*
S. Ps. 55: 1-23.....*Friends Faithless—God Faithful.*
S. Ps. 143: 1-12.....*David's Prayer.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. The People's Hearts Stolen. 2. The Conspiracy Ripe. 3. The King's Flight.

Time.—B. C. 1023.

Places.—Jerusalem and Hebron.

Catechism.—Q. 91. *How do the sacraments become effectual means of salvation?* A. The sacraments become effectual means of salvation, not from any virtue in them, or in him that doth administer them; but only by the blessing of Christ, and the working of his Spirit in them that by faith receive them.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—When the prophet Nathan came to tell David of his sin he pronounced this doom, that the sword should not depart from his house. See 2 Sam. 12: 9-12. It was not long before the words began to be fulfilled. First there was Amnon's shameful outrage, which was avenged by Absalom. Absalom's flight followed. He was subsequently permitted to return, and soon afterward he began to lay his plans for revolt. He sought to make the people dissatisfied with his father's administration of justice, and intimated that if *he* were king these things would be corrected. Our lesson describes Absalom's base conduct and his final open revolt.

---

1 And it came to pass after this, that Ab'sa-lom prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him. [1 Kings 1: 5; Prov. 11: 2; 16: 18.]

2 And Ab'sa-lom rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate: and it was so, that when any man that had a controversy came to the king for judgment, then Ab'sa-

lom called unto him, and said, Of what city *art* thou? And he said, Thy servant *is* of one of the tribes of Is'ra-el.

3 And Ab'sa-lom said unto him, See, thy matters *are* good and right; but *there is* no man *deputed* of the king to hear thee.

4 Ab'sa-lom said moreover, Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice!

5 And it was *so*, that when any man came nigh *to him* to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him. [Ps. 12: 2.]

6 And on this manner did Ab'sa-lom to all Is'ra-el that came to the king for judgment: so Ab'sa-lom stole the hearts of the men of Is'ra-el. [Rom. 16: 18.]

7 ¶ And it came to pass after forty years, that Ab'sa-lom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the LORD, in He'bron. [1 Sam. 16: 1.]

8 For thy servant vowed a vow while I abode at Ge'shur in Syr'i-a, saying, If the LORD shall bring me again indeed to Je-ru'sa-lem, then I will serve the LORD. [2 Sam. 13: 38.]

9 And the king said unto him, Go in peace. So he arose, and went to He'bron.

10 ¶ But Ab'sa-lom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Is'ra-el, saying, As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, Ab'sa-lom reigneth in He'bron.

11 And with Ab'sa-lom went two hundred men out of Je-ru'sa-lem, *that were* called; and they went in their simplicity, and they knew not any thing. [Gen. 20: 5.]

12 And Ab'sa-lom sent for A-hith'o-phel the Gi'lo-nite, Da'vid's counselor, from his city, *even* from Gi'loh, while he offered sacrifices. And the conspiracy was strong; for the people increased continually with Ab'sa-lom. [Ps. 41: 9.]

13 ¶ And there came a messenger to Da'vid, saying, The hearts of the men of Is'ra-el are after Ab'sa-lom. [Judg. 9: 3]

14 And Da'vid said unto all his servants that *were* with him at Je-ru'sa-lem, Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not *else* escape from Ab'sa-lom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword. [2 Sam. 19: 9; Ps. 3, Title.]

1 *After this.* After the admission of Absalom to David's presence, as recorded in chap. 14: 28–33. We are not told how long a time had elapsed after this reconciliation, nor what provocation, if any, caused Absalom to enter upon this base treason against his own father. No doubt his position in Jerusalem those two years, previous to his reconciliation (chap. 14: 28), tolerated by his father but not pardoned and fully restored, was such as to stir up the worst things in him. Then his final admission to favor after this period of exclusion, with no repentance on his part, was a triumph for him, tending to inflate his vanity and to encourage him in any treasonable designs he may have been cherishing. Possibly he may have been slighted at court by Bathsheba, who naturally felt jealous of Absalom. *Prepared him chariots* [a chariot] *and horses.* His proud spirit thus began to assert itself. To ride in a chariot drawn by horses was in imitation of foreign monarchs. 1 Sam. 8: 11. Absalom knew that it would please and impress the people. Adonijah did the same when he seized the throne. See 1 Kings 1: 5.

2 *The way of the gate.* The way that led to the palace gate where the king sat to hear cases. The people would pass this way as they went to lay their matters before David. *A controversy.* A suit. v. 4. *One of the tribes.* Of course naming his tribe in each case.

3–5 *Thy matters are good.* He assured each one who came that his case was important, that his grievance was sore, that he ought to have justice, and then artfully left the impression that the king was negligent. *No man deputed.* No one appointed to look into the matter, implying that cases were decided hastily, without proper investigation. If *he* were judge all this would be corrected, and every man would receive justice. *Kissed him.* Thus carrying his flattery to its fullest extent. He knew all the arts of the crafty politician.

6 *Stole the hearts.* By his hints he made the people dissatisfied with David, and then by his flatteries and kisses won them to himself.

7, 8 *After forty years.* Evidently *forty* is an error made in transcribing; the correct number is *four*, as given in some very ancient versions and by Josephus. It was probably four years after Absalom's reconciliation to David, and after the beginning of his efforts to win the people's hearts, as just described. *Pay my vow.* Using a professed religious design to cover his treason. *In Hebron.* His birthplace. This place was probably chosen as the rallying-point for the conspiracy, because Absalom had many friends of his youth there, and because there would naturally be a jealousy of Jerusalem among the people, and a bitter feeling against David for taking the capital away from them. *At Geshur.* Where Absalom had been while banished from home. *Then will I serve the Lord.* With a sacrifice of some kind. Compare 1 Sam. 20: 6.

10 *Sent spies.* Agents who were secretly sent out to learn the feeling among the people and prepare for Absalom's revolt. *The sound of the trumpet.* This would be the signal given

first at Hebron, and probably then repeated by trumpeters stationed at proper distances all over the country, so that the proclamation was made at almost the same moment throughout the land.

11 *Two hundred men . . . called.* These Absalom invited to accompany him to his sacrificial feast. *Knew not any thing.* Of the conspiracy, although no doubt they were his companions. This shows with what secrecy Absalom had proceeded. He had doubtless selected his men, however, with care, and was quite sure that they would all enter with him into his conspiracy when they knew of it.

12 *Ahithophel.* He was the grandfather of Bath-sheba (2 Sam. 11 : 3; 23 : 34), and it has been supposed that he may have felt bitterly toward David because of the dishonor brought upon his house by the affair of the king and Bath-sheba. However, if Ps. 41 : 9 refers to Ahithophel, it would indicate that up to the time of the revolt he was the king's most intimate friend and most trusted counsellor. He was a man of great wisdom. He has been regarded as the type of Judas, the arch-traitor, and in many points the parallel holds true. Like Judas, his end also was self-destruction. Chap. 17 : 23. *While he offered sacrifices.* The meaning is, that he sent for Ahithophel to *be present* while he offered sacrifices. Possibly Ahithophel may have been in the conspiracy before, as he is not embraced in the two hundred who "knew not any thing." The feast that followed the sacrifice was a good time to announce to the guests his plan, and to get them to pledge him their support. Having enjoyed his hospitality they would be almost compelled to join with him. Then in the excitement of the feast it would be easy to arouse the guests to enthusiasm in his support.

13 *There came a messenger.* This seems to have been the first intimation David had of the conspiracy. *The hearts of the men.* Already it was a great popular revolt. There must have been considerable discontent with David's rule to allow the influence of Absalom to spread so widely and get such a firm hold upon the people.

14 *Let us flee.* There were probably several reasons for this decision on David's part. He had no standing army ready in this time of peace for such a sudden and unexpected emergency. In his tenderness of heart he did not wish to subject Jerusalem to the horrors of a siege. He would gain time also by flight, and this would be favorable to him and unfavorable to Absalom, for there would be a reaction against the revolt after its first violence had spent itself. Then it is doubtless true also that David remembered Nathan's prophecy (12 : 10–12), and that his usual courage forsook him as he thought of this as part of the divine retribution justly following his sins. The sequel proved, too, that flight was indeed the wiser course. The account of David's flight, as given in the remaining portion of this chapter, is one of the most pathetic stories in the Bible.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

Absalom prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him. No sooner was he brought back from banishment and reconciled to his father than he began to plot for rebellion. His father was too plain and old-fashioned; *he* would show the people what real royalty was like. He was a dashing young prince. There are many young men, not princes, walking in the same way. They look upon their father's plain, quiet ways as entirely behind the age. The old man is too slow, does not know much about "the world." So the *young* man pushes out with his impressive airs, his fine clothes, his gold rings, his extravagance, his fine manners, his gay companions, his fast horses. Most people who study this lesson will know of some one who fills out the picture. Possibly it is yourself. If so, you must not fail to read the story through to the end. These splendid horses and chariots generally drive to about the same place.

Absalom rose up early. . . . Thy matters are . . . right; but there is no man deputed . . . to hear thee. It is very easy for one person to stir up a great deal of dissatisfaction in this way among people. He need not say a word against any one, and yet he can put matters in such light as to create discontent. This is a good way, for instance, to make people think their pastor is not very faithful. Just flatter them a little, and sympathize with them in all their troubles, and then say, "How much help your pastor might give you, if he only would!" Or, "What a pity the pastor does not look after his sick people better!" It does not take long even for one person to get half a congregation feeling that they are not quite fairly treated, indeed, that they really are neglected, by their pastor. The same mischievous work is easily done in a great many other places. Slighting remarks about a superintendent, or about a teacher, or about an employer, may lead to complete estrangement. In the same way friends may be separated. There is no more subtle treachery than this, and we need all to be on our guard continually lest, unconsciously, we

destroy the influence of others and cause them deep and irreparable injury.

Oh that I were made judge . . . that every man . . . might come unto me, and I would do him justice. First he poisoned the people's minds toward David by making the impression that the king was neglectful, and that the people were suffering wrong through his neglect; next he suggested how different matters would be if *he* were only judge in his father's place. The meanness and treachery of such words we can all see. He cared nothing for the people's real or imagined wrongs. He had no true sympathy with them. He thought only of destroying their confidence in David and winning them to himself. There are people always who think of no way of getting up but by pulling others down. Our tongues have very perilous powers. It is so easy for any of us by careless words, and unintentionally, to disparage others and indirectly suggest how much better we would perform their duties if they were ours.

When any man came nigh . . . he put forth his hand and took him and kissed him. . . . So Absalom stole the hearts . . . of Israel. The politicians still practice Absalom's arts. It is not the fashion now for men to kiss men, but there are other ways of showing "affection" that are equivalent and quite as effective. That these were false professions of friendship is readily seen when we remember the object of Absalom—to drag his father down from his throne and usurp the place himself. When we see a young man "rising" in the world, we must know by what means he is rising before we can admire his success and approve it. Is he getting up honestly or dishonestly? Is his prosperity fairly and legitimately won, or won by tricks and treacheries, by deceits and falsehoods? Such advancement as Absalom's is a brilliant palace built on sand; and there are a great many such always in process of construction. Before any young man follows Absalom's example he had better ask what came of Absalom's splendid palace in the end.

Absalom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow. He even professed to be a godly man, because this would be a power with the people, and just now especially would blind his father. He must get away from Jerusalem to sound the signal of revolt, and the best way to get off would be on a religious errand. He easily fabricated one. He said he had made a vow when he was in exile—would his father permit him to go to pay it? He knew this would please his father. He would think Absalom was growing penitent, and was about to become a better man. The hypocrisy worked well. David suspected nothing, and sent his son away in peace, to worship God, as he supposed. There is nothing baser in this world than such a use of the name of religion. Yet this sacred robe is often used to cover wickedness and to deceive the good. A man goes about to raise money from good people to build a church—so he represents—for a poor congregation, and soon it comes out that he is an unprincipled scoundrel. A boy wanted to go off with a party of other boys on an excursion of doubtful propriety, and told his mother that his teacher wanted all the class to meet at her house for a pic-nic in the woods. A church fair is gotten up, and in the hallowed house of God grab-bags, chances and pious lotteries are resorted to to gather money to support the gospel. These are illustrations.

With Absalom went two hundred, . . . they went in their simplicity, and they knew not any thing. He had attached them to himself, no doubt, by flatteries and favors. Now he invites them to go with him to Hebron and be present at the princely feast he would give there. It was a high honor. They were greatly complimented by the invitation. All Jerusalem would envy them. They never dreamt of Absalom's design, and yet they seem to have entered with him into the rebellion. This is an illustration of the way bad men still try to lead others into evil. They cover up their real object, and under the profession of friendship draw the innocent and unsuspecting into their schemes. When the true nature of their designs is disclosed it is too late to withdraw. Flattery is always dangerous; we should beware of it. Compliments from bad men or women usually have some evil design behind them. The lesson is, never to allow ourselves to be led blindfold into any wicked scheme. The fable of "The Spider and the Fly" has an illustration here.

There came a messenger to David, saying, The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom. It was terrible news to the father. He had never suspected Absalom's treason, and had begun to hope that his erring son was turning toward God and better things. What a crushing blow it was to David to hear of his treason and the success of his revolt! No words are strong enough to characterize Absalom's crime against his father. The great lesson to the young is, that they should honor their parents and seek in every way to bring happiness and comfort to them. They can do this best by living true and noble lives. No young person who studies this lesson will allow for a moment that he is capable of such treason

against his parents as Absalom's; yet, in a measure, all disobedience, all lack of loving honor, all want of tender regard, all hypocrisies and deceptions toward parents, are similar sins.

David said, . . . Let us flee. So the rebellion was successful without a stroke. Absalom was king, and his father was fleeing away into exile. But who that reads the story envies such a triumph, or would care to wear the crown Absalom wore? Here is a good place to study sin's success. We see things in truer light in others than in ourselves, and can judge more honestly of them. Even suppose Absalom had been permanently successful, holding his place as king, defeating his father in battle and putting him to death; who would want such success—a throne stained with a father's blood, power resting upon a murdered parent?

LESSON POINTS.

1. Love of show and splendor leads to many a downward career. v. 1.

2. We need to be ever on our guard, lest when complaints are made against others we allow ourselves to encourage them. v. 2.

3. Trading for ourselves on the real or supposed mistakes or defects of others is very mean. v. 3.

4. It is a base thing to undermine confidence in others, and then try to get ourselves into the place we have made empty. v. 4.

5. Fawning and flattery are the low arts of the politician, and unworthy of any worthy life. v. 5.

6. The use of religion to cover a great crime under the garb of devotion to God, is one of the blackest deeds of which human nature is capable. vs. 7, 8.

7. We should be warned against the danger of being deceived and led away unawares by designing men. v. 11.

8. The people are fickle and easily led away from their best friends. v. 12.

9. No sin is more black than the disloyalty of children to their parents.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

APPROACH.

Briefly recall the history of David's sin and repentance. Ask, How was David's sin connected with Absalom's rebellion? Some may not see how this sin of David *caused* Absalom's crime. Bring out that the whole life of David after his terrible fall was a period of trial and judgment. The sword never departed from his house. Especially bring out the effects of David's fall upon his own sons. 1. Amnon's crime. 2 Sam. 13: 1–20. 2. Absalom's vengeance. 2 Sam. 13: 21–33. 3. Absalom's exile. 2 Sam. 13: 34–39. 4. His return. 2 Sam. 14.

DIVIDE.

STEALING { *Hearts.* / *A Crown.*

I. STEALING HEARTS. vs. 1–6. 1. Have Absalom's beauty described. 2 Sam. 14: 25. His hair. 2 Sam. 14: 26. 2. His half-kingly state and style. 1 Sam. 15: 1. How would this display of chariots and horses and runners impress the people? Would they not cry, "What a magnificent prince is Absalom! *He* knows how to act the king!" What illustrations have we to-day of Absalom's style and extravagance? Young men vain of their personal appearance, giving more attention to their hair than their brains, riding in magnificent carriages or railroad coaches, riding fast and living fast. Luke 15: 13. 3. Absalom is wonderfully polite. What shows the energy of the conspirer? "He rose up early." How did he make himself seen? How did he address every man who had a controversy at law? What was Absalom's manner at such times? What illustrations have we of the same kind of politeness to-day? Politicians flattering the people, wire-pullers everywhere trying to get "influence." Men and women in society, whose words are "smoother than butter, but war is in their hearts."

"With smooth dissimulation skilled to grace
A devil's purpose with an angel's face."

If corrupt men are so polite to others for bad purposes, what should we be from Christian motives? 1 Peter 3: 8. Bring out that all this scheming culminated in rebellion.

II. STEALING A CROWN. vs. 7–14. With what falsehood did Absalom deceive his father? How would such a pious pilgrimage strike David? Why did Absalom select Hebron as the place to begin. How do children now deceive their parents under a show of religion? What preparations had Absalom made all through the tribes of Israel for the sudden rebellion? Who accompanied him to Hebron? What noted counselor joined Absalom's rebellion? What made the conspiracy so strong? 1. God's judgment upon David. 2. David's fall had lessened his hold upon the people, and made them ripe for rebellion. 3. Absalom's arts had stolen their hearts.

What sins did Absalom commit in thus rebelling?

1. He dishonored and disobeyed his loving father.

2. He dared to cover his rebellion with a cloak of religion, adding hypocrisy to disobedience.

3. His rebellion ended in murdering many innocent men.

4. He lied and stole, all from a selfish, ambitious motive.

5. He rebelled against God as well as against his father and king, for David was Jehovah's anointed.

Who to-day commit sin like Absalom's rebellion?

1. Every child to-day who mocks at or disobeys his father or mother is *beginning* the same course of rebellion.

2. Every young man or woman at school or college who plots against his teachers.

3. Every young man or woman who tries to undermine his employer in trade or business.

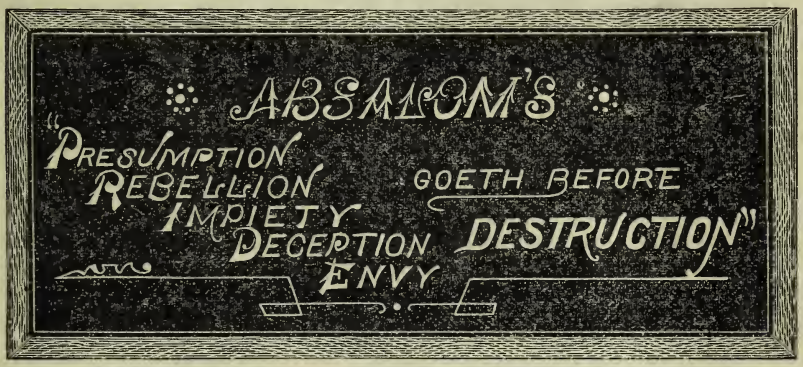
What is the cure for a rebellious spirit?

1. *Submission to God.* Haste not, "commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him and he will bring it to pass."

2. Contentment with our lot.

3. "Look unto Jesus," who endured death for you!

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.



SUGGESTIONS.—Let the words "Absalom's" and "Goeth Before Destruction" be placed upon the board before the opening of the school, and covered with paper, to be removed during the desk lesson. There is in Absalom the spirit of vanity; "vain of his good looks and desirous of show." This spirit leads (1) to Presumption; (2) to Envy. vs. 1–5. Print "Presumption" and "Envy" as in diagram, and remove paper covering the word "Absalom's." It leads (3) to Deception. vs. 7, 8. Print "Deception," as in diagram. It leads (4) to Impiety. vs. 6, 12, 13. Print "Impiety." These all lead to Rebellion, the theme of the lesson. Print "Rebellion" as above. Go over each of these evils, impressing the lessons they are intended to convey, and erase one by one, all but the first letters of each, leaving the acrostic "PRIDE." "*Absalom's Pride*" led to Absalom's rebellion. Have the school read Prov. 6: 16–19, and show how the seven things that are an abomination to the Lord were manifested in Absalom's character, and have one of the teachers read Prov. 16: 18, during which erase "Absalom's," remove paper covering "Goeth Before Destruction," and impress the lesson that "Pride Goeth Before Destruction," as we shall see in our next lesson.

Suggestions for Coloring.—"Absalom's," white shaded with red; "Goeth Before Destruction," brown shaded with red; the acrostic green; the rest of the words plain colors.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The Lesson Introduced by Blackboard Illustration.—Make a broad straight mark in white crayon. Explain that it stands for one of the rules of life which God has given us. Call out a few statements about the ten commandments. Print the figure "5" over the white mark, then call for a recital of the fifth commandment. Print the first half of it on the straight line, viz.: "Honor thy father and thy mother." Make a blue arch at the right, to stand for the promise. Connect the white line and the arch by a link of a chain. In the link print the word "that," and place the rest of the command around the arch. In this way teach that the command and the promise are inseparable. To ensure the one, we must obey the other.

The Lesson Introduced by an Object.—A worm-eaten apple, or nut, will serve as a simple and easily secured illustration of one truth in this story. The apple is fair to look upon; the

little hole that the worm has made is so slight that those who see the apple on the plate with the rest do not notice it at all. So Absalom was fair in speech, winning in manner, and stole the hearts of the people who could not see the little worm of "Ambition" which had gnawed its way into his heart, and eaten out all the natural love for father.

The apple might be shown while the story of his smooth words and kind ways is told to class; and later, when it is explained to them what he was after, cut the apple open and show the rotten heart.

Sins of which Absalom was guilty:

1. Breaking the fifth commandment.

2. Hypocrisy. He took pains to make the people believe that he was deeply interested in them.

3. Falsehood. He pretended to want to go to Hebron to worship God.

4. Falsehood to the two hundred men who did not understand his plans.

These are the ugly branches which grew on the tree. It might help to impress the fact if a tree named "Absalom" was outlined, letting class give you the name of the three prominent branches. But what was the seed from which this tree grew? Make a little seed beneath, and ask class what you shall name it. See if you can so teach the lesson as to draw from them the fact that it was a desire to get a place which did not belong to him. Perhaps "Jealousy" would be as good a name to give it as we can find for children. Surround the seed with a heart, to show the place where all sin begins. Absalom doubtless *thought* of these things a long time before he began to do anything.

Practical Lessons—

1. God's promises all have a command or a condition attached to them. If you break the condition you break the link which connects you with the arch of promise.

2. It is the little seed of jealousy in the heart, hid away from all human eyes, which starts the evil fruit. Put away the tiny seed, give it no soil in which to grow, and you will have no ugly fruit.

3. But the seed which takes root and grows will soon bear fruit that is plain to all. The apple which is rotten at the core will, after a time, decay so that all will see. The day came when everybody could see Absalom's sin.

4. We cannot get rid of the first little seeds of sin without taking the heart to God and asking him to make and keep it clean.

It will be seen that I have suggested several lessons, as well as several ways of presenting them. It is for each teacher of course to select her thought, and her way, and adhere to them.

Lesson VII. **ABSALOM'S DEATH.** **August 17th, 1884.**

2 Sam. 18: 24-33. Memorize vs. 32. 33.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death."— Mark 7: 10.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 2 Sam. 15: 16-37.....*Ittai's Fidelity.*
T. 2 Sam. 16: 1-14.....*Shimei's Hatred.*
W. 2 Sam. 17: 1-29.....*Absalom's Counselors.*
Th. 2 Sam. 18: 1-18.....*The Battle and the Victory.*
F. 2 Sam. 18: 24-33.....*A Father's Love.*
S. Ps. 71: 1-24.....*Confidence in God.*
S. Ps. 144: 1-4.....*Thanksgiving for Victory.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. Waiting for Tidings. 2. The Tidings Brought. 3. The Father's Lament.

Time.—B. C. 1023.

Place.—Mahanaim.

Catechism.—Q. 92. *What is a sacrament?* A. A sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ, wherein, by sensible signs, Christ and the benefits of the new covenant are represented, sealed, and applied to believers.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—When David fled he went toward the Jordan. He refused to take the ark of God with him. His faithful friend and counselor, Hushai, he sent back, that he might remain with Absalom to defeat the advice of Ahithophel. Many pathetic incidents occurred by the way as the king went on. Absalom entered Jerusalem, and was received by Hushai. Ahithophel's wise counsel to pursue David at once was overruled by Hushai's advice to delay and gather a great army. David meantime crossed the Jordan and made his headquarters in the fortress of Mahanaim. Some time, probably several weeks, passed, Absalom raised an army, and at length crossed the Jordan. David also organized his army and prepared for defence. The battle took place in the "wood of Ephraim." In the course of the battle Absalom found himself among enemies, and

turning to escape, the beast on which he rode went under a tree and his head was caught in a forked branch. He hung there helpless, and was killed by Joab. Our lesson tells of the carrying of the tidings to David.

---

24 And Da'vid sat between the two gates: and the watchman went up to the roof over the gate unto the wall, and lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold a man running alone. [1 Sam. 4 : 3; 2 Kings 9 : 17; Isa. 21 : 11, 12.]

25 And the watchman cried, and told the king. And the king said, If he *be* alone, *there is* tidings in his mouth. And he came apace, and drew near.

26 And the watchman saw another man running: and the watchman called unto the porter, and said, Behold, *another* man running alone. And the king said, He also bringeth tidings.

27 And the watchman said, Methinketh the running of the foremost is like the running of A-him'a-az the son of Za'dok. And the king said, He *is* a good man, and cometh with good tidings. [1 Kings 1 : 42; Isa. 52 : 7.]

28 And A-him'a-az called, and said unto the king, All is well. And he fell down to the earth upon his face before the king, and said, Blessed *be* the LORD thy God, which hath delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king. [Ps. 124 : 6; 31 : 8.]

29 And the king said, Is the young man Ab'sa-lom safe? And A-him'a-az answered, When Jo'ab sent the king's servant, and *me* thy servant, I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what *it was*.

30 And the king said *unto him*, Turn aside, *and* stand here. And he turned aside, and stood still.

31 And, behold, Cu'shi came; and Cu'shi said, Tidings, my lord the king: for the LORD hath avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee. [Ps. 27 : 2; 55 : 11; 144 : 7, 10.]

32 And the king said unto Cu'shi, *Is* the young man Ab'sa-lom safe? And Cu'shi answered, The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do *thee* hurt, be as *that* young man *is*. [Judg. 5 : 31.]

33 ¶ And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Ab'sa-lom! my son, my son Ab'sa-lom! would God I had died for thee, O Ab'sa-lom, my son, my son! [ch. 19 : 4.]

24 *David sat between the two gates.* The outer and inner gate of the city, between which there was a space. He had taken his place by the gate in the morning when the army went forth to battle, and probably remained there all the day. See vs. 3, 4. His anxiety can be imagined. *The roof over the gate.* The gateways of ancient cities were covered and built over, as they were important places, being used for business, for the hearing of cases by rulers, and for other public purposes. See chap. 15 : 2. Watchmen were always kept on the lookout on the city walls, to give warning of the approach of any danger.

25, 26 *If he be alone.* This would indicate that he was a messenger, not a fugitive. If the army had been routed there would have been many persons running, not one alone. *The porter.* The man in charge of the gate.

27 *Ahimaaz.* See vs. 19–23. Evidently his way of running was well-known. *Cometh with good tidings.* The king was sure that if the tidings were not good Joab would not have sent such a distinguished messenger; besides, Ahimaaz, being David's friend, would not have volunteered to carry bad news. In all his replies here he shows his sagacity.

28 *Ahimaaz called.* Before he reached the gate, as soon as he was near enough to be heard. This shows his eagerness to deliver his tidings. *All is well.* Literally, *Peace*, the ordinary greeting, implying that all was well. *Fell down . . . before the king.* An act of homage after the custom of the country. Compare chap. 14 : 4; 1 Sam. 20 : 41; 25 : 23. *Delivered up the men.* The expression means, literally, *Shut up*, restrained, arrested in their mad purpose.

29 *Is the young man Absalom safe?* Literally, *Is there peace to the young man Absalom?* The good news that the revolt was checked and the kingdom safe did not satisfy the king's heart; he must know about Absalom. The *father* rather than the *king* appears here. In the midst of all his unnatural crimes David's heart never ceased to yearn for him. *The king's servant.* Cushi, who was now advancing. However, the true reading may be, "When Joab the king's servant, sent me thy servant." *I knew not what it was.* His heart failed him when he saw David's deep anxiety, and he spoke falsely rather than give the bad tidings about Absalom.

31 *Cushi came*, or *The Cushite.* He was an Ethiopian slave. See vs. 21–24. *Tidings.* Rather, "Let my lord, the king, receive the good tidings." *The Lord hath avenged thee.* See v. 19. The thought of the word is, that the matter had been referred to the Lord, and he had decided in David's favor, as the issue of the battle showed.

32 *The enemies of my lord.* Even the Cushite slave seems to be affected by David's great anxiety, and he answers indirectly, though not evasively or falsely.

33 *Much moved.* His great grief showed itself in sore outburst. He forgot the deliver-

ance of his kingdom in personal sorrow for his son's fate. His tenderness of heart as a man appears here, and doubtless the grief was made more bitter by the thought that Absalom had died in his sins. *Would God I had died for thee.* See Ex. 32: 32, where Moses was ready to give his own life for his people; and Rom. 9: 3, where Paul would have sacrificed himself to save his nation. This passage is one of the most pathetic in the Bible.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

David sat between the two gates. It had been a long, anxious day to him. In the early morning the divisions of his army had filed out past him to join the battle with the insurgents. He had intended to accompany the troops, but was dissuaded by his officers. Never did a ruler wait more anxiously for news from a battlefield than did David that day. It was not only his kingdom that was in peril; the fact that the insurgent leader was his own son terribly complicated the issue. Either defeat or victory would bring anguish. A historian describes Emperor William on the heights of Sedan, looking down upon the battle with the French, a father as well as a commander, with his heart in his eye, because his own sons were in the fight; but his sons were loyal to Germany. Different were David's feelings, because his son was the enemy against whom the king's own men were fighting. It was a fearful day for David. Children who go away into sin never know with what bitterness loving fathers and mothers at home think of their evil courses. There are parents who pace their floors many long nights and look out at their windows into the streets watching for the return of those who are dearer to them than life. If children knew how they crush the hearts of devoted fathers and mothers when they go into sin and dishonor, surely they would never choose such a life.

David sat between the gates. That was all the poor, heart-broken father could do. He could put forth no hand to save his son. It was too late for that. He could only sit there in utter powerlessness and wait for the terrible tragedy which would end the sad story. He was like a father standing on the bank of some swift and fatal rapid while a boat is being swept down on the wild torrent. His own son is on the boat, and the father sees him on the deck, but can do nothing to save him. He can only look on with agonized heart and see the child he so loves swept on to hopeless death. It was thus with David that day. The time was now past for rescue. Years ago he might have prevented this terrible catastrophe, but now it was too late. There is a time for each duty, and if it is not done then it may never be possible to do it at all or to prevent the consequences of not doing it.

Ahimaaz called and said unto the king, All is well. . . . The king said, Is the young man Absalom safe? The king was lost in the father. His interest in the safety of the country was swallowed up in his anxiety for his rebel son. He heard of the victory of his arms, but that availed him nothing unless he knew that Absalom was safe. There is a story of a Lacedœmonian mother which stands in contrast with this. A messenger came back from the battlefield, and this woman hastened out into the street to ask what news he bore. With tender words the messenger said, "Your five sons are dead." With a look of withering scorn she replied, crushing down in her heart her own terrible grief, "I did not ask you of the welfare of my sons; I asked if *the country* was safe." Patriotic feeling was stronger in her than parental. In David it was the reverse. Yet there were reasons in his case for this difference. His son's name was dishonored, and besides, David himself felt that Absalom's ruin was, in a certain sense, the work of his hand.

Is the young man . . . safe? It will be well, in the study of this lesson, to put other names in the place of Absalom's, and ask the question of young men that we know: Are they safe? What is it to be *safe?* None are really *safe* who are not *saved.* This is a world of danger. Every life that grows up here must grow up amid countless perils. Storms sweep the sea and the wreck goes down, burying noble lives beneath the waves; and there is sorrow in homes when the missing ones come not. The battle rages, and many a brave soldier falls to rise no more, or to rise scarred and maimed; and there is grief in the homes where the cruel ball strikes. But there are fiercer storms raging in this world than those upon the sea, and our noblest young men are exposed to them. There are more terrific battles than those which are fought between nations, and there are loved ones from our households in the hottest of the strife. Are the young men safe? Are they saved? Are they in Christ? We mourn for those whom death takes; should we not mourn for our living, when we remember to what perils they are exposed? What are we doing for them? David ought to have asked this question years sooner, when his son was a tender child in his own hands. Have we young

children in our homes or classes? Now is the time to ask this question, "Are they safe?"

"Lord, our living, who on stormy seas
Of sin and sorrow still are tempest-tossed!
Our dead have reached their haven, but for these—
Teach us to trust thee, Lord, for *these*, our loved and lost.

"For these we make our passion-prayer at night;
For these we cry to thee through the long day."

The king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept. It is instructive to compare David's grief over Absalom's death with his bearing when his infant child died. Then there was no bitter weeping. During the child's illness he had fasted and cried to God, lying all night upon the earth. But when it was dead he arose and worshiped God in peaceful resignation. Here, however, the news of Absalom's death produced deep, bitter and uncontrollable grief. Why this difference? One reason was that when his infant child died the father knew it was safe with God, and he could say, "I shall go to him;" but Absalom's death was hopeless. Dying in the midst of his sins there was only black darkness about the setting of his sun. Some might think that long before this David would have ceased to love such a son as Absalom had been, and would not have been so affected by his death. But no one who knows a parent's heart will say this. This intense love that lived on through such a history of crime as had darkened Absalom's name is the same kind of affection that all true fathers and mothers have for their children. It never unclasps its hold. Do the children understand it? See in David's love a picture of the love of *your* father and mother. Then this love shows us also how *God loves his children.* Even their worst sins do not change his love to hate. In David's grief over his lost child we see how our heavenly Father feels when we will not be saved. Christ weeping over Jerusalem shows us this phase of the divine experience. He wept because the people he loved and had come to save had rejected him and his love and refused his mercy.

Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son! No doubt he would gladly have died for him, as he says. In the burning mine, when there was room for no more in the car that was starting up on its last trip, one brave lad stepped off and gave his place to another lad, saying: "He is not ready to die, because he is not saved and I am." David would have taken Absalom's place for the same reason; but it was impossible. If he had *lived* for him more faithfully when Absalom was younger he might never have had this terrible sorrow to endure. The *time* for parents to show their love for their children is when they have them in their hands in tender youth, and not when they are dead; and the *way* is, to let their children see in them an example of holiness and virtue, and not by wishing to die for them at the end. No doubt one of the bitterest elements of David's grief was the feeling that if he had lived differently himself and brought up his son differently, this terrible tragedy would never have come. There is a story of an old wrecker whose son had long been a wanderer on the sea. One night the father set his false lights, and a ship came ashore on the rocks. As the old man went along the beach gathering up his booty he came to a dead sailor washed up by the waves from the wreck. One glance and he saw it was his own long-lost son. It was *his* ship coming home that the wrecker had lured upon the rocks. He was his son's murderer. Some such feeling was David's in his pathetic grief. Dr. William M. Taylor gives an incident in the life of James Stirling, the first temperance missionary in Scotland. He was a drunkard till he was sixty, and out of gratitude for his deliverance he gave the remaining years of his life to efforts to save men from the curse of strong drink. On one of his journeys he met one of his sons, who had followed the father's example, and had become a drunkard. He had a long talk with him in the evening, and felt encouraged about him. But in the morning he was sent for in great haste; the son had committed suicide. Terrible was the father's anguish as he cried: "Had I been a sober man all my life this might never have occurred." The lesson for parents is very solemn, and need not be written out. They may by their own evil example start their children on wrong courses which shall lead them to utter ruin.

Yet in reflecting upon David's part of the blame we must not lose sight of the lessons from Absalom himself. He had splendid gifts and opportunities, but he threw them all away. He gave loose rein to his bad passions, and they carried him headlong into ruin. He was a type of what are now called "fast young men;" we need only to study his story through to the awful end to see the outcome of all such lives. The only safety for any boy or young man in this world is, to take Christ's yoke upon him and learn of him the true way of life, which leads to glory. Those who reject parental restraint and the restraints of conscience and the Bible are setting out on the same road Absalom took.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Absalom is the type of all who despise God's law and dishonor their parents; here we see the end.

2. Even a father's love cannot save his son when he is being swept away in the torrent of his own sin.

3. Every parent and teacher should eagerly ask the question, "Is the young man ——— safe?"

4. The time to ask if this or that one is safe is not when the tragedy is over, but while we have the young in our homes and classes.

5. A parent's grief over a saved child is a sweet, placid sorrow compared with his grief over a lost and ruined child.

6. We cannot die for others or suffer their punishment, but we can live for them and save them from the sinner's fate.

7. Contrast the beginning and the end of Absalom's life, his early promise and his dark ruin, and seek for the cause of his failure.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

APPROACH.

1. Carefully review Absalom's rebellion. 2. Bring out by questioning the connecting links fully and in order. (*a*) The pathetic story of David's flight. 2 Sam. 15: 16–30. (*b*) David's sending back of Hushai. vs. 31–37. (*c*) The strange story of Ziba's treachery and Shimei's curse. 16: 1–14. (*d*) Abithophel's defeat and suicide. 17: 1–23. (*e*) The scene at the gate of Mahanaim and David's words. 18: 1–6. (*f*) The battle and victory of David's army. 18: 7, 8. (*g*) The slaying of Absalom. 18: 9–18. (*h*) The customs in those times of sending tidings. 19–23.

DIVIDE.

The Doting Father. vs. 24–30.
The Ruined Son. vs. 31, 32.
The Hopeless Sorrow. v. 33.

QUESTION, ILLUSTRATE AND APPLY.

I. THE DOTING FATHER. 1. Have the scholars read the title of Ps. 3, also vs. 5, 6. Several other psalms David wrote while fleeing from Absalom—possibly the 4th, 25th (?), 28th (?), 58th (?), 61st, 62d, 63d, 109th (?), 143d. These psalms all breathe a spirit of trust in God in time of trial.

2. Why is it, then, that this pious man is now breathless with suspense in that chamber over the gate?

(*a*) David had not restrained his sons. 1 Kings 1: 6. Compare also Gen. 18: 19; 1 Sam. 3: 13.

(*b*) He had let Amnon's crime go unpunished.

(*c*) He had not punished Absalom's murder of Amnon.

(*d*) His own sins had brought all this war and rebellion upon himself. What is the great lesson from this? Parents must train and restrain their children. What great wrong to the kingdom had David committed? He suffered the murder of Amnon to go unpunished. He allowed under his very eyes the vanity and ambition of Absalom to grow into treason and rebellion. As he wails over the gate, what sin against his own subjects and friends is David committing? He is more anxious for the safety of Absalom than for the safety of his own kingdom. Why is this a sin?

II. THE RUINED SON. Recall the circumstances of his death, his burial, the news in vs. 31, 32.

What steps led to Absalom's ruin?

1. What kind of *education* did he seem to have? A training in taking care of his person, polling his hair, etc. We read nothing of his learning or practicing any useful thing.

2. What *passions* did he indulge? Not love for music like his father, but revenge, ambition, rebellion.

What sins are frequently punished in this world?

1. Dishonoring parents—golden text, fifth commandment, Prov. 30: 17.

2. Rebellion against rightful authority. Rom. 13: 1–4, etc. In showing David's blame we must not forget Absalom's own sin, nor fail to impress its solemn lesson of warning for every boy and young man who is disposed to throw off the home yoke.

III. THE HOPELESS SORROW. What was there pathetic in David's lament? In what was David's love for Absalom a reminder of God's love to us? It was love to his son, to his sinful and rebellious son. David said, "Would God I had died for thee!" Christ actually died for his enemies. Rom. 5: 8. Christ wept over sinners. Luke 19: 41. See also Judg. 10: 16; Matt. 23: 37.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Central Thoughts—

1. Death the punishment for sin.
2. Sin pierced the king's heart with sorrow.
3. Our King bore the punishment for us.

Mrs. Crafts in her printed outlines suggests that a picture of Absalom's monument be made

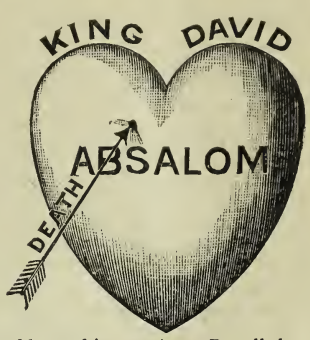
on the board, and the lesson introduced by asking class whose they think it is, and what they know about Absalom.

I shall review last Sabbath's lesson, and then try to picture the war scene. Absalom riding to battle, the old king waiting at home, having charged his soldiers to "deal gently" with Absalom. The snare in which Absalom was caught, the manner in which he was finally killed, the messengers running to the king, their different ways of giving the news, the king's bitter sorrow.

It looks like a very long story, but the thoroughly prepared teacher can give the salient points in brief space, and make the children feel as though the events occurred but yesterday.

Object Lesson.—A heart to represent king David's, with the word "ABSALOM" printed on it. An arrow with the word "DEATH" on it. At the proper time insert the sharp point of the arrow in the heart, to show that David's heart was pierced by the news of his son's death.

Applications.—1. Absalom sinned by disobeying and rebelling against his father. In this way came his death. We are God's children. We have sinned against and in many ways disobeyed him, and he has said: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."



2. God keeps his promises. Recall the straight line on which was printed God's command, as we had it in last Sabbath's lesson, and the link which united it to the arch. Absalom's life was short, because he broke the connection between the command and the promise.

3. David in his sorrow said: "Would God I had died for thee." But Jesus came and died for us, that is, bore our punishment, so that God could be true to his word and yet save our souls from death.

4. Every wrong thing that God's children are guilty of is like an arrow in the heart of Jesus. Who is willing to grieve the heart of one who even *died* to help us?

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

SUGGESTIONS.—Rebellion and Retribution are the lessons to be impressed. As learned in the last lesson, "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. Here we see the confirmation of this truth.

Have a class read Prov. 14: 32 (first clause), and a teacher read Job 18: 5–7, 10, 11, 16–18, and print on board as in diagram, "The Traitor's Doom." Call upon a scholar to read Prov. 11: 3, another Job 31: 3, another Prov. 10: 29, another Isa. 1: 28, and print on board as in diagram, "Destruction." Let a teacher read Isa. 14: 19, 20, and print "Disgrace." Show that all who rebel against the King of kings are traitors, and will meet the traitor's doom—destruction and disgrace.

BAD BOYS A MEET MISERABLE **END.**

Suggestion for Coloring.—The entire diagram red shaded with brown.

Lesson VIII. **THE PLAGUE STAYED.** August 24th, 1884.

2 Sam. 24: 15-25. Memorize vs. 24, 25

GOLDEN TEXT.—"So the Lord was entreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel."—2 Sam. 24: 25.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 2 Sam. 19: 1-30.....*The King's Return.*
T. Ps. 20: 1-9.....*The King's Thanksgiving.*
W. 2 Sam. 20: 1-14.....*Three Years' Famine.*
Th. 2 Sam. 24: 1-14.....*David's Sin.*
F. 2 Sam. 24: 15-25.....*The Plague Stayed.*
S. Ps. 18: 31-50.....*Mercies Recounted.*
S. 2 Sam. 23: 1-7.....*Last Words.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. Wrath against Sin. 2. Repentance and Atonement. 3. Mercy and Deliverance.

Time.—B. C. 1017.

Place.—Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 93. *Which are the sacraments of the New Testament?* A. The sacraments of the New Testament are, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—David's sin in numbering the people was punished by pestilence. The sin did not consist in the simple taking of a census, for this was expressly provided for by the law of Moses. Ex. 30: 12. Evidently it was David's motive in ordering this census which displeased the Lord. It seems to have been a matter of pride and ambition on his part. His kingdom had grown strong, and he began to forget God and glory in his own greatness and that of his nation. This view is supported by Joab's words. v. 3; see also 1 Chron. 21: 3. When the numbering was completed David saw that he had sinned, and cried to God for forgiveness. A choice of punishments was given him—seven years of famine; three months of defeat in war; or three days of pestilence. David chose the pestilence, preferring to fall into the hands of God himself than into the hands of men.

---

15 ¶ So the LORD sent a pestilence upon Is'ra-el from the morning even to the time appointed: and there died of the people from Dan even to Beer-she'ba seventy thousand men. [Isa. 47: 6; 1 Chron. 21: 14; 27: 24.]

16 And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Je-ru'sa-lem to destroy it, the LORD repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough: stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD was by the threshing-place of A-rau'nah the Jeb'u-site. [Ex. 12: 23; Gen. 6: 6; 1 Chron. 21: 15.]

17 And Da'vid spake unto the LORD when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house. [1 Chron. 21: 17.]

18 And Gad came that day to Da'vid, and said unto him, Go up, rear an altar unto the LORD in the threshing-floor of A-rau'nah the Jeb'u-site. [1 Chron. 21: 18.]

19 And Da'vid, according to the saying of Gad, went up as the LORD commanded.

20 And A-rau'nah looked, and saw the king and his servants coming on toward him: and A-rau'nah went out, and bowed himself before the king on his face upon the ground.

21 And A-rau'nah said, Wherefore is my lord the king come to his servant? And Da'vid said, To buy the threshing-floor of thee, to build an altar unto the LORD, that the plague may be stayed from the people. [Gen. 23: 8-16; Num. 16: 48, 50.]

22 And A-rau'nah said unto Da'vid, Let my lord the king take and offer up what *seemeth* good unto him: behold, *here be* oxen for burnt-sacrifice, and threshing instruments and *other* instruments of the oxen for wood.

23 All these *things* did A-rau'nah, *as* a king, give unto the king. And A-rau'nah said unto the king, The LORD thy God accept thee. [Ezek. 20: 40, 41.]

24 And the king said unto A-rau'nah, Nay; but I will surely buy *it* of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt-offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing. So Da'vid bought the threshing-floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver. [1 Chron. 21: 24, 25.]

25 And Da'vid built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings. So the LORD was entreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Is'ra-el.

15 *So the Lord sent a pestilence.* This was the form of punishment which David himself had chosen of the three offered by the Lord. It was some form of plague that fell suddenly upon the people, like the cholera, or other fearful epidemic. The word means, literally, "a death." *From the morning.* The time when it began. It seems to have broken out suddenly. *To the time appointed.* At first thought this would appear to mean, to the end of the three days; but the plague seems from v. 16 to have been stayed before the expiration of the full time. The words may mean, however, *The time of assembly*, that is, the hour of the evening sacrifice, about 3 P. M., when the people gathered for prayer. This explanation is the

most probable, and if it be correct the plague lasted but one day. *Dan . . . Beersheba.* Dan being the chief northern city, and Beersheba being near the southern boundary, this form of expression was proverbial, meaning the whole extent of the country. *Seventy thousand.* For other plagues mentioned in the Bible, see Num. 16: 49; 25: 9; 2 Kings 19: 35.

16 *The angel stretched out his hand.* The angel was the agent of God in the pestilence. See also Ex. 12: 23; 2 Kings 19: 35; Acts 12: 23. *Upon Jerusalem to destroy it.* Compare the account in 1 Chron. 21: 15. The plague had reached Jerusalem, and was about to begin its deadly work there. *The Lord repented him of the evil.* This does not mean that the Lord regretted or was sorry for what he had done, but that upon David's penitence and confession he mitigated the punishment. Compare Ex. 32: 14; Jer. 26: 13, 19; Jonah 3: 10. *The threshing-place of Araunah.* Threshing-floors were located on high points to catch the wind for the blowing out of the chaff. The threshing-floor of Araunah was on Mount Moriah (see cut, page 250, July number of the WESTMINSTER TEACHER), the site on which subsequently the temple was erected. Araunah, the owner of the floor, was a Jebusite, that is, one of the old inhabitants previous to David's capture of the stronghold, and the fact that he was still there and owned his property, shows that some at least of the original owners had been permitted to remain after the conquest.

17 *David spake unto the Lord.* Compare the account in 1 Chron. 21: 16, 17, which is fuller. *I have sinned.* The emphasis is on *I*, in contrast with "these sheep." David's heart is sorely troubled at seeing the punishment fall upon the *people*, while the sin had been his which had displeased the Lord and brought such suffering. See the words of David as given in Chronicles.

18 *Gad came.* Sent by the angel. 1 Chron. 21: 18. The Lord had heard David's prayer, and the answer is sent by the prophet. *Go up, rear an altar.* That the plague might be stayed. See v. 21.

20 *Araunah looked.* He was at the time engaged in threshing wheat. 1 Chron. 21: 20. *Saw the king.* In Chronicles it reads, Saw *the angel.* He may have seen the angel first, the vision causing him to hide himself; or *king* may be the true reading in Chronicles also. *Went out.* From the threshing-floor to meet the king and do him honor.

22 *Araunah said.* He met David with an open heart and hand, ready to aid him in carrying out the Lord's command. *Here be oxen.* Those he was using in threshing out the wheat. *Threshing instruments.* Sledges drawn by the oxen over the grain to separate the wheat from the chaff. *Instruments of the oxen.* The wooden yokes and perhaps other parts of the harness. Chronicles adds, "and the wheat for the meat offering," with the expressive words, "*I give it all.*"

23 *All these things.* The first sentence of this verse probably belongs to Araunah's speech, "The whole, O king, doth Araunah give unto the king." See 1 Chron. 21: 23. Most later writers think that there is no sufficient evidence that Araunah was the former king of Jebus, as Stanley and other older writers have supposed. *Give unto the king.* The emphasis is on *give.* He meant to make a gift of all to David. See a similar incident in Gen. 23: 11.

24 *At a price.* Full price. 1 Chron. 21: 24. See Gen. 23: 9. *Neither will I offer . . . that which doth cost me nothing.* That would indeed be no offering at all. In Chronicles the words, "I will not take that which is thine for the Lord," are inserted. *Fifty shekels of silver.* In 1 Chron. 21: 25 the statement is, that David gave "for the place six hundred shekels of gold by weight." There are different explanations of this difference in amount. Some suppose that *fifty* shekels was the amount paid for the oxen and implements, and six hundred the amount paid for the ground of the threshing-floor. Others suppose that the text in one or other of the narratives, or in both, has been corrupted.

25 *Built there an altar.* On the same spot on which afterward stood the temple. See 2 Chron. 3: 1. When David had offered his sacrifices on this altar the Lord answered him by fire from heaven. See 1 Chron. 21: 26. *The Lord was intreated.* In 1 Chron. 21: 26, 27, we are told the Lord answered by fire, and commanded the angel to put up his sword into the sheath. Thus the pestilence was arrested, apparently, in the evening of the first day.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

So the Lord sent a pestilence. This was after David had seen his sin and made sincere confession of it and sought forgiveness. Was he not then forgiven? Yes, but forgiveness does not always arrest all the penalties of sin. It saves from final condemnation, but the punishment must often be met in this life. It was in the case of David's other great transgression. Forgiveness was actually pronounced, yet David's child died. Here, too, he was for-

given, but the stroke fell. A young man may waste his youth in idleness and wreck his constitution in the excesses of appetite and passion. He may in midlife repent and be forgiven, and may devote his life to holy service. Yet this will not check the consequences in his own body of the sins of his youth. Sin is a far more terrible thing than we want to believe. It always leaves ugly scars, though the wounds may be healed. It always harms the soul. No matter how fully and freely it is forgiven its effects are never helpful, and are always hurtful.

"Sorrow follows wrong,
As echo follows song,
On, on, on, on."

There died of the people . . . seventy thousand men. It was in a spirit of pride and vanity that David took the census. He wanted to make a display of the strength of his kingdom, and perhaps to organize greater armies. And the pestilence fell upon the very glory in which the king was priding himself. God touches that of which we boast and causes it to wither. Whenever we forget him and begin to lean on some other arm, he is likely to break it. He would teach us to trust only in him, and that no other dependence is safe; therefore, he blights the prosperity in which we are glorying to rebuke our vanity and to drive us back to himself. There is a lesson here for all nations—for our own nation; national pride is followed by national humiliation. But the lesson comes also to families; family pride is displeasing to God and full of peril. So in individuals also. "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."

David spake unto the Lord, . . . I have sinned, . . . but these sheep, what have they done? There is something very noble in David's bearing and conduct here. It is human and very common to try to lay the blame on others when we have sinned. Compare Saul's conduct when Samuel accused him of disobedience in sparing the king and the best spoil of the Amalekites: he charged the blame on the people. How much nobler is David's behavior in this case! The sin had not been his alone, but he sees only his own. He does not attempt to excuse himself. He sees *the people* suffering under the heavy stroke which he feels *he* ought to be bearing himself, and cries to God to lift his hand from them and let it fall upon him. The lesson is for all of us. We should never try to shift the blame of our sins or mistakes upon others, but should take it ourselves. If penalties or sufferings come through our misdoings we should bear them, and not allow them to fall upon innocent parties while we escape. . . . Another thing to notice here is, that David's penitence deepened under the divine judgment. Some people grow rebellious when chastened, but the true way, when we have sinned and when punishment comes, is to creep closer to God, and to get down lower before him. This is the spirit that pleases God and receives blessing from his hand.

Gad . . . said, . . . Go up, rear an altar unto the Lord, . . . that the plague may be stayed. Here we have illustrated that great truth that "Without shedding of blood there is no remission." The plague was not stayed merely when David had wept and prayed in lowly penitence. There must be an altar reared and expiatory offerings must be made. Blood must flow, the blood of innocent victims, that the plague might be stayed. And when this was done the angel sheathed his sword. The teachings are very important. Our own tears and confessions will not stay the penalty of our sins or lift the condemnation. There must be an altar and an offering. We do not now need, however, to build altars or offer sacrifices, for the one great sacrifice for sin has been made. "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many;" and to all who come in his name and accept him there is no condemnation. When we seek forgiveness for our sins, we must not forget that mercy can come to us only through the merits of Christ; that it is his blood alone that cleanseth from sin. We go free, the plague is stayed, but we should remember that another has received the stroke that it might not fall upon us. We have pardon and peace, because the head of Christ on Calvary bowed in the darkness under the weight of the world's sin. The plague has been stayed by the cross and believers have shelter behind it.

All these things did Araunah, as a king, give unto the king. Araunah's generosity must not be overlooked. When he knew what the Lord had bidden David to do, he offered his floor, his oxen, his threshing implements, as a free gift. And we must not forget that he was one of the original heathen inhabitants of the hill, and not an Israelite. Many a man would have taken advantage of the necessity, and would have demanded an exorbitant price for the ground and implements. Lots often go up very suddenly when a church is to be built in the locality. Even Christian men take advantage of such necessities to realize handsomely out of other people's piety. Araunah was different. He was ready to make large personal sacrifices that the plague might be stayed and the people spared. His noble example should teach us a lesson. We should ever be ready to sacrifice

our private interests for the public good, and should scorn to make profit out of the calamities of others.

Nay; but I will surely buy it . . . neither will I offer . . . unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing. A great many people would have accepted Araunah's offer. They are quite content to be generous at other people's expense. They like to make sacrifices which others pay for. But David would not permit another to do for him that which the Lord had commanded *him* to do. Burnt-offerings were the expression of self-consecration; therefore they must be his own, and provided at his own cost. It would be no sacrifice of David's if Araunah bore all the expenses. This incident ought to be well studied. There are too many people who like to worship God as cheaply as possible. They are very willing for one or two generous Araunahs in the church to provide everything. No Christian, not even the poorest, can afford a worship of God which costs him nothing. No cost, no blessing. Every one should insist on his privilege to do his share in bearing the expenses of the house of God. There are a great many children whose contributions in the Sabbath-school never cost them anything. This is an unwise education for them. Parents should teach their children in some way to give of their own money, first earning it and then giving it.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Pride is very offensive in God's sight, and will not go unpunished. v. 15.

2. It is the motive that makes many acts sinful; there was no sin in the mere taking of a census.

3. The things of which we are *proud* are apt to be destroyed.

4. Even penitence and confession of sins may not altogether prevent the penalties in this life.

5. Yet true repentance may *stay* the punishment. v. 16.

6. True repentance is deepened under chastening; it does not seek to cast the guilt on others; it does not cry for the removal of the punishment.

7. The penalties of sin can be stayed only by shedding of blood; Christ's blood was shed to save us from the curse. v. 18.

8. We should not try to make personal gain out of the calamities of others, but should be ready to make sacrifices for the public good. v. 22.

9. We should not be willing to serve God without cost, or at the expense of other people. v. 24.

10. Christ is the great sacrifice by which the plague of sin was stayed. v. 25.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

A little talk about plagues and pestilences will fitly introduce this lesson. Refer to the great London plague, to the ravages of the cholera, and to any other similar scourges. Bring up the account of David's choice of punishment.

I. *Wrath against Sin.* vs. 15, 16. Who sent this pestilence? We are taught that God is good, loving, merciful; why should he send such a calamity upon his people? What had David done that was wrong? Was it always wrong to number the people? Why was it so in this case? Teach that pride is always wrong in God's sight; that the things we are proud of we are beginning to depend on rather than on God; and that when we put anything in God's place he is sure to blight or remove it. Peter boasted of his faithfulness—he would never deny Christ—but it was only a little while till his pride was sorely humbled. David began to be proud of his army, its numbers, its brave men—and soon 70,000 of them were dead. God would teach us to trust and glory only in him.

Was not David a good man? Why then did God punish him? Are not all a good man's sins forgiven? What does 1 John 1: 9 say? What are we told in Rom. 8: 1? David had confessed his sin (v. 10); why was he punished? Show that sometimes God punishes his own people even after he has forgiven their sin. (See Note.) Yet notice, also, that the full penalty was not visited. The plague was stayed before the end of the three days. What did David do? See 1 Chron. 21: 16, and the Explanatory Notes.

II. *Repentance and Atonement.* vs. 17–19. What was the angel's mission? What did David do when he saw the angel about to smite Jerusalem? Notice the steps here. 1. He confessed his sin. 2. He took the blame all upon himself, and asked that the *people* might be spared. Show that his penitence was sincere. What did God bid him do? Note David's prompt obedience. v. 19.

III. *Mercy and Deliverance.* vs. 20–25. Who was Araunah? Gather all the facts about him and his noble conduct at this time. Why did David refuse to accept these things as a gift? Impress the practical lesson from this example. (See Notes.) What did David do? v. 25. What followed? What connection was there between the offerings and the staying of the plague?

This incident illustrates in a wonderful manner the way of salvation. *Sin* is the plague.

The offering—almost on the same spot—is Christ, who made an atonement for sin by the sacrifice of himself. The plague stopped at David's altar. The cross arrested the plague of sin. The only way of salvation is to get the cross between your soul and your guilt. Show also the steps in seeking and finding mercy—penitence, confession, accepting God's way of expiation, instant faith and obedience. Thus we have the gospel in the heart of this old story.

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

SUGGESTIONS.—The lesson, as in diagram, to be placed upon the board previous to the desk review. Treat the lesson in its relation to sin and forgiveness. Divine mercy is shown on confession and repentance of sin. As David would not offer of that which cost him nothing, so Christ bought our salvation with his own precious blood, more precious than shekels of gold and silver. He "laid down his life for the sheep," and "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." He is our great peace-offering, and the plague of sin is stayed at the cross. This is divine mercy and deliverance in the highest sense.

Suggestions for Coloring.—Top line in red shaded with white; "Divine Mercy," in blue shaded with yellow; the lower line in white; the cross in red shaded with brown.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The Lesson Taught by Blackboard Pictures and by Objects.—A crown representing King

David. Rebellion put down. A great and powerful kingdom under his control. A flag, on which is printed, "1,000,000 SOLDIERS!" Tell how David had his men numbered, with this result. Make a similar flag on the board, but let the flag-staff run down into a heart, and print on the staff the word "PRIDE."

Dwell on the fact that David began to trust himself to the greatness of his army, to feel sure that now the kingdom was safe, not because God would take care of it, but because there were so many soldiers. It was this feeling that made him count the men. Who put it into his heart to do so? The scholars having been taught before that evil thoughts come from Satan, will readily make this answer, but will be the more impressed if you, having received their answer, turn to 1 Chron. 21 : 1, and read, "Satan . . . provoked David to number Israel." Print the name "SATAN" at the base of the flag-staff.

Now raise a black flag. Trouble and heavy sorrow. Pestilence! It is possible that some of your children may have had experiences of sickness, when they have known of three, or five, or twenty funerals in a day, and have been awe-stricken over the death harvest. Such will

be able to help you impress the awfulness of the fact that in three days' time seventy thousand of David's boasted men died! Let this number be printed on one side of your black flag.

This is what God thinks of sin.

What next? Erase the flag on the board. Out of David's heart went the pride. Put in the heart an altar, and print on it, "I HAVE SINNED."

Let the red lines which stand for prayer go up from this altar. The words of the golden text finish the story.

Special Lesson Points—

1. David acknowledged his sin before the plague came, but this did not save him from punishment. A child may be very sorry for something he has done, and may ask for and obtain forgiveness, and yet have to bear punishment.

2. Pride is the beginning of many troubles in these days. Charley said a few Sabbaths ago that he put ten cents in the collection when he only put in one. This was because he was proud of his name for generosity. Simple illustrations, which fit the individual needs of the scholars under your care, can be readily found by the teacher who keeps a thoughtful lookout for the temptations of her children.

3. Satan is the prime mover in all these thoughts of pride. Shall we be slaves to him?

4. David's way out of trouble is our way also. "I have sinned!" is a cry that the patient God is ever ready to hear. What have we to tell him to-day?

Lesson IX. **GOD'S WORKS AND WORD.** August 31st, 1884.

Ps. 19: 1-14. Memorize vs. 7-11.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name."—Ps. 138: 2.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Ps. 19: 1-14.....*God's Works and Word.*
T. Ps. 138: 1-8.....*God's Word Magnified.*
W. Ps. 8: 1-9.....*Glory Above the Heavens.*
Th. Rom. 1: 18-25.....*"Clearly Seen."*
F. Ps. 111: 1-10.....*His Commandments Sure.*
S. Ps. 119: 129-144.....*"Teach me Thy Statutes."*
S. Col. 3: 1-17.....*Richly in all Wisdom.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Works of God. 2. The Word of God.

Catechism.—Q. 94. *What is Baptism?* A. Baptism is a sacrament, wherein the washing with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, doth signify and seal our ingrafting into Christ, and partaking of the benefits of the covenant of grace, and our engagement to be the Lord's.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—There is no doubt that this psalm was written by David, but there are no marks, as there are in the fifty-first and other psalms, by which the time of its composition can be fixed. It shows David to have been a student of nature. Whether written early or later in his life it carries reminiscences of his shepherd life, when, keeping watch over his flocks by night, the splendor of the overarching heavens had started in his mind great thoughts of God. But this reader of God's book of nature did not fail to read also in God's book of revelation, and he shows us the contrasts as well as the harmony in the two. The heavens declare the glory, the law declares his will.

---

1 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handy work. [Gen. 1: 6; Rom. 1: 19, 20.]

2 Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

3 *There is* no speech nor language, *where* their voice is not heard.

4 Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, [Rom. 10: 18]

5 Which *is* as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, *and* rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. [Eccles. 1: 5.]

6 His going forth *is* from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

7 The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple.

8 The statutes of the LORD *are* right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD *is* pure, enlightening the eyes. [Ps. 12: 6; 13: 3.]

9 The fear of the LORD *is* clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD *are* true *and* righteous altogether. [Ps. 119: 72.]

10 More to be desired *are they* than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honey-comb.

11 Moreover by them is thy servant

warned: *and* in keeping of them *there is* great reward. [Prov. 29: 18.]

12 Who can understand *his* errors? cleanse thou me from secret *faults*. [Ps. 90: 8.]

13 Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous *sins;* let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.

14 Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength and my redeemer. [Ps. 57: 15; Isa. 43: 14.]

1 *The heavens.* The visible heavens, including the sun, moon and stars, with all the phenomena of nature displayed in the skies. *Declare the glory of God.* Even as they appear to the naked eye the heavens speak of power and wisdom in him who created them and keeps them in existence. Then when we look through the telescope, with the eye of science, we see far more of God's glory than ever David saw. *The firmament.* The expanse of sky, another name for the heavens. *His handy work.* The work of his hands. The stars testify that God made them,

"For ever singing as they shine,
'The hand that made us is divine.'"

2 *Day unto day . . . night unto night.* Each day pours its utterances into the ear of the next, and each night transmits to its successor its voices of praise. The idea is of an unbroken flow of testimony from nature to the greatness and wisdom of God.

3 *There is no speech.* If the rendering in our version is correct, the meaning is, that the works of God speak in every language and to all nations. Another rendering is, that these works of God have no audible language, do not speak in words, but silently utter their great truths to every thoughtful mind.

4 *Their line.* The meaning is not very clear. The word literally means a measuring-line, then a rule of conduct, a decree. The sense would then seem to be that the teaching or proclaiming of God's glory by the heavenly bodies extends *through all the earth.* They call every man in the world to honor and worship God. The second clause of the verse gives the same thought. *In them.* In the midst of the heavens. *Set a tabernacle.* Pitched a tent, that is, assigned a place. A tent implies that the sun has no fixed abiding-place, but is ever moving on.

5 *As a bridegroom.* The word indicates youthful vigor, beauty, hope, gladness. The reference is to the rising of the sun in the morning. *Rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.* One ready to start in a race, strong, confident, glowing with hope,

6 *His going forth.* Referring to the sun's motion, or apparent motion, in his daily course, as he mounts the sky and descends again to the west. *Unto the ends of it.* From east to west. *Nothing hid.* The sun's heat reaches and penetrates everywhere. All physical life depends upon it. Here closes the first division of the psalm.

7 The writer has spoken of the declaration of God's glory in his works, and now passes to speak of his *word. The law of the Lord.* God's word, his revealed will. There is a change in the divine name in this second part of the psalm; here it is Lord, Jehovah, the God of the covenant, while in the first division it was El, God, the God of power, the God of nature. *Perfect.* Free from all defect, and also complete as a revelation of God's will and as a rule for human life and conduct. *Converting the soul.* Margin, *Restoring*, that is, bringing back from sin and wrong ways to God and God's ways. *The testimony.* The ten commandments especially are called the testimony, as they are God's statement of the way of life. In a general sense all God's revelations are his testimonies, inasmuch as they bear witness to his character, his attributes and perfections. *Sure.* Fixed, true, unchanging, faithful. *The simple.* The untaught, as in the state of childhood. The "testimony of the Lord" teaches such, making them wise. See 2 Tim. 3: 15.

8 *The statutes.* Different names are used for the word of God. *Are right.* Not unjust nor unreasonable, but in accordance with the principles of God's justice and righteousness. *Rejoicing the heart.* Those who obey them are made to rejoice. *Pure.* Without taint of injustice. *Enlightening the eyes.* Not only does the commandment pour light on the path, showing the way, but it also opens the eyes and enlightens them, removing prejudice, error, and all misconception. Those who truly and sincerely accept the guidance of God's word and seek to follow it, do not walk in darkness.

9 *The fear of the Lord.* That reverence for God which belongs to all obedience. *Clean.* In its spiritual effects; not only clean itself, but cleansing in its influence on the life. *Enduring for ever.* Godly fear is not something which is only temporary in the life, but is part of the permanent character in every child of God. It is like love, "which never faileth." See 1 Cor. 13. *The judgments.* The final rewards of the Lawgiver. *True and righteous altogether.* There is not anywhere in them any injustice.

10 *Than gold.* The most precious of metals, and therefore most eagerly sought after. But

he who accepts God's laws as his portion finds greater and more satisfying riches than he who gets the finest gold. *Honey.* As the sweetest of all things to the taste, and hence a symbol of the richest pleasures of sense; but the enjoyment which comes from meditation upon God's word is far sweeter. *Honeycomb.* The droppings from the comb, the sweetest of the honey.

11 *Warned.* Of danger and reminded of duty. *In keeping . . . great reward.* Obedience to God's commands always brings blessing. The final reward is here primarily meant.

12 *Who can understand his errors?* The reference is not to wilful sins, but to infirmities, secret corruptions and tendencies to evil. No one can see into his own heart to know the possibilities of danger there hidden. No one can even discern all his own errors, mistakes, inadvertencies, unconscious wrong-doings. *Cleanse thou me from secret faults.* It is not enough to be kept from open, wilful sins; we should seek to be kept even from secret sins and freed from secret faults. It is to be noticed also that even these unknown "errors" require cleansing, remission, forgiving. See Lev. 4: 15–19; Num. 15: 25.

13 *Presumptuous sins.* In contradistinction from errors, or sins of ignorance. v. 12. These are *intentional* sins, defiant acts of wickedness. No atonement was provided in the Jewish law for such sins. See Num. 15: 30. David prays to be kept back from these. *Dominion over me.* He thinks of these sins as tyrants seeking to enslave him. *The great transgression.* Omit *the.* Not referring to any particular sin, but to great wickedness in general. This psalm was written most likely before David's fall, yet is there not in this earnest, pathetic cry evidence that he felt himself in danger?

14 *Words . . . meditations.* A prayer not only for external but for internal purity, purity of thought as well as of speech, that every part of his life might please God and be acceptable in his sight. *In thy sight.* God's is the eye for whose inspection and approval we should always work and live.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

The heavens declare the glory of God. And if in David's days how much more now, since science has revealed such marvelous things about the extent of the starry world! Only remember that nearly all the stars we see are really suns, having probably their systems of planets, and that those we see are but the merest fraction of the number the telescope brings into view. The truth is, that there are millions of suns in the heavens, some of them so far away from us that it takes thousands of years for light to come from them to us. Any one who has given even a little attention to the study of astronomy is prepared to appreciate the thought of this verse. The heavens declare the glory of God. Think of the power that called into being such a multitude of worlds, and that keeps them in being age after age. Think of the wisdom that made the plans for such a universe of flying suns and planets and comets, so adjusting their orbits and their motions that they never interfere, that perfect harmony prevails among the spheres. Science, instead of being an enemy of religion, is its friend. The more we learn of the marvelous things of God's world the more do we see for which to praise and adore his name. This is true of all things in nature. There is more beauty in a single little flower than in the finest work of art ever fashioned by human hand. From the minutest insects to the stars, every department of God's universe declares the wisdom, the power, the goodness, the faithfulness, of God. We ought to study nature more; it is one of God's books.

The law of the Lord is perfect. The works of God declare his glory, but not his will. For this we must turn to his word. We could never learn by studying the stars or the flowers or the rocks, how we ought to live; what is right and what is wrong, what will please God or displease him. We could never learn what God himself is, what his attributes are, how he feels toward us. We may learn from his works that he is great, powerful, wise, unchanging, good; but we could not learn that he loves us with a tender, personal affection, that he is merciful and gracious. We could never find a gospel of salvation for lost sinners in the *works* of God. How thankful we should be for his *word*, which tells us all these things. Here we have his law, revealed by his own Spirit. It teaches us how to live. It is a *perfect* law; not only perfect in that it is without flaw or mistake, but also in that it is complete as a revelation, containing all we need to know to be saved and reach the full stature of perfect men and women. We may turn to the law of the Lord with every question of duty, and we shall always find the right answer.

Converting the soul. Every human soul needs converting or restoring. It is ruined by sin; its beauty tarnished, its grandeur destroyed. The word of God is able to build it up, to restore the lost splendor, to bring back again the

defaced image of God. Every one knows the power the word of God has over human lives. It first shows sinners that they are condemned and lost, as it holds up before them the requirements of the divine law. Next it shows them the cross with its salvation for the guilty. Then it declares to them the will of God by which they are to fashion their lives. As they begin to obey it, it leads them on higher and higher, until they enter heaven's gates and wear the likeness of Christ. Thus it converts the soul.

The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart. Many people think that a good life is a sad and gloomy life. They suppose that Christians have no joy. They have to deny themselves many pleasures. They can't have the good times worldly people have. They have to live strictly. They have to keep the Sabbath and follow conscience in all things. It must be very hard. Life must be dreary and joyless to them. So the people talk who boast of being free from the restraints of the Bible, and who imagine that *they* have the happiest times possible. Now, as a matter of fact, the happiest lives in this world are those that are keeping God's commandments. Who ever heard of *sin* "rejoicing the heart?" Disobedience never made any one happy; but obedience always gives peace. There are fresh water springs in the sea that always pour out sweet water beneath all the brackish tides. So in the obedient heart, under all self-denials, there is a spring of joy ever flowing.

By them is thy servant warned. The word of God flames with red lights. Every point of danger is marked. Every perilous path has its lamp hung up, warning us not to enter it. We are warned against the devil, and his helpers. We are warned against bad companions, against false teachers, against all wrong courses.

Cleanse thou me from secret faults. We all have faults of which we ourselves are unconscious. Perhaps other people see them, although we do not. Certainly God sees them. We may be sure at least that there are faults enough in the best of us. Our aim in Christian life should be so high that we should desire to be cleansed even from all these secret faults and sins. No fault is so small as to be a trifle, or not to be a blemish in our character. Small faults grow.

"It is the little rift within the lute
That by-and-bye will make the music mute,
And, ever-widening, slowly silence all—
The little rift within the lover's lute;
Or little pitted speck in garnered fruit,
That rotting inward, slowly moulders all."

LESSON POINTS.

1. In God's works we may learn much of the power, wisdom and goodness of God. v. 1.
2. Even the heathen ought to know at least the glory of God from his works. vs. 3–6.
3. It is only in God's word, however, that we can learn his will. v. 7.
4. Only the word of God has converting, transforming power. v. 7.
5. The way of joy is the way of obedience.
6. The word of the Lord opens our eyes and makes all our paths light. v. 8.
7. The path of God's commandments is clean and holy. v. 9.
8. Most to be desired of all things for value and delight are the words of God. v. 10.
9. The word of God marks every way of danger. v. 11.
10. Even secret faults and sins need cleansing. v. 12.
11. Secret faults if left alone lead to presumptuous sins. v. 13.
12. Even our words and thoughts we should seek to have acceptable to God. v. 14.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

We have in this psalm readings from two of God's books. First we have a reading from the book of nature, and then another from the book of inspiration. It will be interesting to study these two readings separately, and then compare them. There is no contradiction of one by the other, but the latter teaches us many great and important truths that are not found in the former.

I. *The Works of God.* vs. 1–6. Show how God's works are like a book. We can see no writing anywhere on the earth or on the sky, as we do on the pages of the Bible, yet there are things written there. Show a watch. Call attention to its many parts, and to the fact that all are arranged to work together so as to keep perfect time. What do the class think about this watch? If you found one in the field, would you think it had taken that form, with all its wheels and other delicate machinery, by chance? No; some one must have made it. What do all these fine works tell us about the person that made it? He must have had wisdom and skill. Now show a flower or a plant, and bring out by questions the fact that here also there must have been a maker, and that he must have been wise and skilful. Then turn to the first verse and ask, What is meant by *the heavens?* What do we see in the heavens on a clear night? What more would we see if we were to look through a powerful telescope? There are many millions of stars, and nearly

all of them are suns, like the great sun that lights our earth, and probably have their planets revolving about them. Explain how all these millions of suns and worlds have their regular movements and never vary. Could all this be a mere chance? What must we think of him who made all these worlds, and keeps them all in being? He must be very *great*, and very *wise*. What does the lesson say the heavens *declare?* What does the *firmament* show? How does day to day utter speech? No one hears any *speech* or *voice* from the stars. What kind of speech is it?

Thus by simple questioning and illustration even quite young children can be taught something at least of the wonderful divine writing in the book of nature.

II. *The Word of God.* vs. 7–14. Why is the Bible called the Word *of God?* Teach that it was inspired by him. See 2 Tim. 3 : 15, 16, and 2 Pet. 1 : 21. In adult classes a few minutes may profitably be spent on some of the proofs of the inspiration of the Scriptures. This second book God himself wrote, too. The book of nature declares his *glory;* this declares his *will.*

1. We cannot learn our duty by looking at the stars. There are no commandments or laws written there.

2. We cannot learn all the attributes of God from the book of nature. For example, such a description of God's character as is found in Ex. 34 : 6, 7, is nowhere written in nature.

3. The way of salvation is not declared by the starry heavens. There is no gospel found written there; there is nothing there about Christ's cross and sacrifice, about redemption for the lost.

4. There is nothing in nature about the life beyond, about immortality and heaven.

These are some of the great truths that we can read only from the book of inspiration.

What is meant by *the law of the Lord?* In what senses is it *perfect?* What are the several blessings here named as coming from the word? 1. Converting or restoring the soul. 2. Making wise the simple. 3. Rejoicing the heart. 4. Enlightening the eyes. Explain each of these. What qualities of the word are here named? 1. Perfect. 2. Sure. 3. Right. 4. Pure. 5. Clean. 6. True.

V. 10 refers to the spiritual experience of those who receive God's word and take it into their lives. V. 11 marks one of the offices of the word—that of warning. Who find the blessings of the word? Those who *keep* it.

In the closing verses the psalmist applies the word to his own life. What are his prayers? 1. To be cleansed from secret faults. 2. To be kept from presumptuous sins. 3. That even his words and thoughts may be so under the control of the word as to be pleasing unto God.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Dear Teachers: Let me call your special attention to the little hymn given at the close of this lesson—"Little stars that twinkle in the heavens blue." My scholars love to sing it.

Yours truly, PANSY.

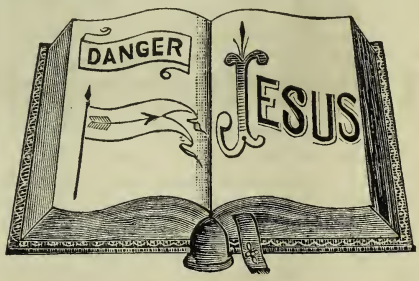
Plan of Lesson—

1. The book of Nature.
2. The book of Revelation.
3. The use I should make of both.

Object Illustration.—A gilt star. Of what is this a picture? How many have you seen on a pleasant evening? Who has counted them? How large is the smallest? Who has ever made one? How long have they been shining in the sky? Rapid questioning after this manner, interspersed with a few simple facts in regard to size, number, etc., will serve to set your scholars to thinking earnestly about the wonders of the sky. Then compare the sun in size and power with a star. Have your facts vividly before your own mind, and confine yourself to a few statements. How many times has the sun risen and set? What do all these things say to us? If you have, up to this point, done your work well, not a child but will be convinced that it was a wonderful thing to make the stars and the sun and keep them in motion all these ages. Not a child but will be too wise to believe that they just "happened" into the sky. They know some great one must have made them.

Call for golden text. Explain meaning of "magnified." How many think the Bible is more helpful than the stars or the sun?

Blackboard Illustration.—A sign-board marked "DANGER." Tell of the one that was set up to warn people from crossing an unsafe bridge. Would not such a thing be done in



kindness? Another sign-board at the junction of two roads, with an arrow pointing to the way to take to reach the city. Suppose a traveler, anxious to get home, would he be glad of this help?

We are all travelers here. There are two roads to go. One leads to the city; on the other there is great and constantly increasing danger. Do the stars show us the way to the city? Does the sun? Will the stars shine for ever? Will the sun? Will *anything* last for ever? Try to call from class the fact that the soul is everlasting. How do we know this? Who said so? Where is it written? Make a large Bible that shall enclose the two guide-boards. Here is "the law" (see v. 7), which gives us all these important facts—the Bible. It tells us of danger, points it out, points to the right road to reach the city. Toward the end of the road, as it vanishes upward, print the name "JESUS" in such a manner that the arrow will point to it. The Bible says that the stars and the sun will not always shine; the time is coming when they will be blotted out, but the soul of every child will be living somewhere after the shining worlds are gone. Is not the Bible more important than the stars?

Now let me ask you a question about which I want you to think carefully. Suppose a man came up to a guide-board and read the word "DANGER," and yet walked right on in that road, would it not be his own fault if he was lost? Why do you suppose some people, even little boys and girls, read about danger in the Bible, and yet go on in that same road?

Which road are my scholars walking?

LESSON HYMN.

"Little stars that twinkle in the heavens blue,
I have often wondered if you ever knew
How there rose one like you leading wise old men
From the east through Judah, down to Bethlehem.

"Did you see the costly presents they had brought?
Did you see the stable they in wonder sought?
Did you see the worship tenderly they paid
To that stranger baby in a manger laid?

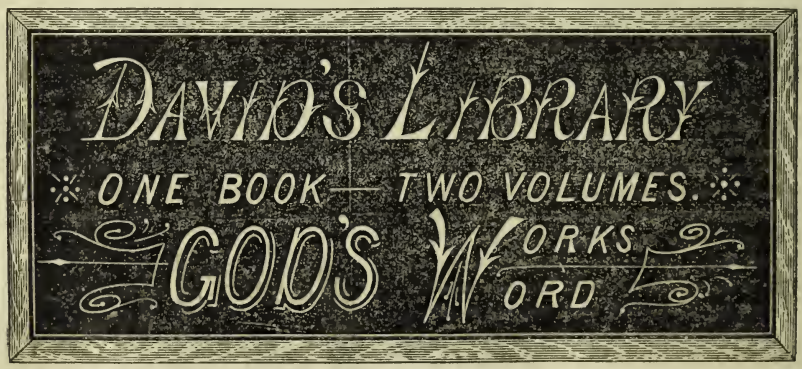
"Did you watch the Saviour all those years of strife?
Did you know for sinners how he gave his life?
Little stars that twinkle in the heavens blue,
All you know of Jesus how I wish I knew.

"Though you are so aged we're worth more than you—
God who set you shining, made the children too;
And when you are blotted from the glorious sky,
We may shine in heaven, for we cannot die."

—*From "Sing the Gospel," p. 82.*

HINTS FOR BLACKBOARD.

Spurgeon says: "This song very distinctly divides itself into three parts. The creatures show God's glory (1–6); the word showeth his grace (7–11); David prayeth for grace (12–14). Thus praise and prayer are mingled, and he who here sings the work of God in the world without, pleads for a work of grace in himself within." Print on the board the following:



One volume declares "the glory of God;" the other, "the grace of God." One is not to be set against the other. "He is wisest who reads them both as the same work, and feels concerning them, 'My Father wrote them both.'" "In the one, let all look and admire and adore; and in the other, let those who have faith kneel and pray and praise. Let one be the outer and the other the inner court. Let the one be the sanctuary where human learning may present the richest incense as an offering to God, and the other, the holiest of all, separated from it by a veil now rent in twain, and in which, on a blood-sprinkled mercy-seat, we pour out the love of a reconciled heart, and hear the oracles of the living God."

If preferred, use the following:

THE VOICE OF GOD

IN HIS WORKS (Glory declared).
WORD (Grace, which bringeth salvation).

Look, Adore—Hear, Obey.
Be Warned—Keep—Be Rewarded.

ABOUT NEW BOOKS.

..SUNSHINE MARY. By Mrs. Alida W. Graves. So many Christians, young as well as old, lack the "joy of the Lord" in their hearts, and so in their faces, that this tale of a "sunshiny" young Christian girl will not be without a mission. It may serve to call attention to that lack of a simple faith in Christ which so sadly mars the happiness of many true disciples, and to stimulate the desire for such a restful faith whilst pointing the way by an attractive example. Presbyterian Board of Publication. Price, $1.15.

..SACRED SONGS FOR LITTLE SINGERS. Edited by Miss Helen P. Briggs. This is a collection of songs, music and words, adapted for primary classes in Sabbath-schools. New York: Ward & Drummond. Price, 35 cents, or $30.00 a hundred.

..PRESBYTERIANISM FOR THE PEOPLE. How little do many intelligent Presbyterians know about the system and the doctrines of their own branch of the great Church universal! It would do thousands of them great good, by enlarging their information and quickening their energies, to read closely a capital little book, "Presbyterianism for the People," recently published by the Presbyterian Board.* It is from the pen of the Rev. Robert P. Kerr, of Richmond, Va. The Rev. John Hall, D.D., of New York, says of it: "Ministers and friends of our Presbyterian system would do well to promote the circulation of a modest, readable and timely little book, entitled 'Presbyterianism for the People.' There is need to give definite information of the kind it contains, if we would uphold a churchmanship which is Scriptural, and a practical benevolence that is not desultory, under the name of '*liberal*,' but wise, concentrated, and under responsible control." A Montreal pastor, the Rev. J. S. Black, D.D., writes to the author: "Your little volume meets a want which I, and no doubt many others, have felt. It is an admirable book for every Presbyterian family, and might with advantage be made a class-book for volunteer study on the part of young people of our congregations. Some such use of it, I think, I shall make ere long." An intelligent apprehension of the system of Presbyterianism increases our estimate of it, and at the same time cultivates that generous liberality on which the system is based. Let us be thankful that we may be strongly Presbyterian without unchurching any of our fellow-Christians. Ignorance, not knowledge, is the foster mother of bigotry and illiberality.

..A little pocket-pamphlet, entitled TO WHAT DO PRESBYTERIANS GIVE? has recently been re-issued by the Board of Publication. It contains a brief explanation of the objects sought by each of the Boards of the Presbyterian Church, with the names of their officers and the places of their headquarters. It is intended for circulation in the churches, and is furnished gratuitously for that purpose. Would it not do good to have it in the hands of your church members?

..LIFE IN ALASKA. Letters of Mrs. Eugene S. Willard. Edited by her sister, Mrs. Eva McClintock. As indicated in the sub-title above, this book consists entirely of letters written from Alaska. Mrs. Willard is the wife of one of our missionaries in that wonderful country. Her letters give us a journal of the missionary's daily life, with all its sacrifices, hardships and difficulties. They furnish us also a large amount of information concerning the country and its people, their superstitions, habits, occupations, homes and capabilities. The book will be read with pleasure by all who are interested in Alaska, as giving so many pictures of its inner life, and with still added pleasure by all the friends of the gospel who are interested in the salvation of the heathen population of the country. Presbyterian Board of Publication. Fully illustrated. 16mo, pp. 384. Price, $1.25.

..THE CABIN ON THE BEACH. A Tale. By M. E. Winchester. A story of a fisherman's widow and her only son, revealing the toils and struggles of poverty in such homes. By his good behavior and his honest character he won friends for himself among those who were well-to-do. The volume contains much valuable information on various topics, such as astronomy, natural history and the sea, which will be of use to boy readers. The tone of the book is good, and its influence will be helpful. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. 12mo, pp. 360, illustrated. Price, $1.50.

..THE WAY OF THE CROSS, and Other Tales. By Emily S. Holt. There are here three little stories—"The Way of the Cross;" "The High Priest's Daughter;" "The Web Ismene Wove"—all tender and helpful in their influence. Robert Carter & Brothers. Price, 60 cents.

..THE SCHAFF-HERZOG ENCYCLOPÆDIA. A Religious Dictionary of Biblical, Historical, Doctrinal and Practical Theology. Edited by Philip Schaff, D.D., LL.D. Volume III. This volume completes this great work. The former volumes have been noticed at length in these columns. The whole work foots up 2,631 large pages, with double column. It is not a *translation* of the German encyclopædia. Such parts of it as are used are modified and adapted to meet the needs of English readers. The editor's aim was to give the substance only of the work of Herzog. Fully one-half the matter is original, the articles having been prepared by a large corps of eminent scholars in Europe and this country. The selection of topics is so wide that almost no subject of a religious character fails of treatment. Then the articles are not of undue length, but are well condensed, omitting nothing of essential importance, yet written in compact form, tersely, clearly and accurately. It is not the work of a few men, but combines in its preparation the scholarship, not only of two continents, but of all religious denominations. The particular tenets of each denomination are presented by some representative man in the denomination. To each article the name of the writer is appended, so that readers may judge of the value of the article by its author. After a careful examination of many of the articles, and a constant use of the former volumes since their issue, we heartily commend this encyclopædia as unsurpassed and, indeed, unequaled by any other publication in this country. *It would be an invaluable aid to Sunday-school teachers, as a book of constant reference, and we earnestly commend it to our readers.* The work is now complete in three large royal 8vo volumes. It is sold exclusively by subscription, but applications made to the publishers by mail will receive prompt attention. New York: Funk & Wagnalls. Price, per vol., cloth, $6.00; sheep, $7.50; half Morocco, $9.00; full Morocco, $12.00.

Any of these books may be ordered from the Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1334 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.

* Price, 50 cents, for which it will be sent by mail.

WHAT THE PAPERS SAY

OF SOME OF OUR BOOKS.

Of **Ecce Terra**, by Dr. E. F. Burr, the *Congregationalist* says: "The author's aim is to prove and illustrate the general doctrine of a universal divine activity in the world, and this he attempts to do by setting aside the chief apparent objections to the doctrine; bringing forward its chief points of harmony with the constitution and course of nature, and instancing decisive examples of divine action. The loftiness of the author's style, though excessive at times, gives an impressiveness to his discussions which adds much to their interest. The work is devoutly Evangelical, and contains occasional home thrusts at what the author holds to be current errors. Many of the deep problems of philosophy and theology are presented in popular and picturesque form, and sometimes the aid of verse is used effectively." $1.25.

Of **Their Married Lives**, the *Methodist Recorder* says: "This volume is a translation and abridgment of a work by an anonymous French author. 'Though differing,' says the translator, 'in style, and in some of its modes of thought and judgment, from those to which we are accustomed, the scope of the book is yet so practical, it bears so closely upon many of the questions of woman's sphere and relations which are to-day agitating the world, and it shows such profound insight into character and such depth of religious experience, as to give it a real value at the present time.' Less sensational but more instructive than many books found in our Sunday-school libraries, it will be read with pleasure and profit by thoughtful young women." $1.50.

Of **Six Years on the Border**, by Mrs. T. B. Rideout, the *Presbyterian* says: "This is a well-written, true story of missionary life in the far West, where the unsettled condition of society makes each man a law unto himself, or if penalties are ever enforced for misdeeds the work is done by excited mobs, who give 'short shrift and a long rope' without form of trial, and sometimes without color of justice. The war-whoop of the Indian adds to the terror of living in these regions, and adds to the danger often encountered by those who go into the Territories with the gospel of Christ. Yet self-devoted men and women do go, and the Church in the Eastern States takes small note of their hardships and privations. Mrs. Rideout's narrative ought to do good by awakening thought and sympathy, and increasing the amount of gifts going into the treasury of our Board of Home Missions. The richest gifts of those who stay at home are as nothing compared with what they give who go. 85 cents.

Of **Glimpses of the Celestial Country**, the *Presbyterian* says: "This is a book written to show how the light shines from God's word on the dark pathway to the land of shadows, and to make this plain to the young. There are many timid souls, especially among the young, to whom death is simply a terror. To such this little book would be a blessing and a comfort, for it is enlightening. 'The sting of death is sin,' but in addition to this the *mystery* of it adds to the terror which some good people even seem to feel. There is far more light in God's word upon the subject than is apprehended by some Christians. This book is, however, especially designed for the young, and should be placed in their hands." 60 cents.

Of **Three Girls in Italy**, by M. E. Winslow, the *Methodist Recorder* says: "The author says that to emphasize the '"old, old story," and make it attractive to our girls, is the primary object of this little book. Whatever of illustrative incident and foreign travel has been used to drape the main idea is all gathered from reliable sources—mainly the personal notebooks and letters of the author, as well as an extensive correspondence with Italian evangelists under the auspices of the Foreign Sunday-school Association.' So, all the incidents related are literally true. The book will be found one of real interest and value, and such as should be found in every Sabbath-school." $1.15.

Of **Michal Ellis's Text**, by M. E. Winslow, the *Christian Observer* says: "Michal Ellis is a brave, resolute, unselfish girl; an orphan, living from early childhood until she was about twelve years old upon her grandfather's farm. Her grandparents never having had a daughter of their own, knew nothing of the training necessary to develop in a girl those traits which are so charming in women; consequently, it is not surprising that she 'became as wild as the blackbirds,' and a veritable 'tom-boy.' When Michal was about twelve years old she heard, for the first time, a sermon, the text being: 'Even Christ pleased not himself.' That sermon Michal never forgot, and the text became her life motto. She tried ever to walk in her Saviour's footsteps, and while, as might be expected from an impetuous, high-spirited girl, she had many battles to fight, she generally conquered. This is an excellent book for a Sabbath-school library." $1.15.

Vol. XII SEPTEMBER, 1884. No. 9.

The WESTMINSTER TEACHER

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL—Notes 323
Lesson Leaves and Bibles 323–324
Learning Scripture by Heart 324–325
All Scholars' Day 325

CONTRIBUTED ARTICLES—
Poem—After Many Years ..... *Eliza Carroll Snell* 326
The Joy of the Lord ..... *Mrs. Helen E. Brown* 326–327
The Superintendent Preparing for the Teachers' Meeting, *John W. Dulles, D.D.* 327–328
The Winning of the Child ..... *S. S. Teacher* 329

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS—Confidence in God 330–337
Waiting for the Lord 337–343
A Song of Praise 344–350
Third Quarterly Review 351–354

About New Books 357
Advertisements 358–360

One Copy, per annum, - - 60c.
Six or more Copies, to one address, - - - - - - - 50c.

PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF PUBLICATION
1334 Chestnut St
PHILADELPHIA PA.

THE WESTMINSTER TEACHER

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

BY THE

PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF PUBLICATION.

EDITED BY { REV. JOHN W. DULLES.
REV. J. R. MILLER.

TERMS:

One Copy to one address, per annum, post-paid. - - - - - - - 60 cents.
Six Copies or more, addressed to one person, post-paid, - - - - 50 cents each.

ALWAYS IN ADVANCE.

ALL THE

PUBLICATIONS OF THE BOARD

CAN BE OBTAINED IN

St. Louis, Mo., of ST. LOUIS DEPOSITORY, Rev. J. W. Allen, 1107 Olive Street,
Chicago, Ill., of CHICAGO DEPOSITORY, C. H. Whiting, 137 Wabash Avenue,
New York, of WARD & DRUMMOND, No. 116 Nassau Street,
Pittsburg, Pa., of BOARD OF COLPORTAGE, No. 198 Penn Avenue,
Baltimore, Md., of S. W. HARMAN, No. 73 Fayette Street,
Cincinnati, O., of WESTERN TRACT SOCIETY, No. 176 Elm Street,
Minneapolis, Minn., of S. M. WILLIAMS, 255 Nicollet Avenue,
Indianapolis, Ind., of Rev. W. A. PATTON, No. 5 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, N. Y., of GEORGE A. MOSHER, No. 70 S. Salina Street,
Halifax, N. S., of MACGREGOR & KNIGHT, No. 125 Granville Street,
Cleveland, Ohio, of INGHAM, CLARKE & CO., No. 217 Superior Street.
Detroit, Mich., of No. 189 Woodward Avenue,
London, Ont., of N. T. WILSON, No. 180 Dundas Street,
Buffalo, N. Y., of ULBRICH & KINGSLEY, No. 365 Main Street,
Albany, N. Y., of D. R. NIVER, No. 46 North Pearl Street,
Montreal, Quebec, of WILLIAM DRYSDALE & CO., No. 232 St. James Street,
Harrisburg, Pa., of S. W. FLEMING, No. 32 North Third Street,
Denver, Col., of CHAIN & HARDY, 414 Larimer Street,
Omaha, Neb., of PRESBYTERIAN PUBLISHING CO., Fifteenth and Dodge Sts.,

On the Same Terms as at the Publication House.

☞ The Numerical, Sabbath-school and Alphabetical Catalogues will be furnished gratuitously on application, and a full Descriptive Catalogue on receipt of 15 cents for postage.

DIRECTIONS FOR CORRESPONDENCE.

Letters relating to the general interests of the Board, to donations of books and tracts, to the appointment of colporteurs, and all reports, orders and other communications from colporteurs, to be addressed to the REV. WILLIAM E. SCHENCK, D.D., *Corresponding Secretary.*

Manuscripts, and communications concerning matter offered for publication, to the REV. JOHN W. DULLES, D.D., *Editorial Secretary.*

Reports of Sabbath-schools and letters relating to Sabbath-school work, to the REV. JAMES A. WORDEN, *Secretary of Sabbath-school Work.*

Remittances of money and contributions to MR. S. D. POWEL, *Treasurer.*

Orders for books, and business correspondence, except from colporteurs, and all orders and payments for periodicals, to MR. JOHN A. BLACK, *Business Superintendent.*

PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF PUBLICATION, 1334 Chestnut St., Philad'a.

THE WESTMINSTER TEACHER.

VOL. XII. SEPTEMBER, 1884. No. 9.

—No one can complain that the Old Testament lessons of this half year are lacking in interest. They are full of graphic incident and rich in instruction, requiring only close, earnest study in teacher and pupil to make them intensely interesting.

—It is not a misfortune in itself when life becomes sore and hard. It is in such experiences that noble character is grown. Great men are never grown in sunny fields amid the flowers. The prayer should not always be that we may have no trial, but that we may be sustained in trial and may pass through it without being harmed by it. If we do this we will come out of it stronger.

—Just how much use is made of the blackboard suggestions given in the WESTMINSTER TEACHER we have no means of knowing. Perhaps greater help can be given in this line by a number of outline hints than by a single blackboard lesson. Some of the suggestions of this month are after this plan, and it is believed that help will thus be given to a greater number of superintendents.

—It is much easier to talk and sing about consecration than to live a thoroughly consecrated life. Perhaps we can do better if we try to live only a day at a time for Christ, and if we bring it down to small things and to every-day practical duties. We are in danger of overlooking the details, and the result is, that our living is too much a matter of sentiment and not enough a real thing. There is no such thing as holiness apart from actual holy living, day by day, that is, a shaping of our actions toward God and toward men after the requirements of the divine law. Consecration is not a pious sentiment; it is simple obedience to Christ moment by moment.

Lesson Leaves and Bibles.

CONSIDERABLE interest has been excited during the past summer on the question of the proper use in the class of the *Lesson Leaf*, *Quarterly*, *Question Book*, or other help. It is thought by many excellent people that these helps are being used to the too great exclusion of the Bible itself, and an earnest effort is to be made to restore the Bible as a text-book. There is no objection made of course to the proper use of lesson-helps, but it is contended that they are used not only in the preparation of the lesson, but also in class, and that as a consequence many scholars do not use the Bible at all.

A number of prominent pastors and Sabbath-school workers of different denominations in Chicago have combined in an appeal on this subject to the churches of the country. We can best state their object in their own words:

As fellow-workers in the Gospel and in the Sabbath-school, we have become painfully impressed with the prevalent disuse of the Bible as a *text book*. We rejoice most heartily with all Christian people in the uniformity of Scripture instruction secured by the system of International Lessons and Leaflets, and we appreciate the valuable service rendered by the great variety of lesson leaves, class books, and other helps so generally employed; but we are constrained to feel that there is need of making all these supplementary to the use of the Bible itself. We are led to believe that large numbers of the scholars never use it in preparing or reciting the lesson, and too often they have the teacher's example for depending entirely on the helps, with no Bible at hand. How can any such fragmentary method be any less injurious in a Sunday-school than in a secular school?

Such a method tends inevitably to keep God's word from the place it should occupy as the *text book* he has himself provided. Such a disuse of the sacred volume prevents the familiarity with it which is so desirable, and tends to a fragmentary and superficial method of study by the exclusion of all reference to the context, and to parallel passages, and in general leaves out of sight the divine order and relations of Scripture truths.

We feel assured that you will agree with us in the principle, for all evangelical Christians make the Sunday-school, at least in theory, a distinctively Bible-school. Therefore, we venture nothing in requesting your sympathy and co-operation in an organized effort to put the Bible into the hands of every Sunday-school teacher and scholar in our country, and to secure its constant employment in studying the lessons both at home and in school.

Should not each scholar be *persuaded, if possible, even at some sacrifice, to purchase a Bible for himself, or at any rate to own one?*

Should not each teacher encourage its actual use among his scholars by precept and by example?

Should not each school adopt for itself a rule enjoining the use of that blessed Book in all regular exercises?

We recommend that the *first Sunday of October next* be fixed as the date upon which each Sunday-school shall strenuously endeavor that every member be possessed of a Bible of his own.

If this recommendation be approved, we suggest also that the *first Sunday of November next* be observed by Sunday-schools as a day of *thanksgiving for the open Bible*, and of *prayer for the promised blessing upon its use.*

We are glad to second this appeal and recommendation. The time to use leaves and other helps is in the study of the lesson at home, and neither teacher nor scholar should carry anything into the school but the Bible itself.

In many schools it is probable that nearly all the scholars already have Bibles of their own. Let them be urged to carry them to the school and use them in the class. If there are pupils who are not thus supplied let a systematic effort be made to have every one buy a Bible of his own and begin to use it.

For years one of the most interesting features in the regular opening worship of Bethany Sabbath-school, in Philadelphia, (Mr. John Wanamaker, Superintendent), has been the showing of Bibles. Before the reading of the lesson begins the books are held up all over the house by teachers and scholars, and then the passage is read, not from Leaf or Quarterly, but from the sacred page itself. To make it possible for every pupil, even the poorest, to own a Bible, arrangements are made by which the school itself furnishes the books not gratuitously but at reduced prices. The result is, that a scholar entering or leaving the building without a Bible in his hand is the rare exception.

It may be said that Scripture is Scripture whether read from the book itself or from a Lesson Leaf. Yet there is an education in the daily use of the same Bible with which one grows familiar as with a friend. We honor the book when we open it and study it. In all true lesson study there is necessarily more or less reference to other passages. What goes before a lesson should usually be read in preparing it to get the full sense. There is a moral influence, too, in the sight of an entire school carrying Bibles to and from the services. Then the habit of studying and reciting the lesson only from a leaf leads to a disuse of the Bible altogether.

For these and other reasons we earnestly second the suggestion above made, that on the first Sabbath of October next every teacher and scholar in our Presbyterian schools come into the school carrying his own Bible, and that hereafter the Bible be the only text book used in the class. We cannot believe that the evil complained of is so great in our schools as the above circular intimates. There are multitudes of teachers who themselves and whose classes also make full and thorough use of the Bible in every lesson, turning to other passages for light and for explanation, and duly honoring the blessed word. But so long as there may be some who use "nothing but leaves," it is wise to call the attention of all to the fact. It will certainly be a great blessing to our schools if every scholar can be induced to own a Bible of his own, to use it every week at home, and to carry it every Sabbath to church and Sabbath-school, reading and studying from its pages the words of inspiration that are able to make him wise unto salvation.

Learning Scripture by Heart.

WE are always swinging to extremes. The fashion of parrot-like memorizing has become so unpopular that many question the worth of committing anything to memory. We shall soon have it questioned whether the Creator did not err in giving a special measure of this faculty to the young. "Is it not better to understand God's truth than to commit its mere words to memory?" it is asked. And since this can hardly be denied, "Why make this ado about learning Scripture verses by heart?"

Glorious logic! As if committing the very words of inspiration stood in the way of understanding them! What we should seek to do is, to have the precious words stamped on the plastic mind of youth whilst their meaning also is unfolded as rapidly as it can be received.

But, practically, what shall we aim to do in this line in our Sabbath-school work?

Of one thing we may be sure—we shall not do more than we try to do, though we may do a good deal less. Shall we then seek to secure *some* memorizing of Scripture each week? By all means. Not to do so is to miss our opportunity and to neglect our duty. Albert Barnes, when he was past three-score years, kept an open Bible on his bureau that he might commit its words to memory whilst dressing; but we may set it down as a fact that the most of our scholars will memorize little of the Scriptures after they are fifteen years of age—very little after they are twenty. They are both more able and more willing to "learn by heart" from eight to fifteen years of age than at any other period of life. If then they are to have stored in their memories these priceless treasures for life-use, the acquisition can best be made whilst they are boys and girls. It is our part

to help them to lay up these treasures, which are too often all unappreciated by them.

To urge our pupils to do what they certainly will not do, is to the last degree unwise. It is discouraging and every way damaging. Therefore begin with the attainable and work up. What is attainable in each case depends upon influences so various that it is impossible to discuss them. Each child is a distinct study. But in general, the factors to be considered are, the co-operation to be had from the home, the pulpit, the superintendent, the teacher, the scholar. Where all these forces can be combined in an effort for religious education, the problem is vastly different from that in which the teacher is left to exert an unaided influence upon the pupil. But put the forces at this lowest point, and can anything of value be done? Yes, much can be done with a moderate amount of patience and ingenuity. Laziness is our worst foe. To think and work calls for effort, and for effort so out of the ordinary line of most of us, that it is apt to get the go-by. But let the teacher who is willing to resist this temptation, and to try what can be done, begin at a minimum. The golden text is a thing by itself, and is ordinarily worth laying up in the memory.

Start with this. Let the teacher recite it first, and then each pupil. If there be in the class a neglected boy, or a dull girl, with godless parents, let that child be last called on, so as to give it the opportunity to refresh its memory by hearing the others recite. Encourage your scholars, lead them on, make them desire to do this to please you, and for their own good; array home influences on your side if there are any to be commanded.

When this point is gained move a step forward. If the lesson contains verses which it is desirable to have remembered, try to secure one such verse in addition to the golden text. Let the scholar pick out his own verse, and so enlist his interest. If from this you can go on to the repetition of all the "memory verses" of the lesson you will be doing well.

There are, however, some portions of Scripture so rich as soul food that it is very desirable to secure their being stored away in the memory, even if you must omit the lesson verses. Such are the twenty-third psalm, the one hundred and third psalm, the beatitudes, the fourteenth of John, etc. The teacher who can bring a class of boys or girls to lay up two or three, or more, of these in their hearts, has bestowed upon them a rich gift, a life-long treasure. It will be found, too, that verses thus linked together in a psalm or chapter, will be more readily committed and much more permanently retained than dissociated texts. In fact, they become spiritual treasures, always within the owner's reach. How many an aged sinner has been recalled to the convictions of early life and to God by the recurrence of such inspired monitors? How many a saint has been comforted in grief and upheld in hours of anguish by precious words stored in childhood's impressible and retentive memory?

That the co-operation of parents in these efforts will be most helpful, and that the union of the entire school, under the guidance of pastor or superintendent, will give added force to the teacher's endeavors, is obvious. But, without these aids, the teacher alone may do that for which his scholars shall hereafter call him blessed. Let us then seek, with prayer, with patience, with ingenuity, to lead the young to "learn by heart" the very words of the richest and most essential words of divine revelation.

All Scholars' Day.

If schools have been reduced during the summer, as is generally the case, especially in cities, now is the time for blowing the trumpet to gather all the wanderers back. There is enthusiasm in a good start. If all the teachers and scholars can be called together on some one Sabbath during this month, and the exercises so directed as to arouse in every one a desire and purpose to attend regularly the whole of the year, the influence exerted cannot fail to be good. Last year Mr. Robert C. Ogden, Superintendent of the Hollond Memorial school, in Philadelphia, conceived and adopted the idea of "All Children's Day," carrying it out with marked success. The following is the call he sent out:

ALL SCHOLARS' DAY.

In some churches All Saints' Day is celebrated. My proposition to the school is, that next Sunday shall be *All Scholars' Day* for our school. What I mean by this is, that we make a general effort to bring every one of the members of the school to the service on the afternoon of that day, and as many as possible to the Parents' and Children's service in the evening. All through the summer our school has been making a remarkable record for attendance, but it will be a fine thing to start anew by the school looking itself in the face. It can then see how really strong and powerful it is, and thus get an inspiration for future work. Perhaps it will be suggested that such an effort is only a confession of weakness and shortcomings at other times. Admit it, and we only confess that we are not perfect. An ideal is always a help, and for once to see our ideal realized will help us forward in the future.

After Many Years.

BY ELIZA CARROLL SNELL.

Beneath the ling'ring shadows of the mind,
Which gather round the mem'ries of the past—
Lie long forgotten words of Christian love,
Of gentle warning, and of kindly cheer;
Words which, when spoken, seemed but wasted breath—
Like arrows glancing from a brazen shield—
And yet, unknown to any save the One
Who reigns above, they were not lost for aye,
But in the mind's deep treasure-house they lay,
To wait their time. Then weary not, but speak
That which the Spirit prompteth you to say,
With faith and patience. Though the harvest bloom
Seem ever distant to your waiting eyes—
Though pleading words wake no responsive chord—
Yet who can tell but that those gentle words,
Sweet with the fragrance of thy whispered prayers—
Though touching not the heart—within the mind
Shall find a resting place; and there abide
Through all the changing years!—stilled, it may be,
By the gray shadows of forgetfulness—and yet not lost,
But after many years to wake again,
And by their echoes, rolling through the soul,
With added power, from their long repose—
Bring one more wand'rer to the Saviour's breast.

The Joy of the Lord.

BY MRS. HELEN E. BROWN.

WE had for our Bible lesson, some time ago, at a woman's meeting, the reward assigned the faithful servant in Matt. 25: 21, 23: "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." The question arose, "What is the joy of the Lord?" The general idea seemed to be that it was the serene and deep happiness which the Lord must ever have, by reason of his absolute holiness; and in which his saints will participate, inasmuch as they are changed into the same image, and shall awake in his likeness. Allusion was made to the passage in Heb. 1: 9: "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows," as confirmation of this view.

"Is not the joy of the Lord the joy he has in the salvation of the lost?" asked one, "when he shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied? What was the anointing of Christ spoken of in Hebrews but just this?" And opening her Bible, she read from Isa. 61: 1–3: "Because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." "It was Christ's joy," she added, "to live and die for sinners. Does he not invite his Church to unite with him in this glad work, and when a lost soul is recovered, call, 'Rejoice *with me*, for I have found my sheep which was lost.' All heaven then enters into his joy. 'I say unto you, There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.'"

We felt that this thought was worth a great deal to the Christian worker. The joy seems to transcend *the happiness* of heaven. Happiness is a satisfied feeling, a sense of content and security under favoring circumstances. The happiness of heaven is therefore perfect and ceaseless. Joy is an emotion of gladness which arises on the acquisition of any good, especially a good much desired, or which it has cost sacrifice and labor to obtain. Every one in heaven will be happy; but, as we understand it, only a portion of the upper household will enter into the joy of their Lord—those faithful ones who have improved their talents, and made them more in their Lord's service, and for his sake. They will comprehend and share the joy with which "the Lord brings home his own;" when the sheep that was lost is found, and he "layeth it on his shoulder rejoicing." "He will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing." Is not this "the joy that was set before him," for which he "endured the cross, despising the shame?" Was not this the "great joy" of which the angels sang at his birth, when they proclaimed the glad tidings of a salvation which should be "to all people?"

And this joy we can enter into, in a measure, even before we reach the golden streets, and cast our crowns before the throne. Is there a delight on earth so pure, so rich, so inspiring, as that of leading a sinner to Jesus? But what is it here to the full reward hereafter, when we meet these saved ones in heaven, and join with them in the grand hallelujah chorus! Archbishop Leighton has said: "It is but little we can receive here; some *drops* of joy that will enter *into us;* but there we shall enter into joy as vessels put into a sea of happiness."

With the exception of the parent and the pastor, perhaps no Christian worker has such opportunity to win souls for Jesus as the Sabbath-school teacher. He has direct access to the heart of the child. His especial work is, to apply God's truth to the conscience, and to lead

souls to the cross for cleansing. In the Sabbath-school we cultivate the heart soil, sow the seed, and reap the harvest for the Lord; for the faithful teacher never loses his harvest. The Lord is faithful, who has promised, "My word shall not return unto me void;" and when our labors are completed here, we shall enter into the joy of our Lord in heaven. The souls we have gathered here for him will be "our glory," "our joy and our crown" through eternal ages, not to be selfishly enjoyed, but ever to be laid at Jesus' feet—his joy also.

The Superintendent Preparing for the Teachers' Meeting.

BY JOHN W. DULLES, D.D.

OF many things it is true that it is more easy to do them than to tell how to do them, to follow out your own unconscious methods than to analyze and set them forth. The Rev. Dr. Thomas Brainerd, of Philadelphia, in his youth was the helper of the eloquent Dr. Lyman Beecher. Once, when they occupied the same room, the young Brainerd asked his eminent friend as to his mode of preparation for preaching. The great preacher sat up in his bed, and, looking earnestly at his young Timothy, replied, "Why, Brainerd, I just stick a pin down, and then work right around it." Not a very detailed explanation this of the processes by which a great effort was wrought out, but quite satisfactory to the orator himself. Yet, after all, the hint is not an unsuggestive one when we are asked as to the superintendent's methods of preparation for the weekly meeting of his teachers for the study of the Bible lesson of the coming Sunday—"Know your lesson text, and work right around it."

However, we may help each other by hints drawn from experience as to the means for carrying this idea into effect.

Have your heart in a proper attitude toward your vocation as leader in the teachers' meeting.

Beware of looking upon it as a task, of feeling it to be a burden. Do not suffer it to be a duty that must be discharged; rather count it an opportunity—*the opportunity* of the whole week—to honor God by being of use to his servants who are the instructors and guides of young (and old) immortals. By touching and affecting the teachers, you are reaching every one of their pupils. Look forward to the hour as your opportunity, and so your privilege, not your task.

Let your mind dwell on it, and it on your mind. You are a busy man. Good superintendents are men who are worked hard in other lines. That is as it should be; it is the man whose mind is kept tense and vigorous by toil who is able to work, not the sluggard, with ungirt loins, unready for sharp exertion. But with all your engagements you may have your mind on your teachers' meeting through the whole week that precedes it. This gives Saturday advantages over the earlier part of the week as the time for holding the meeting. You can be reading and meditating on your Bible lesson, and seeking wisdom from above, all through the seven days. With your thoughts thus turning, your preparation will ripen, unconsciously to yourself.

Heart and mind being thus engaged, you will be in the best possible condition for helpfulness to those whom you desire to help. But you wish to understand just what it is that you propose to do. What is it?

It is not to do exactly what the teacher is to do when he is before his class. To do that, to make your teachers' meeting simply an adult Bible-class, would be a profitable thing, but that it is not your aim or the purpose of the meeting. Its aim is to prepare the teachers to teach the Scriptures, and especially to teach the Bible lesson of the coming Sunday, with the best possible effect. The effort of the superintendent will be to aid his teachers to understand the Bible text, to stimulate them to enter into its spirit, its beauty, its power, to grasp its subordinate as well as its capital teachings, and to have them in shape for use with their classes.

The superintendent, thus understanding his purpose, will go forward to make specific preparations to execute it.

1. He will try to learn all he can with regard to the portion of Scripture selected for the lesson. How? If able he will study it in the language in which it was written. Lacking the ability to do this, he will examine the translation given in the Revised Version in connection with our grand old King James Version. He will use the best helps accessible to him: the books of learned and sound commentators, and the expositions contained in our Sunday-school periodicals; anything that will be of assistance in finding out what God says in his Word. That is what he is after now. A vast deal of "bosh" has been uttered about not taking the truth at second-hand, or suffering the commentator to come between you and God. When your scholarship and penetration, and ripeness of judgment, are superior to those of President Woolsey and Professor Green, of Alexander and Lightfoot and their compeers, you can afford to neglect what they suggest. This comparison of the teachings of the learned

and wise with each other and with your own understanding of the text will correct many unfounded ideas. You will be surprised to find that thoughts caught from many sources, from your own fancy, from books, from pictures even, have no support in the text; and that there are rich truths there that had entirely escaped your notice. Yet, after all, you will of necessity finally use your own judgment, seeking the guidance of the Spirit of all truth for a true understanding of the Word.

2. But the superintendent will not stop here; he will seek to draw out distinctly the teachings of the lesson, that he may be able to convey them intelligibly to others. Until they are clearly outlined in his own mind, he cannot express them clearly. He may not intend to give these teachings to the teachers, but rather to draw them from the teachers, but he will want them to be well defined in his mind, and subject to call, and also to have an opinion as to their comparative importance. He will have an eye to the broad diversities in the age and attainments of the pupils of the different classes, and will ask himself, What will the teacher of that class of married women need from this text? What can the teacher of those mischievous boys get from it that will arrest their attention? What is there in it for that class of girls of fourteen? Here is a point at which the superintendent's preparation may be made fruitful by stimulating each teacher to ask himself what *he* is to do with the lesson in his class, thus leading each to seek the ammunition suited to his purpose. Grape-shot is of little service for the shot gun, or snipe-shot for the rifle. Above all, do not fail to pick out ammunition suited for sharp-shooting and for the small game. Just here, try to be keenly practical. Think of Mrs. A and Miss B. and Mr. B. and poor Miss D. who will be "taught out" in fifteen minutes —alas! the D. family do not attend the teachers' meeting.

A few hints as to special measures may not be useless.

1. Occasionally prepare, on a slip of paper, Bible references bearing on a given point in the lesson. Call for these references from your teachers, and let those who desire to do so take them down. This can be varied widely, and may prove helpful.

2. Group in a natural order the topics drawn from the lesson, and have ready the development of a single topic.

3. An outline, or sketch, or collection of Scripture utterances, may be prepared by the superintendent, to throw a strong light on some topic contained in the text.

4. Have maps as far as possible. Few of our superintendents know how feasible it is to have home-made maps. You would like to point out the localities on the shores of the Sea of Galilee visited by our Lord, but on an ordinary map these are not distinguishable across a room. Then make one for yourself. Procure a piece of muslin four feet long; draw your outline on it with a lead-pencil or crayon, then go over this outline rapidly with a small brush and ink or blacking; with a little indigo (ordinary washing blue) paint a water-line within the coasts of the lake, and put wafers on for the towns, or make red or black spots for them, and you have a map for your purpose such as you cannot purchase. If a blackboard is accessible, be ready to use it. And, as a last resort, with a cane you may point to an imaginary map on the wall, outlining it as you describe its metes and bounds.

5. Of course, illustrations from your own experience, from history, from passing events, from any source, will be useful. Cultivate the habit of getting and using them.

6. It is well at each meeting to have a hint ready as to the art of teaching—showing in a simple, natural way, how to attract attention, how to hold attention, how to regain it when lost; dwelling on the importance of being perfectly clear and of not taking knowledge in the pupil for granted; on drawing all that is possible from the scholar, rather than giving it to him, etc.

After all, the personality of the leader lies back of all special preparation. All that he knows, all that he is, all that he acquires, may be drawn upon at any moment. Hence, every gain made by him in head or heart is an added preparation for his post in the teachers' meeting. The sum of his acquisitions, spiritual and mental, are his capital, ready to meet calls upon it. A Spanish sculptor carved a piece of statuary for a patron in twenty-five days; the purchaser proposed paying for it as twenty-five days' work. "Not so," replied the artist, "twenty-five years of study and practice have entered into that piece of statuary. It is not the work of twenty-five days, but of twenty-five years." So is it with the superintendent in his teachers' meeting. His heart culture, his knowledge, his experience, all of grace and gift and education that are his, are his preparation for his duties. Therefore let him earnestly seek to enrich his mind, and to have his heart enriched by grace divine, that he may be the more fully qualified for his responsible, honorable, and useful position as a teacher of teachers.—*S. S. Times.*

The Winning of the Child.

EVERY loyal teacher makes all education lead up to the winning of the child. Punctual attendance, close attention, clear impressions, are only preliminary; beyond is the great task of winning the living soul. And while gleaning the "chance-blades" by the roadside—lucid answers, vivid memories, orderly habits—he looks on to the larger harvest of a life gained for Christ.

In order to win the child the teacher *must be inspired with the lesson.* There is often a grave danger of the lesson standing between the teacher and the scholar. The mind is enslaved to the points and illustrations, laboriously fitting up the loose parts of it; while the child-soul is lost sight of, and is itself lost in a wilderness of details. By all means a lesson, and a lesson well prepared, but not a lesson to spoil the spontaneous charm of the mind, and make its inspiration cold and dull. An uninspired teacher can mar the most tender of inspired doctrines. The glow of heaven alone can keep the heavenly teaching beautiful and strong.

In studying the lesson each scholar must be studied. The study of character is too much of an exile science in our Sunday-schools as well as in our pulpits. The psalmist sings of the Providence that gives to every animal its own food—"their meat in due season." Now the little "beasts of prey" that we have with us on Sundays must be carefully studied and classified, that each may receive what it needs.

To analyze: It is almost sure that in every school there will be three classes of scholars. In the first class the intellectual faculties are prominently developed; in the second, the moral faculties are strongest; and in the third, the animal faculties. A boy endowed with a large fund of animal energies does not respond to the same touches as a boy furnished with large intellectual powers. One mind that is credulous and another that is logical must evidently be handled in different ways. A credulous mind must be slowly and tenderly released from the superstitions that hang around it; the windows of the soul, dark and closely fastened, must be opened and cleaned, that the light of day may shine in, and the breeze of the everlasting hills fill the house. But a rational mind is naturally a house of fresh air and clear light. fresh air to the point of being frosty, and clear light to the point of being dazzling. What the credulous wants is a healthy nerve to think, what the logical needs is strength to be humble. The one must have courage to go on its knees, the other must have courage to rise, and walk in the pleasant lanes and broad fields of reason.

It is not enough to enlighten the head, but it is necessary also to kindle the heart. A clear mind and a cold heart is a grave disaster. Get the child to understand the truth; much more, get him to love the truth. The highest and most abiding influence is not exerted until the affections are awakened and drawn, and the life is thus surrendered to the sovereignty of truth.

Every honest-minded teacher has his own class of methods. One method coming very much into vogue at present is that of catechising. We consider it admirable for one period of growth—in the dawn of attention. But it is not an end in itself; it is good to start with. Its danger is to leave the mind content with ready-made answers, and so quench the spirit of mental enterprise and endeavors. There are some teachers that go the garden of truth, and cut a few specimens of favorite flowers, and then ask the scholars to admire them and be satisfied; or to take a choice blossom away with them, and see it droop and die. Another teacher leads the children to the garden itself; walks amidst its soft and shining light, and in revealing the life-story of leaf and flower, will graciously turn to ask: "Here is a charming plant—will you have a slip?" "And here is another—you can have a root of this." "And here are seeds of a very beautiful specimen." And the children go away with a spirit of adventure, that may help them one day to have their own garden of Divine truth. But no cramming!—for Bible-cramming is as much of a crime as any other cramming, and fills the mind with the abomination of desolation. So from catechism the mind should be led forth to fit up expeditions of its own.

Nearly in every class there is at least one child with a larger wealth of development than the rest. And while seriously advocating care and sympathy for the dullest of all, we say—get hold of the one! The mind susceptible to heavenly education, the heart open to holy influences, every sacrifice is not too great to win it, and win it wholly for Christ. And this is our reward: we win the children and lead them to the mansion of our Redeemer and Lord; we win them, and he wins us and ours, and our winning is his crown of glory.

We are afraid there is no universal remedy for the heart-sorrow of the Church when she bewails the loss of her Sunday-school children. But if we with quiet trust do our best to win them, we shall not be conscience-stricken. With shrewdness born of sympathy, with sympathy born of our love for Christ, we betake ourselves to the winning of the child.—*The S. S. Teacher.*

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

THIRD QUARTER.

1. July 6.—David King over all Israel. 2 Sam. 5: 1-12.
2. July 13.—The Ark in the House. 2 Sam. 6: 1-12.
3. July 20.—God's Covenant with David. 2 Sam. 7: 1-16.
4. July 27.—Kindness to Jonathan's Son. 2 Sam. 9: 1-13.
5. Aug. 3.—David's Repentance. Ps. 51: 1-19.
6. Aug. 10.—Absalom's Rebellion. 2 Sam. 15: 1-14.
7. Aug. 17.—Absalom's Death. 2 Sam. 18: 24-33.
8. Aug. 24.—The Plague Stayed. 2 Sam. 24: 15-25.
9. Aug. 31.—God's Works and Word. Ps. 19: 1-14.
10. Sept. 7.—**Confidence in God.** Ps. 27: 1-14.
11. Sept. 14.—**Waiting for the Lord.** Ps. 40: 1-17.
12. Sept. 21.—**A Song of Praise.** Ps. 103: 1-22.
13. Sept. 28.—**Review.**

Lesson X. **CONFIDENCE IN GOD.** **Sept. 7th, 1884.**

Ps. 27: 1-14. Memorize vs. 4, 5.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?"—Ps. 27: 1.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Ps. 27: 1-14 ..... *Confidence in God.*
T. Ps. 31: 1-24 ..... *Trust in the Lord.*
W. Ps. 124: 1-8 ..... *The Lord on our Side.*
Th. Ps. 121: 1-8 ..... *The Lord thy Keeper.*
F. 1 Pet. 1: 1-9 ..... *The Trial of Faith.*
S. Isa. 41: 8-20 ..... *"I Will Help Thee."*
S. Rom. 8: 28-39 ..... *Confidence and Security.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. Light and Salvation. 2. Refuge and Strength. 3. Safety amid Enemies.

Catechism.—Q. 95. *To whom is Baptism to be administered?* A. Baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible church, till they profess their faith in Christ, and obedience to him; but the infants of such as are members of the visible church, are to be baptized.

Lesson Hymn.—Westminster S. S. Hymnal, No. 47: "Oh, sometimes the shadows are deep." Other hymns, 31, 26, 37, 45, 180.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

INTRODUCTORY.—It is not possible to determine positively the date of the composition of this psalm, nor the circumstances which gave rise to it. Evidently it was written in a period of urgent danger, in the midst of which it expresses strong confidence in God. There are indications in the psalm itself that it was composed during David's flight from Absalom, perhaps when the battle was about to be fought which would end the revolt and restore him to his throne. Some, however, refer the psalm to the period of David's exile because of Saul's persecution, when he was hiding away in some rocky refuge, perhaps in the cave of Adullam. Many of the allusions fit in well with this period and with David's circumstances and experiences.

---

1 The LORD *is* my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD *is* the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? [Ps. 84: 11; Mic. 7: 7, 8.]

2 When the wicked, *even* mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. [Ps. 14: 4.]

3 Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this *will* I *be* confident. [Ps. 3: 6.]

4 One *thing* have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple. [Ps. 65: 4; 83: 2.]

5 For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock. [Isa. 4: 5, 6.]

6 And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD. [Ps. 3: 3.]

7 Hear, O LORD, *when* I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me.

8 ***When thou saidst,*** **Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.** [Ps. 24: 6; 105: 4.]

9 Hide not thy face ***far*** **from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.** [Ps. 69: 17; 143: 7.]

10 When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up. [Isa. 40: 11.]

11 Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies. [Ps. 5: 8.]

12 Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty.

13 ***I had fainted,*** **unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.** [Ps. 118: 17, 18.]

14 Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD. [Isa. 40: 31.]

1 *The Lord is my light.* In the New Testament this term is frequently used with reference to the divine character. See John 1: 7–9; 1 John 1: 5; Rev. 21: 23. It occurs also in several of the prophets. See Isa. 60: 1, 20; Micah 7: 8. This, however, is the earliest use of the term in the Scriptures. Possibly David was now hiding in a dark cavern, and thought of the Lord as his light. What the light is to the natural world, God is to the human soul. *My salvation.* Or, my Saviour. Primarily here in the sense of protection and defence from danger, but also in the larger sense of Saviour from sin, and from all the powers of evil. *Whom shall I fear?* If God be my defence and my salvation, I need not be afraid of any other enemies. See Rom. 8: 31. *The strength of my life.* The stronghold of my life. God is the refuge, the fortification, in which my life is safely kept. See Ps. 18: 2; 125: 2. *Of whom shall I be afraid?* With God for walls and stronghold there is no reason to fear any enemy.

2 *When the wicked.* There is a reference here to some past experience of danger, possibly to his meeting with Goliath. There is a similarity of language in the psalm and the narrative. 1 Sam. 17: 48. The giant "arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David;" "the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh." Compare the language of Goliath. v. 44. The phrase, "they stumbled and fell," describes the defeat of the boasting Philistine, who "fell upon his face to the earth." Of course the reference here may be general only, but it is not improbable that his encounter with the giant was in his mind when he wrote these words.

3 *Though an host should encamp.* A whole host against one man. He supposes the greatest possible danger. *My heart shall not fear.* An expression of perfect confidence in any danger.

4 *One thing have I desired.* There is one desire of my heart that is greater than all other desires, one thing that I wish more than any other. The words of this and the following verses indicate that David was in exile at the time; and that which was the sorest loss of all to him was not his separation from home and friends, but his exclusion from the sanctuary. That which he longed for most of all was to meet God in the place of his worship. *That I may dwell.* Without break or interruption. He does not necessarily speak of a literal living in the sanctuary, but of dwelling constantly under its influences. *The beauty of the Lord.* Grace, loveliness, referring to the character of God, not to anything external in the sanctuary. See Ps. 63: 2; 90: 17. *To inquire.* To contemplate. *In his temple.* Or *palace*, not referring so much to any tent or building however as to the place consecrated by God's own presence. At this time the temple of Solomon had not been built.

5 *In his pavilion.* The literal sense is, *a booth*, constructed of branches of trees, but the name is used of the tabernacle. Ps. 76: 2. Here, however, David is speaking of the shelter of the unseen God himself. *The secret of his tabernacle.* The most holy place, into whose sacredness no one could follow to harm him. The expression is figurative, and represents the sanctuary of God's gracious presence. *A rock.* A symbol of defence frequently used in the Bible. If David was now hiding in some rocky cavern this probably suggested the figure. See Ps. 18: 1.

6 *Mine head be lifted up.* In restored honor and prosperity. He had confidence in his early triumph over his enemies and his speedy return to his home. *Therefore will I offer.* In gratitude for deliverance. His heart already is full of praise in anticipation of his restoration.

7 *Hear, O Lord.* There is a sudden change of tone in this verse. David's thoughts turn from God's goodness and grace to himself, and as a deep sense of his own unworthiness fills his heart he cries for mercy.

8 God is here represented as saying to the trembling suppliant, "*Seek ye my face,*" and the prompt and glad answer from the heart is, "*Thy face, Lord, will I seek.*" The psalmist lays hold of God's command and invitation, and pleads these as he presses into the divine presence in all his unworthiness and need.

9 *Hide not thy face.* The connection with the

previous verse is close. The writer is drawing near to God, and prays God not to hide his face from him. The word "far" should be omitted. *Put not thy servant away in anger.* He is conscious of his own unworthiness, and feels that justly God might in anger put him away, or reject him; but he pleads that this may not be done. *Thou hast been my help.* He refers to past mercy, and then pleads for a continuance in his present distress of the same favor. *Leave me not.* No thought is more terrible to the penitent soul than that God may withdraw his presence and grace.

10 *When my father and my mother forsake me.* It is not implied here that David's father or mother had forsaken him. He refers to his parents as the truest and most faithful of earthly friends, and then says that even if it were possible for them to forsake him God's love would still remain. See Isa. 49: 15. This verse would seem to indicate that David's parents were yet alive, and if so, this psalm could scarcely have been written during Absalom's rebellion. *The Lord will take me up.* Even what the best human love abandons God takes up and saves.

11 *Teach me thy way.* He desires to walk in God's way, not his own, and asks to be taught what that way is. *Lead me in a plain path.* A straight and level path. He asks not only to be taught the way, but to be led in it. The thought of God's leading is very beautiful. *Because of mine enemies.* Who watched his steps and were ready to destroy him.

12 *Deliver me not.* At mention of his enemies a sense of danger enters his mind, and conscious of his own weakness and inability to defend himself, and of his entire dependence upon God, he implores him not to leave him in the hands of those who would destroy him. *False witnesses.* If this psalm was written during Saul's persecution, the reference may be to those who told the king false things about him to make Saul hate him the more. *Breathe out cruelty.* Indicating bitter and intense hatred. See Acts 9: 1.

13 *I had fainted.* These words are not in the original. The sentence begins with *Unless*, and is not finished. "*Unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living*—" he does not say what would have been the result—certainly darkness and despair. Only his hope and confidence in God had sustained him in his sore perils and trials. *To see the goodness of the Lord.* In the defeat of his enemies and his own deliverance. *In the land of the living.* Among those who fear God, referring to his own land and people. He expected to be restored to his home.

14 *Wait on the Lord.* From his own experience he speaks to others this word of counsel. In every time of trouble or danger, wait on the Lord; look to him, hope in him, cling to him. *Be of good courage.* Be firm, undoubting, unfearing, even in the darkest hours, and in due time God will send help and deliverance. *He will strengthen thine heart.* See Isa. 40: 31.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

The Lord is my light. What the sun is to the earth and to life on the earth, the Lord is to his people. The sinful state is called, in the Bible, "darkness and the shadow of death." Darkness and death go together, for where there is no light there can be no life. But God is light. Christ said he was the light of the world. In one of the psalms the word of God is said to be a light unto the feet and a lamp unto the path. Light shows the truth about one's condition. A foul room may seem to be clean until the light is admitted, but then every spot is visible. One may think his heart and life quite fair until the light of God's truth shines in, but then all his evil is disclosed and he is convicted of sin. Light reveals the dangers in one's path. A party of pleasure tourists on the Alps were overtaken by the darkness, and after groping for a time decided to wait for the morning. When the sun rose they saw that they were on the edge of a fearful precipice, and that a few steps more would have sent them down to death. The light showed them their awful peril. So a night traveler over an open field was saved by a lightning flash from falling into an open pit, which lay close before him in his path. In like manner the light from God's word, the rising of the sun of righteousness, or some sudden flash of the Spirit, has saved many a soul from eternal death. Thus Saul was saved by Damascus. Thus David was saved when Nathan came with the lamp of divine truth in his hand. Thus Peter was saved when the Lord turned and looked upon him, and the flash showed him his terrible sin and peril. Thus all conviction is produced; thus all wanderers in temptation's flowery path are warned. Another office of light is, to give *life*. Were it not for the sun there would not be a plant or a flower or a blade of grass on the earth. So all spiritual life is produced and nourished by the light of

God. Light clears up mysteries. Things that are obscure in the darkness are made plain when the morning breaks upon them. And many of the mysteries of life become clear when the light of God's truth and love falls upon them. Light gives cheer, as when it falls into the prisoner's cell, or into the sick-room; so the truth of God brings comfort and gladness to the sorrowing heart, or to those shut away in the prisons of trial or affliction. Such are a few of the many suggestions from this emblem.

The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? The thought is, that God is a fortress, like strong walls around his people. The same thought is found elsewhere. "The eternal God is thy refuge." "God is our refuge." "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth even for ever." Notice, it is not said that the Lord *builds* a refuge or a fortress about his people, but he himself *is* the refuge and the stronghold. He puts himself between them and danger. Thus the stork and other birds when there is danger cover their young with their own bodies, bearing the attack of the enemy themselves and shielding their brood. So Christ said he would gather his people as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings. Thus on Calvary he *did* receive on himself the terrible storms that his people might be sheltered. So also about every individual believer's life continually God is a fortress, in which, in every danger, he may hide and be safe. If this be true, of whom indeed shall we be afraid? The only thing is, to make sure that we can say this little word "my." "The Lord is the stronghold of *my* life." It makes a very great difference on which side of a fortress one is when the battle is raging. *Outside* its strong walls give no protection, while its missiles fall everywhere, dealing death. It is only *inside* that its shelter is enjoyed. It makes every difference whether we are *in* Christ or outside.

One thing have I desired . . . that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. If this psalm was written during David's banishment by Absalom's revolt, it is remarkable that the loss which he felt most keenly was that of the sanctuary. Home and throne and honor and people's love—all these sore losses weighed less heavily upon him than his being unable to meet God in the wonted place. He was right, too. There is no other loss so great as that of fellowship with God. One may have everything else—riches, honor, fame, human friends, happiness, health, home joys, but if he has not God all these things fail to make him truly blessed. On the other hand, if we have God we are blessed, though we have nothing else. A gentleman came home from business heavy-hearted. Disaster had struck him that day. Throwing himself into a chair, he said: "Everything is gone. We are beggared. There is nothing left." His little child seeing his distress and hearing his words, climbed up on his knee, and putting her arms about his neck, said: "Why, papa, you have mamma and me left." Yes; while such human love remained, was he not still rich? Still more, if everything else is taken and God and his love remain, are we not rich? Mrs. Browning has put this thought in these striking lines:

"If I could find
No love in all the world for comforting,
Nor any path but hollowly did ring,
Where 'Dust to dust' the love from life disjoined;
And if, before those sepulchres unmoving,
I stood alone (as some forsaken lamb
Goes bleating up the moor in weary dearth),
Crying, 'Where are ye, O my loved and loving?'—
I know a Voice would sound: 'Daughter, I AM!
Can I suffice for heaven, and not for earth?'"

It will be well for us to test our lives by this experience of David's. Can we say that the one great desire of *our* life is, to live with God, to enjoy his presence, to engage in his worship? What is the *one thing* we are striving after above all other things? What one thing is it in our life whose loss would give us the keenest pain?

In the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion. This is one of those promises that we cannot claim till we come to the place of need. We cannot find it in the bright sunny days when all is joy about us. There is no promise that God will hide us in his pavilion when we are in glad safety, but only *in the time of trouble.* Many people worry because they do not seem to have grace for trials. They see good Christians passing through experiences of sorrow or trouble, without fear, even joyfully, realizing God's presence and sustained by his grace; and they say, "I couldn't do that. I have no such grace as that." Of course not; and why should they have? They have no trial now to endure, requiring any special help from God, and why should he give such help when it is not needed? When the time of trial comes, then he will give the grace that is needful to pass through it.

When thou saidst, Seek ye my face: my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek. That is the spirit we should all show—instant and glad obedience to every command of God, and every slightest intimation of his will. To

every divine voice, "Do this," our response should be "I will." This same call, "Seek ye my face," comes to every child. God wants the children's love. He wants the merry boys and the happy girls to give him their hearts early, before sin gets strong power over them. They hear his call, for it comes in many ways. He wants them to seek his face, to learn to know him as their Friend, their Saviour, their Guide, their Keeper. The reply should be, "Thy face, Lord, will I seek." If some king, or other great person, were to invite us to come to see him and receive favors at his hand, we would not likely refuse to go. Why, then, when God invites us, are we so hard to persuade to come to him?

Hide not thy face far from me. Would it not be an awful thing if God *were* to hide his face from us so that we could not find him any more? What would we do if, when we had sinned, we came seeking God to ask him to forgive us, and could not get to see his face? Or, what if we were in some sore trouble and called and called, receiving no answer save the echo of our own cries? Or, suppose God were to hide his face when we are dying, or when we stand to be judged? Or, what if through all eternity he were to hide his face from us? It is the most terrible of all thoughts. How can we trifle, then, with God's love? If we reject and despise his grace year after year, living in sin and disobedience, are we sure that when we *do* call upon him at last in our despair he will hear us. Read thoughtfully Prov. 1: 24–31; Matt. 25: 11, 12.

When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up. We all know how much our fathers and mothers love us. It seems to us there never could be a stronger love than theirs. No matter how wickedly a son may act, the love in his father's and mother's heart still goes on. Though all the world casts him off and turns him out of doors, the home door still stands open to him. But this verse tells us that even if parental love is worn out and parental patience is exhausted and the home doors are shut in one's face, there is still a place in God's heart and home for the outcast. This is the verse for the sinner who has gone down to the lowest depths of shame, till even his mother—if this is possible—has given him up and shut him out of her heart. There is another phase of truth here. This is the *orphan's* verse. When God removes father and mother, he himself takes up the child, in special, tender love and care. This ought to be a great comfort to every orphan child. See also Jer. 49: 11.

Unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living ——. The sentence in the original stands unfinished. No words could express the sadness of his condition if it had not been for his confidence in God's goodness. Such experiences come to all of us some time in life, when there is not one ray of earthly light. Then it is that we realize the value of our Christian hope. We know that God rules, that he is our Father, and that his love can never do anything to harm us. In dark hours the duty of the Christian is simply to believe and to wait. Out on the sea, when the night is black and the storm rages and the peril is great, the wise seaman drops anchor and waits for the morning. The Christian should do the same.

LESSON POINTS.

1. God is light to his people. v. 1.
2. God is a fortress to his people, and in him there is no danger from a world of foes.
3. "My" is one of the most important words in v. 1. It is the *window* through which the light comes, and the *door* into the fortress.
4. It is idle for bad men to fight against those whom God is defending. v. 2.
5. The believing heart should *never* be afraid. v. 3.
6. The sorest loss in the world to a godly heart is to be shut away from the sanctuary. v. 4.
7. Love for God's house and service is the strongest affection in a consecrated life.
8. God has a refuge ready always when trouble comes. v. 5.
9. To every call and invitation of God our hearts should give glad and ready response. v. 8.
10. The most terrible thing possible is, that God should ever hide his face from us. v. 9.
11. The outcast's verse, and the orphan's verse. v. 10.
12. When there is danger God's way is the only safe way. v. 11.
13. Belief in God's love is the only anchor in storms. v. 13.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

How to begin a lesson in class is always an important question. No bright, earnest teacher will fall into routine and always open in the same way. The first thing is, to catch the ear and secure the interest of every member of the class. Sometimes a little story well told is the very best way to do this. Of course the story should have a bearing on the lesson, and should

lead to it. Sometimes a few words of outline on a sheet of paper will be the best. A question put in such a way as to gain attention and excite inquiry may prove sufficient on some occasions. An allusion to some event of the past week in which all are interested will often be the best introduction.

Here we are to study a psalm. It was evidently written during some time of persecution and danger. Call for David's times of peril—when hunted by Saul, when driven away by Absalom. Was he afraid? Why not? Was it merely because he was a brave man? This psalm tells us why. What is its title? A Christian lad of eighteen, in England, when searching one day for sea weeds discovered that the tide had risen and that he was enclosed between the sea and the cliffs. Escape was impossible. Taking his Bible from his pocket he wrote on the fly-leaf these words: "In danger. If help does not speedily come I must be drowned. But Jesus, to whom I gave myself five years ago, is with me, and I am perfectly happy." His body was found next day, and the little Bible bore this testimony to his victory over danger. This was confidence in God, and illustrates the lesson.

I. *Light and Salvation.* vs. 1–3. David may now have been hiding in a dark cave. What does he say first that God is? What are the blessings of light? How is God like the light? (See Notes.) What next does he say of God? *Salvation* is used here in its general sense—from sin, from danger, from enemies. What is the third comfort David has? "Strength" here means fortress. What is a fortress? What does it do for those inside its walls? Show that it is not a shelter to those outside. What words show David's confidence? How can we have the same confidence in danger? If we can say, "The Lord is *my* light and *my* salvation; the strength of *my* life," we can say the other words of these three verses. The little word "my" is the key of the door into the fortress; have you the key?

II. *Refuge and Strength.* vs. 4–8. Where was David when he wrote this psalm? What were some of the losses he endured when thus banished? Home, friends, comforts, ease; if it was during Absalom's rebellion, his palace, his throne, his crown, his honors. What loss does he seem to have felt the most? v. 4. What did he most long after when away? What was his most earnest prayer? What "house of the Lord" was there then? What did he mean by "the beauty of the Lord?" Charles Kingsley, when dying, was heard to exclaim: "Oh how beautiful God is!" This verse may be closely applied. Do we love our church and Sabbath-school as David loved the sanctuary? Does it pain us so to be kept away? Is God lovely to us? Suggest some reasons why we ought to love to attend these services. We meet God. We learn how to live. We get help here. We leave our burdens. We find the Saviour.

What is God's "pavilion?" v. 5. How does he hide his people there? In the ancient times Christian churches were hiding-places where persons in danger might flee and be safe from pursuers. The door always stood open, and the priests were there to receive and protect the fugitive. The churches were like the cities of refuge in Israel. So God hides in his pavilion those who flee to him. The sinner who is in trouble about his sins and flees to his cross is hidden, and is safe for ever. So in all danger.

How did David express his confidence? v. 6. What did he say he would do? Notice here (1) an offering; (2) a song; (3) a prayer; (4) a consecration.

III. *Safety Amid Enemies.* vs. 9–14. In these verses we have several things to study. 1. A bitter cry. v. 9. The saddest thought possible is, that God should ever hide his face. What alone can cause him to do it? 2. A glad comfort. v. 10. What love is stronger than a parent's? This is the outcast's verse, and the orphan's verse. 3. A good prayer. v. 11. In what kind of a path does God lead his people? No other way is safe from enemies, but this is a protected way and always safe. 4. An unshaken faith (v. 13); and this faith is all that keeps him from despair.

In the closing of the lesson it must be shown who enjoy the safety of this psalm. Clearly not those who are God's enemies; only those who are in God's family by faith in him, and walk in God's safe and holy ways. Verse 8 is a good closing verse.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

BY MRS. G. R. ALDEN—"PANSY."

Lesson Plan—

1. Different kinds of light.
2. How far they may be trusted.
3. The only absolutely safe light.

The Lesson Developed.—The scholars' answers supposed.

How many of you can see my face? Suppose it was the middle of the night and no gas lighted, could you see me then? What helps you to see? What gives us light? What lights us on a rainy day? Why can we not see in the night? How many like to walk on a perfectly

dark road? How far can we trust the sun to light us? Speak of a dark cellar, of a coal mine, etc. Let class mention places where the sun cannot reach. Dwell on this thought until all are impressed with the fact that it is not safe to depend entirely on the sun.

Suppose, then, that we want to go to the cellar, what can we do? After receiving your answer, light a candle. How far can we trust this light? Encourage talk about it, and develop the fact that the wind may blow it out, or the water may quench it, or the candle may burn low and go out. In short, it is not absolutely trustworthy.

Imagine a ship on the sea, dark night and storm. What good will a candle do? How shall the sailor avoid the rocks? Try to call out the idea of a light-house. Show a picture of one, or better, make a rude outline on the board. Not many years ago, in a severe storm, a light-house was blown down, and a ship went to pieces on the rocks. Even light-houses are not entirely trustworthy. I saw a little child who I knew was blind skipping merrily along, and I asked her if she was not afraid to walk in the dark, but she answered: "Oh, no, I have hold of father's hand." But fathers grow old and die. There are dangers and dark places that they are not strong enough to shield from? Whom shall we trust? Another thing: All shut your eyes. Can you see me now? No, even though the sun is shining. When death comes and closes our eyes, the sun or the lamp cannot light us, and father does not know anything about the road that we are to travel. What shall we do?

Call for golden text: "The Lord is my light." Who said this? How did David know that God could light him? (Notice David's argument in v. 2.) God *had* cared for him through many dangers, therefore he could. Children understand such arguments; the friend who has not failed them is the one to trust. What mother has done before, she can do again. Print a motto on the board—

"HE SHALL HIDE ME."

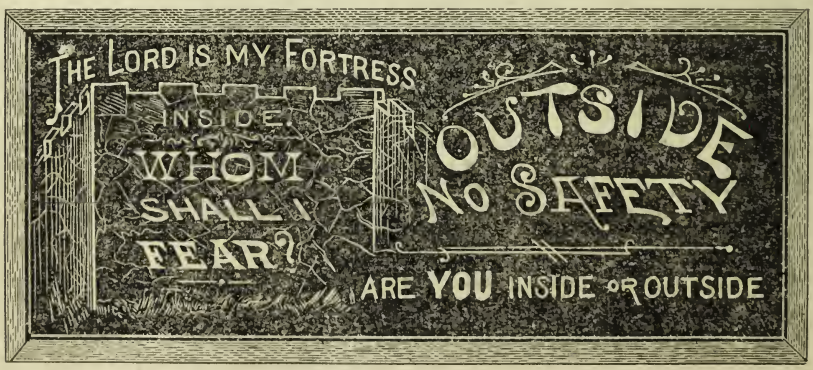
How did David know that? Answer the question with a blue arch of promise. How did David get the help of this great friend? Make the red line, which stands for prayer, and print on it the words, "Hear, O Lord."

How did David know that this was the way to secure help? (Notice the answer in v. 8.) God had told him so. But about the dangers of the sea? Can God light us then? "The sea is his, and he made it." Then we need not fear. But about that last journey, when our eyes cannot see the light of the sun, and when father and mother have no power to help. Listen: Turn to the Bible verse and read, "The Lamb (*i. e.*, the Lord) is the light thereof." Then what is there to fear? That was what David said. The Lord was his light not only, but his salvation. Nothing was too hard for the Lord. So he said, "Whom shall I fear?"

Final Thoughts.—1. Would it not be well for us to have this great friend for ours, so that we need not be afraid of anything?

2. If I have a light that can be trusted anywhere, and there are people around me in darkness and danger, what is it my duty to do?

SUGGESTIONS FOR BLACKBOARD.



The thought of the lesson is, the believer's confidence in God. It is a time of danger. Enemies are thronging. He looks to God for protection. The Lord is his fortress—a wall around him. Surely then he is safe. No one can harm him without first overcoming God. Describe a scene in a strong fort in time of war. Enemies lie all about it. It is dark night. But within all is quiet. The walls are high and strong. The iron gates are shut and bolted.

Sentinels keep watch. And the men inside have no fear. They have light in their barracks. They spend the evening in pleasant pastimes, reading, conversation, games. A picture of the Christian's peace in the worst of dangers when he has God for a refuge. Gather from the psalm some of the blessings named. God is light, salvation, fortress, pavilion, friend. v. 10.

Show, however, that a fortification gives safety only to those who are inside its walls. It is terrible to those without. God is a refuge to those who are in him, but he, too, is terrible to those outside. *Who* are outside? *Why* are they outside? How may they come inside? John 1: 12 shows the gate. Is not the Christian's confidence worth something?

Lesson XI. **WAITING FOR THE LORD.** Sept. 14th, 1884.

Ps. 40: 1-17. Memorize vs. 1-4.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"I delight to do thy will, O my God."—Ps. 40: 8.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Ps. 40: 1-17... *The Waiting Sufferer Delivered.*
T. Ps. 22: 1-31... *Christ's Complaint and Triumph.*
W. Heb. 10: 1-14. *The One Offering.*
Th. Heb. 5: 1-10.. *Heard in that he Feared.*
F. Isa. 53: 1-12.. *The Suffering Saviour.*
S. Ps. 16: 1-11... *Christ's Sufferings, Resurrection and Glory.*
S. Heb. 12: 1-13. *"Lest ye be Wearied."*

LESSON PLAN.

1. Mercy Remembered. 2. Obedience Promised. 3. Confidence in Danger.

Time, Place and **Occasion** unknown.—Written by David in the name of the Messiah, of whom he was a type.

Catechism.—Q. 96. *What is the Lord's Supper?* A. The Lord's Supper is a sacrament, wherein, by giving and receiving bread and wine, according to Christ's appointment, his death is showed forth; and the worthy receivers are, not after a corporal and carnal manner, but by faith, made partakers of his body and blood, with all his benefits, to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace.

Lesson Hymn.—Westminster S. S. Hymnal, No. 228: "Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus." Other hymns, 215, 218, 221, 225.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (10: 5-9) quotes a portion of this psalm as referring to Christ. Alexander says that the psalm is appropriate to the whole class of pious sufferers, of which Christ is the most illustrious representative. It is only in him, therefore, that some parts can be said to have received their highest and complete fulfilment. Although Messianic, the psalm grew out of David's own personal experience. It belongs to the period subsequent to his great sin and the troubles that followed. He has passed through the dark night of storm into the peaceful morning. He first remembers the pit and the darkness, and thanks God for mercy and deliverance. Next he states how he had been brought out of the gloom, by obedience to God's love and submission to his will. The closing part consists of earnest prayers for safe-keeping amid the evils around him, and a final expression of confidence in God and assured hope.

---

1 I waited patiently for the LORD: and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. [Ps. 27: 14; 37: 7.]

2 He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, *and* established my goings. [Ps. 69: 2, 14; 27: 5; 37: 23.]

3 And he hath put a new song in my mouth, *even* praise unto our God: many shall see *it*, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD. [Ps. 33: 3; 52: 6.]

4 Blessed *is* that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.

5 Many, O LORD my God, *are* thy wonderful works *which* thou hast done, and thy thoughts *which are* to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: *if* I would declare and speak *of them*, they are more than can be numbered.

6 Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. [1 Sam. 15: 22; Ps. 50: 8; Luke 24: 44.]

7 Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book *it is* written of me,

8 I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law *is* within my heart. [John 4: 34; Heb. 10: 5.]

9 I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest.

10 I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness

and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy loving-kindness and thy truth from the great congregation. [Acts 20: 20, 27.]

11 Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O LORD: let thy loving-kindness and thy truth continually preserve me. [Ps. 43: 3; 57: 3.]

12 For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me. [Ps. 38: 4; 73: 26.]

13 Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me: O LORD, make haste to help me. [Ps. 70: 1.]

14 Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it; let them be driven backward and put to shame that wish me evil. [Ps. 35: 4, 26.]

15 Let them be desolate for a reward of their shame that say unto me, Aha, Aha. [Ps. 73: 19.]

16 Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified. [Ps. 70: 4.]

17 But I *am* poor and needy; *yet* the LORD thinketh upon me: thou *art* my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God. [Ps. 70: 5; 1 Pet. 5: 7.]

1 *I waited patiently for the Lord.* The expression is intense. The thought is, that the answer to his prayer was long delayed or the relief for which he sought long in coming, but that he continued to wait, and to wait patiently, without doubt or fear. See Ps. 27: 14; 37: 7. *He inclined unto me.* The reference is to our bowing or bending low, so as to catch the words of the suppliant's request. Though there was long delay, yet in the end he turned to me with favor and answered my prayer. *Heard my cry.* Answered his earnest supplication.

2 *A horrible pit.* Margin, *A pit of noise.* The figure in the writer's mind is of a deep pit on a field of battle, into which a warrior falls amid the shouts of exulting foes. *The miry clay.* Such as was found in the bottom of pits. The feet would sink into the soft mud, and it was impossible to extricate one's self from the disagreeable condition. See Jer. 38: 6. *Upon a rock.* Drawing him up out of the pit where his feet sank into the clay, the Lord had set him on a rock where the footing was firm. See Ps. 27: 5. *Established my goings.* Enabled me to walk firmly, not sinking into the mire any more.

3 *A new song.* A song of joy and praise instead of the sad cries of his heart while in the pit. It was *new*, because it voiced a new experience. The expression is of frequent occurrence. See Ps. 33: 3; 98: 1; Isa. 43: 10; Rev. 5: 9; 14: 3. *God* put this new song into his mouth by working the deliverance, and then by restoring the joy. See Ps. 51: 12. *Many shall see it.* That is, the deliverance, which gave occasion for the new song. The effect on the world of a life divinely rescued from great suffering or from the power of sin and led into the paths of joyful experience and holy beauty, is very great. *Fear and . . . trust.* Seeing what God has done for one person, others are led first to respect and reverence the Lord, and then to trust in him themselves.

4 *Blessed is the man.* The expression is strong, implying that *many* blessings come upon the man who trusts in the Lord. See for illustration Jer. 17: 7, 8, with the contrast in vs. 5, 6. *Respecteth not.* Looks not to, does not depend upon. *The proud.* Those who haughtily reject God and practically set themselves up against him. *Turn aside to lies.* Apostates, those who have forsaken the faith. Men are described who disregard truth and deceive others by their false professions and promises. They are set here in opposition to God as a ground of confidence. If there is a historical allusion here it may fitly have been to Absalom and those who had gone with him into treason.

5 *Wonderful works.* Referring to the many great things the Lord had wrought for him in delivering him from foes and dangers, and restoring him to such joy and blessedness. See Job 5: 9; 9: 10. *Thy thoughts . . . to us-ward.* Toward us. God is represented as thinking about us, planning for us, making purposes and arrangements for our welfare. *They cannot be reckoned.* Margin, *None can order them unto thee.* The meaning is, that God's thoughts about his people are many, that they cannot be numbered. See Ps. 139: 17, 18. *If I would declare.* Try to recount them all.

6 The four kinds of offerings referred to in this verse embrace all the different sacrifices required in the Jewish system, and the meaning is, that none of these, nor all of them, were really efficacious in themselves. It was not such rites and observances that pleased God. What does please him we learn in the following verse. *Sacrifice and offering.* The first word refers to bloody offerings, in which a victim was offered in place of the offerer; the second refers to oblations, offerings without blood. God did not desire these, but, instead, *mine ears hast thou opened.* Some suppose the reference is to the ceremony appointed to take place when a slave refused to go out free, choosing to remain permanently. The boring of the ear was the seal of this engagement and covenant. See Ex. 21: 6; Deut. 15: 17. The meaning then would be that David had consecrated him-

self for ever to the service of God. Another interpretation is, that God had opened the ears of David, making them prompt and quick to hear his words and ready to obey. We must learn to *hear* what God says. The thought of the verse is, that outward observances are of no avail without obedience to God.

7 *Then said I.* Instead of trying to please God with sacrifices. *Lo, I come.* Presenting myself before the Lord as an obedient servant, ready for whatever he may command. The thought is, *self*-consecration rather than mere ceremonial offerings. *In the volume of the book.* In the roll containing God's revealed will. The reference is to the law of Moses, the Pentateuch. Presenting himself before God with the divine word, David declares his intention to keep the law and obey all its requirements. *Written of me. Concerning* me. Probably referring directly to the specific instructions contained in the "volume of the book" for the king. See Deut. 17: 14–20. The application of the words of this passage to Christ (Heb. 10: 5–9) is very striking. The "book" is full of words written of him. He came, not to present to God external offerings, but to do God's will.

8 *I delight.* It is no cross but a delight. The secret of this is given in the succeeding clause: *Thy law is within my heart.* This is a true description of a converted life. The new birth gives new desires, desires in accordance with God's law. See Jer. 31: 33.

9 *I have preached.* Declared, published. *In the great congregation.* The nation of Israel. *I have not refrained my lips.* I have not shunned to declare thy will. Compare Acts 20: 27.

10 *I have not hid thy righteousness.* See v. 8, in which he had said that the law of God was in his heart. Here he says that he had not kept it concealed there, but had declared it, made it known to others, for their edification and for God's honor and glory. *I have declared thy faithfulness.* Using his own experience of God's goodness to bring others to trust in him.

11 *Withhold not.* The same word translated *refrained* in v. 9. He had not refrained his lips in the utterance of divine truth, and he prays that God would not refrain or keep back his tender mercies. *Preserve me.* In all peril.

12 *Innumerable evils have compassed me about.* Surrounded me. The words indicate a period of great trial when evils gathered from all sides. This explains his reference in the previous verse to the divine protection. He had great need of such shelter. *Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me.* As expressive of David's own experience these words describe an overwhelming sense of sinfulness under the remembrance of his past sins. Those who regard the psalm as wholly Messianic apply the words to the Saviour as bearing the sins of his people. *Not able to look up.* To see. The sense of sin was like a cloud covering him. Ps. 38: 4. *More than the hairs.* Countless. *Faileth me.* He finds no strength or dependence in himself. Ps. 38: 10.

14–16 *Ashamed and confounded.* Let their plots against me fail. *That seek after my soul.* These words were written evidently in some period of persecution. *Soul* is used here in the sense of *life. Driven back.* When they made their assaults upon him. *Aha.* A word of scornful derision and triumph. *Those that seek thee.* Those that are faithful to God. He prays for all God's people.

17 *I am poor and needy.* Showing a deep sense of humility. *The Lord thinketh upon me.* Though he was so needy and so unworthy, the Lord gave thought and care to him.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

I waited patiently for the Lord. There are some kinds of waiting for the Lord that are not right. We are not to *sit down lazily* and wait for the Lord to provide for us and carry us along to success. We are to do our own whole duty first and then wait. Nor are we to wait for the Lord to *save* us in some wonderful way. we are not to wait for a revival, or for some overpowering experience to carry us into the kingdom of heaven. There is no need ever for a sinner to wait for the Saviour to come. "*Now* is the accepted time; *now* is the day of salvation." Christ is always ready to save. He is always *seeking* the sinner, always waiting to be gracious. It is not in these ways that we are to wait for God. "Having done all," we are "to stand" firm, in quiet confidence. There are things that God only can do, and he will do them only in his own time; we are to wait for him. There come times in every one's life when no exertion of our own can do anything, and when no human power can help. Then we should commit all to God and wait for him. And it is no blind or ignorant confidence that we may have at such times, if we are God's children, for our Father rules this world, cares for each one of us, and has a plan for each life. We can, therefore, safely trust him to bring aid or deliverance or light at the right time. Read Ps. 37: 3–6. We are to trust in the Lord and *do good;* we are to delight ourselves *in the Lord*, that is, find our joy in him and in his

service. *Then* we are to commit our way to him, roll it upon him, and leave it all in his hands, not meddling ourselves at all in the matter, but waiting for him. There are other occasions when patient waiting is our highest duty. When we are working for souls we must present the truth, and then commit the result to God, just as the farmer sows his seed and waits for the harvest. *Time* is necessary for some spiritual processes, and results cannot come immediately. Then in *prayer* we have sometimes to wait for the answer, even to wait long. In our most earnest supplications, therefore, we should never be impatient. If we only *wait* for the Lord he will bend down to hear our cries and answer us.

He brought me up also out of an horrible pit. There is a story of one crossing by night an English moor and falling into the shaft of an abandoned mine. He was not injured, as the pit was not deep, but the bottom was covered with mire and the sides were slimy so that he could not climb out. He could only wait and look up at the stars as the night slowly passed. At last morning broke, but he could hear no sound, and there was no way to get help. Noon came, but no deliverance. Long were the hours, but at length a shadow fell across the mouth of the now "horrible pit." His heart leaped with joy, but presently he saw it was only an animal, nipping the grass about the edge of the shaft. At last, however, he heard human voices, and rescue came. This illustrates many an experience. Sin's pits are "horrible" beyond conception, and no one can ever extricate himself. The "helps" that come are only shadows, and can do nothing. Only God can lift us out. He may delay to come to our rescue, but if we cry earnestly, with penitence and faith, he will surely come at last with mercy and deliverance.

He hath put a new song in my mouth. The statue of Memnon was supposed to become musical when the sun rose and the beams of morning light fell on it. When the light of the gospel falls upon a darkened heart it begins to sing. No wonder salvation gives joy. Only think of what we are saved *from*—the horrible pit of sin; and of what we are saved *to*—childship in God's family; and can we but rejoice, if we realize our deliverance and our blessedness? Every Christian should be a singer. If we cannot acquire the vocal art we should at least "sing and make melody in our hearts unto the Lord." Our song should be one that nothing can check. Paul sang in prison with his feet fast in the stocks and his back gashed with stripes. No trouble or pain should be able to hush the song in a Christian's heart. Then our *lives* should be songs. We cannot all be poets, to write glad hymns of praise, or singers, to thrill hearts by the sweetness of our voices, but we can live hymns and songs, and that is just as pleasing to God. Has God put the new song in your mouth? Are you singing it?

Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust. That is not what the world says. It calls the man blessed, or happy, who gets on in business, who prospers and grows rich, or gets to Congress or into the Presidential chair. It is along the paths to these places of distinction that the racers throng. There is no scramble for the honors of sainthood. Not many people envy the heroes of Christian faith. Yet as the angels see this world its highest seats are those filled by God's believing ones. Study the Beatitudes to learn who are really "blessed." Trace the word "blessed" through the Bible and see who come within its radiant circle. The man that *maketh the Lord his trust* is here said to be blessed. Why? He has been lifted out of the horrible pit. His feet are on a rock that cannot be shaken. He has a joy that nothing ever can break. His trust is one that no storm or flood, no Wall street panic, no bank failure, no defalcation, no fire, no political defeat, can ever disturb. Is it not worth something to have such a *secure* blessedness? No other trust is absolutely safe even in this life. Then what about the day of death, and the judgment that comes after, and the eternal years? It is not very hard to prove that none are really blessed save those whose trust is stayed on God. The question, however, is, Where is *your* trust? Are you building on the rock? Are you among the "blessed?"

Many . . . my God, are . . . thy thoughts . . . to us-ward. . . . I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me. Does God ever think of us—the great, glorious, eternal God, of us small, sinful, unworthy beings? We suppose that he thinks of our earth; that is large enough to be worthy of divine thought. He may give thought, too, to some distinguished man in this world, who rises above the masses as Mont Blanc towers above the common hills of earth. But here am I, a little child, living in a humble street in the heart of a great city, with its teeming population; surely he never thinks of me. Of course my mother does, because she is my mother, and she has only me; but God has millions more children in this world alone, and perhaps there are millions of other worlds with their millions. It cannot be that *he* ever gives any thought to *me*. But the Bible says he does. He calleth his sheep all by name. The very

hairs of our head are all numbered. The Lord knoweth them that are his. What one said we can all say, "Christ loved *me* and gave himself for *me*." God's love is as personal and distinct as any father's or mother's. Think of a parent's thoughts of his child, a father's thoughts, a mother's thoughts. So God loves, watches, thinks, plans, cares for each one of his children. Then his thoughts are all both loving and wise. "I know the thoughts that I think toward you, thoughts of peace and not of evil." It is one of the sweetest truths in all the Bible that God thinks of us, distinctly, separately, lovingly, wisely, with all a Father's fondness. There is not a moment when we are not in his thought. He has plans for each of our lives, taking in the smallest events as well as the greatest, and we need never be afraid of anything going wrong for us if we simply trust him and continue faithful in every duty. How safe and secure it should make us feel at all times to know that God is thinking of us, and planning for us and caring for us!

I delight to do thy will. That is consecration. All ambition should start and end there. Duty is simple obedience. The highest thing possible in this world for any life is what God marks out for it. The Koran tells of the sending of Gabriel to the earth to keep Solomon from sinning, and at the same time he is bidden to help a little toiling ant that cannot get home with its burden. And the mighty angel did both errands with equal alacrity and gladness. Nothing is small if it be God's will for us for the moment. Nothing is great, however brilliant in men's eyes, if it be not God's will. Here should be our life motto: "I delight to do thy will."

I have not refrained my lips . . . I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart. It is not enough to be good at heart, to love God and trust Christ in secret. We must speak out our heart's feelings. Secret discipleship is not enough. There is a great strife going on, and we must not only be on God's side, but must let it be known that we are. He is no patriot who in the hour of his country's peril hides his loyalty and remains silent. He is no friend who when one is maligned skulks away and lifts up no voice in his behalf. He is no true disciple of Christ who claims *heart*-discipleship but makes no open avowal. Besides, those who know God's truth are bound to speak it out, that others also may be saved and blessed by it. Shall we who have found Christ see our neighbors dying in their sins, and not tell them of the Saviour?

LESSON POINTS.

1. Those who wait for the Lord, in faithful obedience and earnest prayer, will be blessed. v. 1.

2. Sin is a horrible pit, out of which God alone can bring any soul. v. 2.

3. A saved soul should be a singing soul, a "song in the night." v. 3.

4. The only blessed man is he who has a trust that never can fail. v. 4.

5. Each one of us is perpetually in God's thoughts. vs. 5, 17.

6. God does not care for external service if the heart be not in it. v. 6.

7. A true life is one consecrated to the doing of God's will. v. 8.

8. Heart-religion must find ways of expression, in speech and life. vs. 9, 10.

9. The only safety of a soul in this world of evil is in God's merciful care. vs. 11, 12.

10. No one is too small or obscure to be cared for by the Lord. v. 17.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

There is a story of General Havelock which gives an example of one kind of waiting. Crossing London Bridge one morning with his son he suddenly thought of something he had forgotten, requiring him to return to a certain street. Leaving the boy on the bridge he told him to wait there for him. He was detained by business, and becoming absorbed forgot about his promise to the lad, and did not return to the bridge at all. When he came home late in the evening his wife asked him where Harry was. Then it flashed on him that he had forgotten his promise. "Why, Harry is on London Bridge," he said, and hastening to the spot he found him just where he had left him in the morning. The boy had *waited*, all the day, not once leaving the spot. His father had given him the command and the promise, and he simply obeyed. The incident illustrates one phase of waiting for God, and will make a good introduction.

The outline suggested in the Westminster series of helps may be followed.

I. *Mercy Remembered.* vs. 1–5. In what condition was David? What did he mean by "a horrible pit?" What kinds of troubles are like this? *Sin* is a horrible pit; then some great *trials* which bring discouragement and almost despair, are like deep pits. Show that not only is the condition described very terrible, but it is hopeless. No one can lift himself out, and no human arm can do it. What did the psalmist do? v. 1. Waiting implies *prayer;* he cried to God for rescue. It implies *faith;* he believed

that God would send rescue. It implies *patience;* he did not lose heart.

What did God do? 1. He delayed for a time to answer. 2. He bent his ear at length to hear. 3. He took the sufferer out of his sore distress. 4. He set him on a solid place. 5. He put a new song in his mouth. A question or two on each of these points will bring out their meaning. What is the effect on others of one saved life? v. 3. Who is the truly blessed man and why?

II. *Obedience Promised.* vs. 6–10. What different kinds of offerings are here spoken of? v. 6. Why do these not satisfy God? (See Notes.) Show that no amount of worship or of ceremony is pleasing to God, if the heart be not in it, and if the life be not obedient. Who is represented in Heb. 10: 5 as using these words? Yet the words contain great lessons for us though Christ used them as spoken of him. 1. There is the offering of self: "I come;" not "I bring offerings," or "I send gifts," but *I come.* 2. We find our duty written "in the volume of the book," in the holy Scriptures. 3. It is the doing of his will that God wants, and not mere sacrifices and observances. 4. It should be a delight for us to do God's will. 5. The way to be ready for obedience is, to have God's law written in our hearts; then we will love to obey. 6. When we know God's gospel we should not hide it away, but declare it to others to bless them. vs. 9, 10. We should do this for the glory of God, to spread the honor of his name. We should do it also for the sake of others, that they may be blessed as we have been.

III. *Confidence in Danger.* vs. 11–17. What are some of the evils amid which we all live? They are here said to be "innumerable." Each scholar can suggest one at least of these evils, such as sickness, sorrow, pain, poverty, all troubles, temptations, the devil and his angels. What other troubles does the writer name? "Mine iniquities." What does he say of these? There is no other such burden as the burden of sins. They hide God's face and weigh the soul down into despair. What cry does the writer utter? v. 13.

What does he say of himself in the last verse? What gave him joy? Although so small, yet the Lord thought of him. See v. 5 and the Illustrative Note on God's thoughts. It is very wonderful that the eternal God has time to think about each one of us on the earth. In Tennyson's poem of the child in the children's hospital, one little thing tried to tell another young sufferer about Jesus, urging her to ask him to help.

"If I," said the wise little Annie, "was you,
I should cry to the dear Lord Jesus to help me,
for, Emmie, you see,
It's all in the picture there: 'Little children
should come to me.'"

* * * * * * *

"Yes, and I will," said Emmie, "but then if I
call to the Lord,
How should he know that it's me? such a lot
of beds in the ward!"
Annie was puzzled, but a moment after she said,
"Emmie, you put out your arms; and you leave
'em outside on the bed—
The Lord has so *much* to see to; but, Emmie,
you tell it him plain,
It's the little girl with her arms lying out on the
counterpane."

Morning came and the little thing was dead, with her "dear, long, lean, little arms lying out on the counterpane."

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The Lesson Introduced by Object and Story.—Watch this bright red tape and see what I do with it. Fasten one end outside a door or window, and tie the other end to your chair. This is to help you remember a story that I have to tell. There was once a little girl who had been very sick. When she was getting better it was hard for her to stay alone. She used to say: "Mamma, what if I should need something very much? I couldn't get it, you know." Her mother was a dressmaker, and in the sewing-room were three girls who needed her to direct them. So she took a ball of red tape, like this, and tied one end of it to the little girl's arm chair and the other to her own wrist, and then she planned that whenever her little daughter needed any help she was to pull the tape so, and the mother's hand would feel it, and she would come at once to her help. When I studied our lesson for to-day I thought of this story. Let me make a red tape on the board. What does a red line stand for? I am supposing that you have before this taught your class the simple symbols which represent certain things, the red line standing for prayer. Now let us see how King David used this, and what he said about it. David tells his story. He says "I" and "HE" a number of times in this lesson, so we will print these two words on the board. Now, in the first verse he speaks about his "cry" to the Lord. What do we call that? Then this red line will stand for David's cry. Then he says he "waited patiently." We will print those two words, "cried" and "waited." When you call anybody and then wait and listen, do you act as though you believed he

would hear, or as though you thought it would do no good? Let us see what David's waiting did for him.

Open the large Bible and read, "He heard my cry." Print the word "heard." When the mother of whom I told you felt her hand drawn by the red tape, what do you think she did? David was in trouble. He says it was as bad as though he had fallen into a horrible pit, and was fast in miry clay! Now listen to what he says God did. Read: "He brought me up . . . and set my feet upon a rock." So God not only heard, but helped. (Print that word.) What do you think David did after that? What do you think you would do if you were in trouble and somebody had helped you? Encourage talk about this, and if possible call out from class the thought that they would tell about it to others, which is just what David did. Print the words so that the sentence will read: "I told others," reading bits from vs. 9 and 10 to show class how he did it.

What then? Was David able to take care of himself after this without any more help? Not at all. See what he says of himself: "I am poor and needy." Every day, every hour, he felt that he must have help or he would get into trouble. Do you suppose he was afraid? Let me tell you, he knew one thing that made him feel safe. I will print the words here, after this word which stands for God. (Print "Thinketh upon me.")

Whenever he pulled the red tape he knew God thought about him and heard his cry. This was what he said: "O Lord make haste to help me." See what a good prayer that is for us, so short that the youngest can remember it, and long enough to get all the help we need.

Now I am going to take off this covering and show you what David thought after he had been helped a great many times. Have the first clause of v. 4 printed in ornamental letters and covered until you reach this point.

Blackboard Outline—

I cried and waited.
I told others.
I am poor and needy.

HE heard and helped.
HE thinketh upon me.

BLESSED IS THE MAN
THAT MAKETH
THE LORD HIS TRUST.

Closing Thought.—Look here. (Untie the tape from your chair, and let it trail on the floor.) What have I done? That was what my little girl did after a while. Can she call her mother now? Whose fault is it? The mother still has the tape tied to her wrist.

Do you know I think that is a good picture of the boys and girls who forget to pray. God never unties his end, but sometimes the boys and girls let go, and then they wonder that they get into trouble.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BLACKBOARD.

The psalm is rich in suggestive outlines for the blackboard. A number are here given that may help in suggesting others.

PATIENT WAITING and its results
- He inclines and hears
- He delivers
- He establishes
- He gives a new song.

The JOY of CHRIST'S COMING "TO DO THY WILL."

The Father's Will—The Son's Work. John 4: 34.

"The Will of God is seen in the
- *Fact of Salvation,*
- *Plan of Salvation,*
- *Provision of Salvation,*
- *Accomplishment of Salvation."*

It was a joy for him to do that will.

It should be a joy for us to receive and rest in his work.

PERSONAL
- THANKSGIVING,
- DEDICATION,
- DELIVERANCE.

WAITING
- FOR RESCUE,
- IN OBEDIENCE,
- FOR HELP.

On v. 2 George Rogers gives the following:

The Depth
The Height
The Breadth
The Strength
OF GOOD'S GOODNESS.

1. The *Depth* of God's goodness to his people. It finds them often in a horrible pit and miry clay. There is a certain spider which forms a pit in sand, and lies concealed at the bottom, in order to seize upon other insects that fall into it. Thus David's enemies tried to bring him into a pit. 2. The *Height* of God's goodness. He brought me out, and set my feet upon a rock. That rock is Christ. 3. The *Breadth* of his goodness established my *goings*, restored me to my former place in his love, showing me still to have been his during my low estate. 4. The *Strength* of his goodness *established* my goings, making me stand firm.

PRAYER,
PROFESSION,
PROTECTION.

"They shall not be ashamed that wait for ME."

Lesson XII. **A SONG OF PRAISE.** Sept. 21st, 1884.

Ps. 103: 1-22. Memorize vs. 1-5.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."—Ps. 103: 2.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Ps. 103: 1-22.....*A Song of Praise.*
T. Ps. 104: 1-35.....*Perpetual Praise.*
W. Ps. 145: 1-21.....*Greatly to be Praised.*
Th. Luke 1: 46-55....*Mary's Song.*
F. Luke 1: 67-79....*Zachariah's Song.*
S. Rev. 5: 1-14.....*The New Song.*
S. Rev. 7: 9-17.....*The Song of Saints and Angels.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. Remembering God's Benefits. 2. Recounting God's Goodness. 3. Calling to Praise.

Time and **Place**, uncertain. Written by David on his recovery from dangerous sickness.

Catechism.—Q. 97. *What is required to the worthy receiving of the Lord's Supper?* A. It is required of them that would worthily partake of the Lord's Supper, that they examine themselves, of their knowledge to discern the Lord's body, of their faith to feed upon him, of their repentance, love, and new obedience; lest, coming unworthily, they eat and drink judgment to themselves.

Lesson Hymn.—Westminster S. S. Hymnal, No. 37: "Come, thou almighty King." Other hymns, 37, 13, 15, 22, 36.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—Next to the twenty-third there is probably no other psalm that is read so often or is dear to so many Christian hearts, as the one hundred and third. Mr. Spurgeon says: "This one hundred and third psalm has ever seemed to be the Monte Rosa of the divine chain of mountains of praise, glowing with a ruddier light than any of the rest. It is as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, and its golden fruit has a flavor such as no fruit ever bears unless it has been ripened in the full sunshine of mercy." The psalm commemorates God's many mercies, and specially exults in his forgiveness and his patience with his people's weakness and failure.

---

1 Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, *bless* his holy name. [Ps. 146: 1.]

2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:

3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; [Isa. 33: 24; Luke 7: 47.]

4 Who redeemeth thy life from destruction: who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies:

5 Who satisfieth thy mouth with good *things: so that* thy youth is renewed like the eagle's. [Isa. 40: 31.]

6 The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed. [Ps. 146: 7.]

7 He made known his ways unto Mo'ses, his acts unto the children of Is'ra-el. [Ps. 147: 19.]

8 The LORD *is* merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy. [Ex. 34: 6, 7; Deut. 5: 10.]

9 He will not always chide; neither will he keep *his anger* for ever. [Isa. 57: 16.]

10 He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. [Ezra 9: 13.]

11 For as the heaven is high above the earth, *so* great is his mercy toward them that fear him. [Eph. 3: 18.]

12 As far as the east is from the west, *so* far hath he removed our transgressions from us. [Isa. 43: 25.]

13 Like as a father pitieth *his* children, *so* the LORD pitieth them that fear him. [Mal. 3: 17.]

14 For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we *are* dust. [Gen. 3: 19; Eccles. 12: 7.]

15 *As for* man, his days *are* as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. [Ps. 90: 5, 6; 1 Pet. 1: 24.]

16 For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more. [Job 7: 10.]

17 But the mercy of the LORD *is* from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; [Ex. 20: 6.]

18 To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them. [Deut. 7: 9.]

19 The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all. [Ps. 11: 4; Dan. 4: 25, 34, 35.]

20 Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word. [Ps. 148: 2; Matt. 6: 10.]

21 Bless ye the LORD, all *ye* his hosts; *ye* ministers of his that do his pleasure. [Gen. 32: 2; Heb. 1: 14.]

22 Bless the LORD, all his works in all places of his dominion: bless the LORD, O my soul. [Ps. 145: 10.]

1 *Bless the Lord.* When used with reference to God the word "bless" means to praise, implying affection and worship. The psalm opens with a call upon his own spirit to praise the Lord. *All that is within me.* All the faculties, powers, emotions and capabilities of his being, his mind, his heart. He thinks of the various elements of his being as a choir of singers, and

he would gather them all together for an anthem of praise to God.

2 *Forget not all his benefits.* We are all in danger of forgetting God's goodness. The very multiplicity of his favors and their unbroken flow make us forgetful of the author of all.

3 Here follows an enumeration of the principal blessings for which he was moved at this time to give thanks. *Who forgiveth all thine iniquities.* Forgiveness is the first great need of our souls, and is put here first among the benefits bestowed by the Lord. Notice the *all;* when God forgives there is not one sin left unforgiven. See 1 John 1 : 7. The word *thine* is also important. David is addressing his own soul, and he does not forget that his sins are his own, and that the divine forgiveness is individual. *Who healeth all thy diseases.* It is probable that David had recently been restored from sickness, and was now experiencing a deep sense of gratitude to God as the healer. He may also have had in mind the diseases of the soul, the effects of sin, which by God's grace are healed in every saved one. Notice again the word *all.*

4 *Who redeemeth thy life from destruction.* The reference here is not to the redemption of the soul, but to the rescue of the life from great peril, implying, however, much risk or cost, as when one leaps into the water to save a drowning man. David was delivered from many sore dangers in his life. *Crowneth thee.* A crown suggests honor and dignity. God not only forgives, but makes the forgiven one his own child, a joint heir with Christ, to sit with him on his throne. Rev. 3 : 21. *With loving kindness and tender mercies.* The crown is not one of merit, but one of grace; is not won, but given as an act of mercy.

5 *Satisfieth thy mouth.* Some render this, "Satisfieth thy *soul.*" God only can give satisfaction to a soul. Others render, "Satisfies thine *age,* so that thy youth is renewed." If the psalm was written in David's old age this interpretation has a special significance. The grace of God in the heart gives such satisfaction amid the infirmities of old age that youth is in effect renewed. *Like the eagle's.* The eagle is frequently referred to as an emblem of strength. See Deut. 28 : 49; Isa. 40 : 31; Hos. 8 : 1. Possibly the allusion is to the fresh appearance of the eagle after moulting its plumage.

6 David passes now from his own blessings to those bestowed on God's people in general. *Righteousness and judgment.* The thought is, not merely that God rules in righteousness and judgment, but that those whom men oppress and wrong receive redress at God's hands. He rights their wrongs. They may safely leave all their interests in his hands.

7 *He made known.* He revealed his commandments and laws to Moses, and talked with him face to face. See Ex. 33 : 9–23. *Ways . . . acts.* The first implies a more intimate manifestation than the second. Moses saw the very *ways* of God, and heard his words; the nation saw God in the things he did, his *acts* of power, of justice, of mercy.

8 Here begins a wonderful description of God's character. See Ex. 34 : 6. *Merciful and gracious.* If he were not there would be no hope for any one, for all are sinners. *Slow to anger, plenteous in mercy.* He lingers long before he punishes, giving time for repentance, but he is quick, at the first cry of penitence, to show mercy.

9 *Not always chide.* Judge, rebuke, condemn. That is, when we sin it will displease him and he will punish, but he will not continue to feel and show displeasure. He forgives freely and does not remember our sins any more. See Jer. 31 : 34.

10 *Hath not dealt.* He has not punished us as our sins deserve.

11, 12 *As the heaven is high.* The expression denotes that which cannot be measured. *As far as the east is from the west.* The thought is, that he puts away our sins so far that they can never be found again. The distance from east to west is infinite.

13 *Like as a father pitieth.* One of the most wonderful glimpses even in the Bible into the heart of God. See Christ's picture in Luke 15 : 20–24.

14 *He knoweth our frame.* Our nature, especially referring to our weakness, the frailty of our moral state. *He remembereth that we are dust.* Gen. 2 : 7; 3 : 9. The thought is, that God tempers his dealings to our feebleness and weakness. Because of our infirmities he is patient with us, and also gives us greater help. See Isa. 57 : 16.

15, 16 *As for man.* Having referred to human frailty he dwells upon it. *His days are as grass.* An emblem of decay. See Ps. 90 : 5; Isa. 40 : 6; 1 Pet. 1 : 24. *As a flower.* Another emblem of transitoriness and perishableness, beautiful for a day, and then fading. *The wind passeth over it.* The hot winds from the east burnt up the flowers in a few moments, leaving only a bare waste. See Jer. 4 : 11, 12. *It is gone.* Margin, It is *not. The place thereof shall know it no more.* So complete is the destruction of the flowers by the burning winds that no trace even

is left, nothing to show that they had ever bloomed there.

17, 18 *But.* In contrast with man's transitoriness and brief, frail existence. *From everlasting to everlasting.* God's mercy is not like the grass or the flowers, but endures for ever. The expression is very strong, from eternity to eternity. *Upon them that fear him.* Three times, vs. 11, 13, 17, this limitation of divine blessing is repeated. The word "fear," as thus employed, embraces all the elements of true piety and devotion to God—honor, obedience, trust, love, worship. The character of those to whom the mercy and righteousness of God are thus assured is further described in v. 18. They are *such as keep his covenant*, who are faithful to God, obedient and true, and *remember his commandments*, not merely keeping in mind these commandments, as a matter of memory, but remembering *to do them.*

19 *Prepared his throne.* Fixed, settled his throne. The idea is, that his government is permanent and secure, his throne is immutable. There is no danger of catastrophe or disaster. This is the ground of our confidence in God. The thought of his throne fixed *in the heavens* indicates the glory, the spirituality, the exaltation, the splendor, of his government. *Ruleth over all.* Over the whole universe, indicating the vast extent of his kingdom.

20 *Bless the Lord.* See vs. 1, 2. Here the call to praise is to mighty angels. Qualities of the angels are here named. They are strong; they do God's commandments; they listen to catch the slightest expression of God's will or desire.

21 *All ye his hosts.* The great multitude of the angels. Luke 2: 13. *Ye ministers of his.* The angelic hosts wait continually upon God, and do whatever it is *his pleasure* to have them do.

22. *All his works.* He calls upon all the universe—all things God has made in every part of his vast kingdom, to praise. *O my soul.* He closes as he began, by calling his own spirit to join in the great chorus of praise.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

Bless the Lord . . . all that is within me, bless his holy name. Every part of our being should join in praising God. The song of praise we sing should not be a solo, or a duet, or even a quartet, but a full chorus, the feelings, the affections, the mental powers, the tastes, the desires, all mingling in harmony of praise. There are some who praise with their voices, but not with their hearts. Others give intellectual worship while their affections are not engaged. Others give emotional praise, but their wills and consciences do not join in the song; they have good feelings, but lack in practical obedience and in devotion to duty. Some sing missionary hymns with zest, but *give* nothing to missionary work, or consecration hymns, and then live for themselves. The true way is, to arouse every faculty and energy and power and affection to hearty, enthusiastic, practical praise.

Forget not all his benefits. Many people have excellent memories for all trials, adversities, losses and sorrows, but cannot remember the blessings of their lives. It is very unfortunate to have such defective memories. Suppose God should forget us for a time, and fail to provide for our daily wants, and fail to send us his ordinary gifts; how sore a misfortune it would be! Yet we forget continually that our blessings come from him. We take them as a matter of course, and never think of the Giver. Perhaps if there were some breaks in the flow of blessings we would learn to be more thankful. The very unbroken continuity of gifts makes us oblivious to their source. Some one kept a book for a daily record of blessings. It would be a good thing for all of us to do. Surely this matter is important. We think others very ungrateful who forget our little kindnesses to them. Must we not judge ourselves by the same judgment in relation to God's goodness?

Who forgiveth . . . healeth . . . redeemeth . . . crowneth . . . satisfieth. What an enumeration of divine blessings, and what blessings they are, too! They are all blessings which the world cannot give. Any one of them is worth more than all earth's treasures combined. If we are not *forgiven* we must rest for ever under the curse of sin, a weight greater than all the Alps; but God forgives, and forgives *all* our sins, and forgives fully and for ever. If we are not *healed* we must be sick for ever, sick with the plague and leprosy of sin; but God heals, and heals *all* our diseases, heals completely. If we are not *saved* from the destructive dangers of this world, we never can reach heaven; but God keeps, rescues, redeems our life. Earth's *crowns* are made of thorns, and at the best are only what the children call "play-crowns," for they are only of leaves that wither, or of gold and gems that the fire will destroy; but God crowns his people with crowns of loving kindness and tender mercies, which are real and

radiant, which shall never fade, but shall shine for ever, becoming crowns of eternal life and glory in heaven. This world cannot satisfy a heart's cravings. Its possessions only make the hunger more intense; but God *satisfies* the souls of his people, meets all their cravings and hungers. These are some of the things for which we have to praise God.

The Lord is . . . slow to anger and plenteous in mercy. The prodigal's father waited years in love—how slow to anger! and then *ran* to meet his returning son—how quick in mercy! The Koran says two angels attend every man on the earth, one on each side of him. At nightfall when he sleeps they fly up to heaven with reports of his words and actions for the day. Every good thing is recorded at once and repeated ten times, that no item may be omitted. But when they come to his sinful things the angel on the right says, "Forbear for seven hours to write this down. Peradventure he may awaken in the night and be sorry and repent and pray and obtain forgiveness." The angel is slow to record the man's sins. Is this not a true picture of God's treatment of us? He is *slow* to anger, but *quick* to show mercy.

He will not always chide; neither will he keep his anger for ever. . . . As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. These are wonderful pictures of the way God forgives. The best *human* forgiveness is very imperfect. Men forgive, but they often "chide" and "keep anger." They say they "forgive but cannot forget;" they keep the memory of the wrong always in their hearts, never forgetting, even while showing us favors, that once we injured them. The old memories of wrongs block up the channel of love as old wrecks block up a river. But God does not chide nor keep anger. His heart is like the smooth lake which the driving keel cleaves, but which soon becomes calm and placid again, retaining no mark or trace of the rude furrowing. He puts away our sins as far as the east is from the west, that is, infinitely. This was taught in the ancient ceremony of the "scape goat." One goat was killed and its blood sprinkled before God; that meant the atonement of Christ by which our forgiveness is procured. The other goat then, after the priest had confessed over its head the people's sins, was led away out of sight, into the wilderness, and let loose, never to return again; thus bearing away the sins of the nation to an infinite distance, so that they could never come back again to disturb those who had been forgiven. Thus it is that God forgives. See a wonderful passage in Jeremiah: "In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found; for I will pardon them whom I reserve."

Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. This is one of the most wonderful verses in the Bible. It brings God very near to us. It shows us his heart. He is not cold and far removed from us in feeling, indifferent to our sufferings, stern and severe in his judgments upon us. Rather, he is pitiful, like a human father in his pitifulness toward his children. The best commentary on these words is Christ's own life. See him moved with compassion for the sick, the lepers, the sorrowing, the sinful, the fallen; weeping by a grave at Bethany, deeply touched at Nain as he saw the widowed mother following her only son to the grave; weeping again over Jerusalem because the people would not repent and receive him. All this is commentary on this precious verse.

He knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust. He does not treat us as if we were strong and holy and unfallen. He does not forget that we are weak, that it is hard for us, in our fallen condition, to live right, that we are easily tempted and overcome. Therefore, he is very patient and gentle with us when we have sinned, binding up the wounds, restoring the soul. We ought to get a great deal of comfort out of these words. You say you are so weak that you cannot resist temptation. Yes, and does not God know it? You are weary and worn out through trouble or burden-bearing, but God knows all about it. You find your work very hard, and cannot see how you are ever to get through with it; but God knows. He knows your frailty; he remembers that you are only dust. He is pitiful and compassionate, and gives always needed help.

As for man . . . as a flower . . . so he flourisheth. . . . But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting. A dear young friend has just brought to my table a cluster of beautiful flowers. They charm my eye, and their fragrance fills my room. But to-morrow they will be withered and dead, and I shall be compelled to put them out of my sight. So it is with human lives. They may be very lovely and sweet, but soon they are gone, and there is only a memory left behind. As we think of this we grow sad, and ask, "What is there that is abiding?" Above our heads is the blue sky, and when night comes the brilliant stars look down and say, "*We* do not fade. *We* have shone upon all the passing generations of men,

and still are bright as ever." There is comfort in that—there is something at least that does not pass away in a day. But here is something better still, the mercy of God is from everlasting to everlasting. Here is a bosom, then, on which we may lean and know that our repose shall never be disturbed. Would you be safe eternally? Rest your hopes on God's everlasting mercy, and not on any frail thing of earth. Two little birds went out one bright spring morning to build their nests. One chose a tree on a river's bank, and fixed her nest amid its leafy branches. The river murmured sweetly below, and the breezes sang through the green branches. But the treacherous stream was secretly undermining the tree's roots, and one morning tree and nest and nestlings were all gone. The other bird chose a mountain-crag, and built her nest in a cleft of the rock. The river murmured far below and the winds sang mournfully, but the nest was safe. Where are *you* building your soul's nest? Amid the flowers, in the branches of earth's trees, close beside the rivers of pleasure? Or in the cleft of the Rock of Ages, in God's everlasting mercy?

To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them. All God's promises and blessings have conditions. We have something to do to get them. Here the condition is obedience. There is a covenant, and it has two sides. There is not the slightest doubt about God's faithfulness. He will do his part. But we have a part to do, too. God's mercy is everlasting, but only those will receive it who keep his covenant and remember his commandments to do them. This is very simple. It is idle for any one to expect to receive God's mercy who is disregarding God's commandments. Those only are inside the circle of the covenant who are keeping its conditions. Church membership does not secure to any one the blessings of grace, nor does the fact that one has had Christian parents and has been given to God in baptism. The Scriptures are very clear on this point. It is to those who . . . *do* his commandments that the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting. It is important to *remember* the commandments, but this is not enough. A great many people remember them and can repeat them verbatim who do not obey them. The stress of emphasis is on the word "*do*." So if we want to claim and secure the blessings here promised we must be sure that we do our part and fulfill the conditions of God's covenant of grace. If this psalm is a palace of love, here in this verse is the gate beautiful by which all must enter in who would enjoy its rich gladness and blessedness.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Praise is a duty, a duty much neglected; we should arouse our whole being to praise God. v. 1.

2. Whatever else we forget we never should forget God's benefits and mercies. v. 2.

3. The blessings of these three verses (3–5) are worth more than all earth's mines and thrones.

4. The Lord looks after the interests of his people, that their wrongs are redressed by mercies. v. 6.

5. The Lord is quick to show mercy, but slow to punish. v. 8.

6. The Lord's forgiveness is full, complete, free and for ever. vs. 9–12.

7. The Lord is pitiful and compassionate. v. 13.

8. The Lord knows our infirmities and when we are weak or crushed, and is patient and gentle. v. 14.

9. As a little flower on the great mountain-crag so is a human life on the bosom of God's mercy. vs. 15–17.

10. We should make sure that we come within the circle described in v. 18.

11. Praise is the great business of creation, and every voice should help in the song. vs. 20–22.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

It is supposed David wrote this psalm when he was an old man. He looked back over his life, and remembering God's great goodness to him, shown in many ways, he was moved to sing this song of praise. Call from class some of the blessings he had received during his life, which he would probably remember in his old age. God had honored him in choosing him, when only a shepherd lad, to be king. He had given him the victory over Goliath. He had delivered him from the hand of Saul. He had made him king at last. He had helped him to subdue his enemies and build a strong kingdom. He had delivered him from Absalom's revolt. He had given him great power and honor. But among all the blessings he had received, that which shone brightest in his review was the forgiveness of his sins. A little talk about the blessings of David's life will prepare the way for the study of this psalm of thanksgiving and praise.

I. *Remembering God's Benefits.* vs. 1–7.

1. Praise should be *full and hearty.* v. 1. A great many people put a sentence of thanks-

giving into their prayers, but mean nothing by it. There is no earnest glow of praise in their hearts. We should give *real* praise, warm, loving, glad.

2. We should not allow ourselves to *forget* God's benefits. A word about bad memories. How do we feel when those we have helped forget our favors? In an institution for saving beggar children, the child's picture is taken when he enters, in his rags and filth He remains for a number of years, and is trained, then when sent out this picture is given him to keep, that he may never forget what he was, nor fail to be grateful to those who have done so much for him. We should remember our past to keep the gratitude ever warm in our hearts. We should remember our sins that we may always keep in mind the great forgiveness and mercy of God. We should remember the benefits we have received and the many kindnesses of God.

3. Praise should be *definite*. vs. 3–5. What a chain of blessings, each link of gold. Every one who is saved has received these same blessings, and may address these words to his own soul. A word about each—forgiveness, healing, keeping, crowning, satisfying. Notice that every list of blessings starts with *forgiveness*. Until we get that, no other blessing can come, after we have that, *all* other blessings follow. What kind of *healing* is here meant? What is meant here by *redeemeth?* What kind of a *crown* does God put on his people's heads? How does he *satisfy* them?

II. *Recounting God's Goodness*. vs. 8–19.

1. His mercy and grace. v. 8. See Illustrative Note.

2. The fulness of his forgiveness. vs. 9–12. Mark how David's mind loves to linger upon God's forgiveness. Bring out the points in the nature of this forgiveness: (*a*) He does not chide, but when he once forgives the matter is entirely obliterated and does not affect his after treatment of us. (*b*) His forgiveness surpasses ours as the heavens are higher than the earth. (*c*) He puts away our sins utterly and for ever, as far as the east is from the west.

3. The pity of the Lord. v. 13. See Note.

4. His remembrance of our weakness and infirmity, and his gentleness toward us in consequence. vs. 14–16.

5. The enduring character of his mercy. v. 17. Bring out the thought of God's unchangeableness, his eternity of being, and show the everlasting security of those who make their soul's resting-place in him. Read into the thought of mercy here that which always belongs to it, the idea of atonement or propitiation.

> "Rock of ages, *cleft* for me,
> Let me hide myself in thee."

6. His wise sovereign rule. v. 19.

7. Notice those who receive these benefits. vs. 17, 18. Those that "fear him;" that "keep his covenant;" that "remember his commandments to do them."

III. *Calling to Praise*. vs. 20–22.

1. The angels are called to praise God. v. 20. Who are the angels? What is their character? Their occupation? How do they praise God?

2. *All* the heavenly hosts and all powers are called to unite in this anthem of praise. v. 21.

3. All creation is called to praise him. v. 22.

4. Our own souls should praise him. v. 22. How can we best praise him? See Note on v. 1. Not merely by singing hymns, but by living so as to please, to honor, to glorify him.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Print on the blackboard in large letters the words—

"ALL HIS BENEFITS."

Have prepared some little gilt stars with mucilage on the back, and after calling from your children the fact that King David wrote this song of praise, interest them in seeing how many "benefits" they can recall. If they know the little song—

> "A wonderful house have I,
> That God has made for me,"

to sing it at this point will help them to think of the wonderful mechanism of the human frame, and how graciously God has adapted it to our needs.

A little child could not get to sleep one night, but cried bitterly. She finally told her mother that she had been very naughty that day, and was afraid of God. Her mother told her about this third verse of David's song: "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities." Suppose God grew tired of hearing us ask forgiveness, and said he could not listen any more! Suppose he would only listen to us once a month, or perhaps once a year! What a mercy it is that he is always ready!

Ask class if you shall mark that loving-kindness of God with a star. Place a gilt star in the centre of your board. Sing—

> "Little gentle breath
> Coming and going away."

Talk about the many dangers to these bodies

of ours—the many kinds of sickness, the numerous accidents, etc. If there has been any marked providence in your midst of late, use it as an illustration. Who has watched over these wonderful little "houses" day and night, and kept them from getting out of order? David said "Bless the Lord, who redeemeth thy life from destruction." Surely we need a star to mark his goodness in this. What if he had forgotten the little beating heart for a moment!

You see the possibilities of the lesson. The danger will be in attempting too much. Yet I think, at the risk of crowding the minds a little, I would allow each child to state briefly one thing for which she ought to thank God that day, and put up a star for it; at least until you have stars enough to impress the class with the idea of numbers. Then, suppose that to be the story of one hour, an hour for each child. How many hours has the youngest in the class lived? Make a rapid calculation. Suppose you were to try to put a star for each of all these hours! If you do your work well the class will be prepared to take a thought from David's climax: "As the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy ——."

Perhaps the most important thought in connection with his mercy is the forgiveness of sin. Even little ones realize that God has much to forgive in them. How long will his mercy last? To impress the answer make a large circle, and print on it the words—

"FROM EVERLASTING TO ——."

Let class conjecture what David said, *i. e.*, what was the word following the "TO;" then tell them that it is the same word "EVERLASTING." So that the circle reads always "round and round."

But is this mercy for everybody? Teachers will need to be careful here. The mercies of God are undoubtedly bestowed on all classes of people. Not a wicked man but could, if he would, set up many stars as signs of God's kindness, for "he maketh his sun to shine on the evil and on the good." But there is a peculiar mercy of forgiveness and loving-kindness and watch-care which God gives only to chosen ones. Who are they? David distinctly tells us. Make a blue arch, and print on it the important words, "To those that remember his commandments to do them." Only such are within the circle of everlasting mercy, so that no storm of trouble can ever reach them.

Shall we children be among those who "forget his benefits," or shall we be within the circle, showing our remembrance by loving obedience?

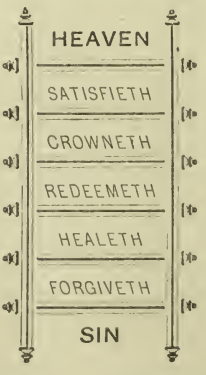
SUGGESTIONS FOR BLACKBOARD.

Take the five things which the Lord has done for the believer in the order in which the Holy Spirit has placed them, and note the remarkable fitness of the order. 1. He is the Forgiver. 2. The Healer. 3. The Redeemer. 4. The Crowner. 5. The Satisfier. Impress these with other Bible passages in the order. 1. Isa. 38: 17; Jer. 50. 20; Micah 7: 19; 1 Peter 2: 24. 2. Isa. 32: 24; Acts 10: 38; Matt. 8: 16. 3. Isa. 63: 16; Ps. 34: 22. 4. Ps. 5: 12; 2 Tim. 4: 8; 1 Pet. 5: 4. 5. Isa. 55: 2; Ps. 17: 15; 63: 5; Isa. 58: 11; Ps. 22: 26.

What God Does. HE FORGIVES HEALS REDEEMS CROWNS SATISFIES HIS PEOPLE.

In the "Lesson Hand-Book," Mrs. Crafts finds in vs. 3–5 David's ladder from sin to heaven.

Prepare the ladder first without the words. Start with sin, showing its terrible nature and results, as illustrated in David. Describe his penitence, and then write *Forgiveth*. From other parts of the psalm show how God forgives. But God does not stop with forgiveness. Sin makes wounds and diseases, and God *heals* these. (Write the word.) We are in the power of Satan, his captives, but God *redeems* his people. Those whom he redeems he makes his heirs, *crowning* them with loving-kindness, even here, and in heaven will crown them with glory. Show how noble is the honor of a Christian, far surpassing the honor of the child of any king of earth. This world never satisfies any soul, but God *satisfies* the soul he saves, in a measure here, and perfectly in the bliss of the life to come. Thus the ladder reaches up from *sin* to *heaven*. Speak of Christ, as himself the ladder.



Lesson XIII. **THIRD QUARTERLY REVIEW.** Sept. 28th, 1884.

[*From Westminster Quarterly.*]

HOME STUDIES.

M. Lesson I.
T. Lessons II., III.
W. Lessons IV., V.
Th. Lessons VI., VII.
F. Lessons VIII.
S. Lessons IX., X.
S. Lesson XI., XII.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul."—Ps. 66: 16.

REVIEW CHART.—Third Quarter.

Lesson Passages.	*Title.*	*Golden Text.*	*Lesson Plan.*
1.—2 Sam. 5: 1-12.	David King over all Israel.	I have found David my servant—Ps. 89: 20.	1. Anointed by the people. 2. Reigning and conquering. 3. Established and honored.
2.—6: 1-12.	The Ark in the House.	He blesseth the habitation —Prov. 3: 33.	1. Rejoicing around the ark. 2. Death beside the ark. 3. A home blessed by the ark.
3.—7: 1-16.	God's Covenant with David.	Thy throne shall be— 2 Sam. 7: 16.	1. The temple proposed. 2. The service declined. 3. A covenant made.
4.—9: 1-13.	Kindness to Jonathan's Son.	Thine own friend, and thy —Prov. 27: 10.	1. Jonathan's friendship remembered. 2. His son honored for his sake.
5.—Ps. 51: 1-19.	David's Repentance.	My sin is ever before me. —Ps. 51: 3.	1. A cry for forgiveness. 2. A prayer for inward cleansing. 3. A new consecration.
6.—2 Sam. 15: 1-14.	Absalom's Rebellion.	Honor thy father and thy mother—Ex. 20: 12.	1. The people's hearts stolen. 2. The conspiracy ripe. 3. The king's flight.
7.—18: 24-33.	Absalom's Death.	Whoso curseth father or mother—Mark 7: 10.	1. Waiting for tidings. 2. The tidings brought. 3. The father's lament.
8.—24: 15-25.	The Plague Stayed.	So the Lord was entreated 2 Sam. 24: 25.	1. Wrath against sin. 2. Repentance and atonement. 3. Mercy and deliverance.
9.—Ps. 19: 1-14.	God's Works and Word.	Thou hast magnified thy word—Ps. 138: 2.	1. The works of God. 2. The word of God.
10.—27: 1-14.	Confidence in God.	The Lord is my light and my—Ps. 27: 1.	1. Light and salvation 2. Refuge and strength. 3. Safety amid enemies.
11.—40: 1-17.	Waiting for the Lord.	I delight to do thy will,— Ps. 40: 8.	1. Mercy remembered. 2. Obedience promised. 3. Confidence in danger.
12.—103: 1-22.	A Song of Praise.	Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not—Ps. 103: 2.	1. Remembering God's benefits. 2. Recounting God's goodness. 3. Calling to praise.
13.—	Review.	Come and hear, all ye— Ps. 66: 16.	

REVIEW OUTLINE.

Last year we closed our Old Testament studies with the defeat of the Israelites by the Philistines and the death of Saul and his sons. As soon as David heard of this he went by divine direction to Hebron. There the men of Judah anointed him king. Abner, the chief captain of Israel, proclaimed Ishbosheth, the eldest surviving son of Saul, as king, nominally over all Israel. He succeeded in gaining control over the ten tribes. After seven and a half years he was slain by two of the captains of his body-guard. Then David was anointed king over all Israel. He soon after took Jerusalem and made it his capital. The Philistines made two attempts to overthrow the new king, but were defeated. David then brought the ark of the covenant from Kirjath-jearim to Jerusalem, and made arrangements for the public worship of Jehovah. Fully established in the kingdom, he next proposed to build a temple for the Lord, to take the place of the tabernacle which he had made for the ark. The Lord did not permit him to carry out his purpose, but made a covenant with him, in which he promised to establish his family in the kingdom and to give to his son who should succeed him the honor of building the temple. Mindful of his covenant with Jonathan, David sought out Mephibosheth, the lame son of his friend, took him into his family, and showed him great kindness for his father's sake. By a series of successful wars he extended his kingdom until it covered the territory promised in the covenant with Abraham. In the midst of these conquests he was guilty of the sins which occasioned the penitential psalm which was the subject of our fifth lesson. Then followed a series of domestic sorrows and calamities, the bitter fruit of his sin. Absalom, his favorite son, conspired against him, and he was driven from Jerusalem. The conspiracy was defeated, but to David the victory was saddened by the death of Absalom. A few years later David incurred the anger of the Lord by his sin in numbering the people, in punishment of which the pestilence was sent, of the staying of which we have an account in Lesson VIII. In the remaining lessons of the Quarter we have studied some of the Psalms of David, written at different periods of his life, all breathing forth a pious spirit, and containing much to interest and instruct us. The lessons ought to do us great good.

INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS.

Who was the first king of Israel? How was he chosen? What was his first military exploit? What effect had it on the people? Give some of the events in the life of Saul? For what sin was he rejected? Who was anointed to be king in his place? Give an account of the first noted event in David's life? What caused the envy and hatred of Saul? Who was David's friend? What do you know about their friendship? How did David show his forbearance toward Saul? Give an account of the death of Saul and his sons? How did the Philistines treat their bodies? What finally became of them? How long did Saul reign? Of which tribe did David become king at the death of Saul? Who became king of the other tribes? Where and how long did Ishbosheth reign? How did his reign end? What was David's first capital? How long did he reign there? What is the golden text of this lesson?

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSONS.

Lesson I. What is the title of the first lesson? Golden text? Lesson plan? What did the elders of Israel propose to David? What followed this proposal? What did David then do? What neighboring king became his friend and ally? What made David prosper?

II. What is the title of the second lesson? Golden text? Lesson plan? Where had the ark been for many years? Who went to remove it? What sin delayed its being brought to Jerusalem? Where was it then carried? What was the result to the household?

III. What is the title of the third lesson? Golden text? Lesson plan? What did David propose to do? What did the Lord say to this proposal? What did the Lord promise David? Who should build the temple? What did the Lord promise respecting his kingdom?

IV. What is the title of the fourth lesson? Golden text? Lesson plan? What inquiry did King David make? What was told him? What did he do? What kindness did he show Mephibosheth? How did he honor him?

V. What is the title of the fifth lesson? Golden text? Lesson plan? How did David confess his sins? How did he cry for forgiveness? What was his prayer for inward cleansing? What new consecration did he make?

VI. What is the title of the sixth lesson? Golden text? Lesson plan? How did Absalom steal the hearts of the people? On what pretence did he go to Hebron? For whom did he send? What is said of the conspiracy? What did David do?

VII. What is the title of the seventh lesson? Golden text? Lesson plan? For what did the king wait? For what was he most anxious? What good news did he receive? What bad news? What was the father's lament?

VIII. What is the title of the eighth lesson? Golden text? Lesson plan? How did the Lord punish the sins of David and his people? What did David do? What did the Lord do? Where did David build an altar by divine command? How did the Lord show his acceptance of David's offerings?

IX. What is the title of the ninth lesson? Golden text? Lesson plan? What are we taught by the works of God? When and where do they show these things? How has God more clearly revealed himself to us? How should we regard the word of God? What should be our daily prayer?

X. What is the title of the tenth lesson? Golden text? Lesson plan? How did the psalmist express his confidence in the Lord? What was his great desire? Of what was he assured? How would he show his gratitude? What important counsel does he give?

XI. What is the title of the eleventh lesson? Golden text? Lesson plan? What did the psalmist do in trouble? With what result did he wait? Who is here pronounced blessed? What is said of the offering of sacrifices? What is our only hope of salvation?

XII. What is the title of the twelfth lesson? Golden text? Lesson plan? What does the psalmist call upon himself to do? What benefits does the Lord bestow upon us? How has he made himself known to us? How does he show his love for his children? How does the psalm end?

CATECHISM QUESTIONS.

86. What is faith in Jesus Christ? 87. What is repentance unto life? 88. What are the outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption? 89. How is the word made effectual to salvation? 90. How is the word to be read and heard, that it may become effectual to salvation? 91. How do the sacraments become effectual means of salvation? 92. What is a sacrament? 93. Which are the sacraments of the New Testament? 94. What is baptism? 95. To whom is baptism to be administered? 96. What is the Lord's Supper? 97. What is required to the worthy receiving of the Lord's Supper?

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

The only teachers who will be really ready for this review lesson are those who have been looking forward to it and systematically preparing for it during the whole of the Quarter. Those who have not done so will not find it easy to make the review lesson either very enthusiastic or very helpful.

It is usually supposed that in a review lesson the whole school shall be able promptly to answer the superintendent's call for titles, golden texts and Catechism answers. But whether this expectation is realized or not will depend on two things, whether the teachers have carefully trained their classes on these points, and whether the superintendent himself has kept up a weekly drill on the same during the Quarter.

One method of conducting this part of the exercise is the narrative form, the class or school filling the pauses. Thus: "The title of the first lesson is ——; the golden text ——; the title of the second lesson is ——, etc."

Instead of taking up all the lessons in order and spending two or three minutes on each, it will be found better, for this quarter at least, to take a view of the whole field—"David and the Psalms." Questions may be carefully prepared covering the incidents of the seven historical lessons, and others bringing out the principal features of the five Psalm lessons. In this way the work of the Quarter may be gathered into a form in which it can be remembered. In adult classes especially the great doctrines and practical lessons from David's life should be gathered out and impressed. The following paragraph from the *Westminster Quarterly* presents some of the more important of these:

"The story of David's life is full of most valuable instruction. We can trace it from his boyhood, when we find him a shepherd lad at Bethlehem. He was even then unconsciously preparing for his future greatness of character and achievement. Many of the tender things that came out in his after life in beauty were breathed into his soul when he kept his father's flocks. The twenty-third Psalm, for example, was the blossom and ripe fruit of seeds dropped into his heart and thought when he was himself a shepherd, leading his flocks into the green pastures and by the still waters. As a man, we see him in different characters and capacities—a soldier, brave and heroic; a poet, whose songs yet live in the world, blessing millions of lives as they are sung in every experience; a musician, whose harp's notes have quieted countless perturbed spirits; a king, wise, faithful, devoted, lifting up his people to exalted power and nobleness. His personal life has also for us many lessons. Of like passions with ourselves he sinned and fell into grievous wrong; but the story of his penitence and restoration is one of the most profitable chapters in all his life. It shows that no fall need be final; that through the grace of God restoration is possible to all. It shows also that in spite of grievous sins one may win a high place in God's favor, for David was called the man after God's own heart. Yet it shows that sins though forgiven bring sorrow. David's later life was very full of sore trouble, nearly all of which could be traced in some way to his sin. We must learn also from David's life what to do when we have sinned—not to hide our sins, but to confess them and find that mercy which David found when he sought forgiveness. The most precious thing in this world in heaven's sight is the tear of penitence. God never rejects the sincere cry for mercy. Let us seek to carry with us such memories and influences from these studies in David's life as shall make us all stronger and nobler."

The Review Exercises on pages 355, 356 may be effectively used as an opening exercise for the whole school.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The Teacher Before Her Class—

I. What do I hold in my hand? (Show a crown cut from gilt paper.) Who was it that was finally made king over all Israel? Then we will pin this to the board to remind us of David's crown. (Question rapidly to recall the facts connected with David's coming to the undivided kingdom.) Who is finally to be King over all this earth?

II. See this crooked mark which I make in the sin-color. I will print the word "Ark" on it. Notice that the crooked mark reaches away up to the crown. What can you remember about the moving of that ark?

III. The straight mark stands for a plan that King David made. Here is one that comes directly across it. On that I will print "No." Who said "No" to one of David's plans? Why does God sometimes say "No" to us?

IV. See, I am pinning a star right above David's crown. It stands for a kind thing which he did to a man who was poor and lame. Who was he? Question on the lesson, not forgetting the application. Mephibosheth for Jonathan's sake. Each little child admitted to the palace "for Jesus' sake."

V. I must make another crooked mark. It reaches to the crown! But I am going to cover

it with red, for David repented and was forgiven. He asked God to "blot out" his sins. Who can tell me the words of his prayer?

VI. Watch to see what I am making. (Outline a scroll with figures for the ten commandments.) Who can repeat this one? (Point to the fifth.) See what I am doing. (Make erasures along the line of the fifth.) Who was the young man who broke this commandment? What other one did he break?

VII. Here is a purple mark to stand for the king, and here are marks for two men who have come to bring him news. And here is a picture of a monument. How many can tell me about this lesson? How came Absalom to be killed? Did God break his promise?

VIII. Do you remember a lesson in which we had this black flag? For what trouble did it stand? Why did the people have this trouble? Look, here is the crooked mark again, in the sin-color. It touches the crown. But I am going to cover it again with the red line of prayer. What three words did David pray? (In each of these lessons I am supposing that the teacher will simply start the train of thought, and then question to call out the children's recollections and logical deductions.)

IX. See the gilt stars I am pinning on the board. Let these yellow marks stand for the sun. Here is a picture of an open book. Who can remember a lesson in which we had all these? What did David say was the best, the book of nature or God's book? Which one shows us the way to heaven? How many of you have learned the way?

X. Let us see how many kinds of lights we can think of. I will put a dot on the board for every one you can mention. Do you remember a lesson in which we talked about which of these we could always trust? What did we choose so that we need never be afraid? What is the only light that will shine when our eyes are closing in death?

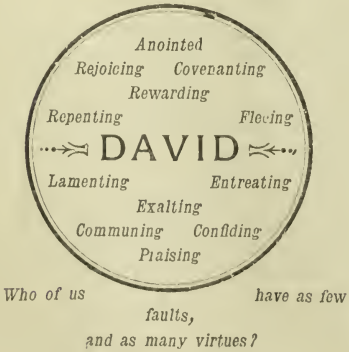
XI. Look at these red lines which stand for prayer, and at these arches which stand for promises. Look what I am printing on this red line. (Print, "I cried.") Who said that? What did David want? Did he get it? See what I am printing under this arch. (Print, "He heard.") Draw out the fact that this was David's testimony. God romised to hear the cry of his children; and David is a witness that he did so. This emboldened him to pray for all that he needed, and wait for his answers.

XII. Let us take all these stars pinned here to stand for a lesson in which we tried to count up the blessings that God. had given us. Have we stars enough? Let us try. Let class mention enough blessings to exhaust the stars, and to impress them with the fact that they need many more, even to commemorate one day's gifts. What then? Do they live grateful lives, or "forget" him?

I have thus glanced through the lessons of the Quarter, suggesting a way in which a teacher might rapidly review the central thought of each lesson. Or, suggesting in each lesson a thought for the teacher to dwell on, to the exclusion of the others, if she pleases. Or, teachers may select one thought, as, for instance, a covenant-keeping, or a prayer-answering God, and let all the lessons centre around that.

Certainly no teacher will have time to take up *each* lesson with even as much detail as I have given here. These hints are simply presented that you may get the thought of the method, and choose from the loaf the piece that will give your scholars most nourishment.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BLACKBOARD.



Have David's name exposed to view during the school session. The lesson words should be covered with small pieces of paper, to be removed as each lesson is reviewed. By word-picture draw from the school the titles and golden texts. When this is done question upon the leading events of each lesson, and at the end point to each lesson word and ask for the title and golden text of each lesson, indiscriminately, and press the question, "Who of us have as few faults and as many virtues?"

The writer has tried many methods of reviewing the school, and has found none more satisfactory than the one here presented, whether the whole time or only part of it has been devoted to the desk.

REVIEW EXERCISE.*

Usual signal for silence.

Reading of part of Psalm 103.

Pastor.—Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, *bless* his holy name.

Superintendent.—Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:

Teachers.—Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;

School.—Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies;

Boys.—Who satisfieth thy mouth with good *things; so that* thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Girls.—The Lord executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.

Pastor.—He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.

Supt.—The Lord *is* merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.

Associate Supt.—He will not always chide: neither will he keep *his anger* for ever.

School.—He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

Supt.—For as the heaven is high above the earth, *so* great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

Teachers.—As far as the east is from the west, *so* far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

All.—Like as a father pitieth *his* children, *so* the Lord pitieth them that fear him.

Singing.—*Westminster S. S. Hymnal*, No. 40:

One there is above all others
Well deserves the name of Friend;
His is love beyond a brother's,
Costly, free and knows no end.

Which of all our friends to save us
Could or would have shed his blood?
But our Saviour died to have us
Reconciled in him to God.

Oh, for grace our hearts to soften!
Teach us, Lord, at length to love;
We, alas! forget too often
What a Friend we have above.

Prayer: Closing with the Lord's Prayer.

Recitation of the Apostles' Creed, or Ten Commandments.

Singing.—*Westminster S. S. Hymnal*, No. 29:

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run;
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

People and realms of every tongue
Dwell on his love with sweetest song,
And infant voices shall proclaim
Their early blessings on his name.

Let every creature rise and bring
Peculiar honors to our King;
Angels descend with songs again,
And earth repeat the loud Amen.

REVIEW QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

LESSON I. **Superintendent.**—How was David made king over all Israel?

School.—All the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and King David made a league with them in Hebron before the Lord; and they anointed David king over Israel.

Supt.—What did David perceive?

School.—David perceived that the Lord had established him king over Israel.

II. **Supt.**—How was Uzzah punished for touching the ark?

School.—The anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God.

Supt.—How long was the ark in the house of Obed-Edom?

School.—The ark of the Lord continued in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite three months; and the Lord blessed Obed-Edom and all his house.

III. **Supt.**—What did the Lord promise David respecting his son?

School.—I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

IV. **Supt.**—What kindness did David promise Mephibosheth?

School.—I will surely show thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually.

Singing.—*Westminster S. S. Hymnal*, No. 200:

One there is above all others:
Oh, how he loves!
His love is beyond a brother's:
Oh, how he loves!
Earthly friends may fail or leave us—
One day soothe, the next day grieve us;
But this Friend will ne'er deceive us:
Oh, how he loves!

All your sins shall be forgiven:
Oh, how he loves!
Backward shall your foes be driven:
Oh, how he loves!
Best of blessings he'll provide you;
Naught but good shall e'er betide you;
Safe to glory he will guide you:
Oh, how he loves!

* Extra copies of this Review Exercise furnished, on application to the Board, at 50 cents a hundred.

V. **Supt.**—How did David confess his sin?

School.—Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.

VI. **Supt.**—What word was brought to David about Absalom's rebellion?

School.—There came a messenger to David, saying, The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom.

Supt.—What did David say to his servants?

School.—Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not else escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword.

VII. **Supt.**—How was David affected when he heard of Absalom's death?

School.—The king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!

VIII. **Supt.**—How did David pray for the staying of the pestilence?

School.—Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep, what have they done? Let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house.

Singing.—*Westminster S. S. Hymnal*, No. 47:

Oh, sometimes the shadows are deep,
And rough seems the path to the goal;
And sorrows, sometimes how they sweep
Like tempests down over the soul!

REF.—Oh, then, to the Rock let me fly, let me fly—
To the Rock that is higher than I;
Oh, then, to the Rock let me fly, let me fly—
To the Rock that is higher than I.

Oh, sometimes how long seems the day,
And sometimes how weary my feet!
But, toiling in life's dusty way,
The Rock's blessed shadow how sweet!
REF.—Oh, then, to the Rock, etc.

Oh, near to the Rock let me keep,
If blessings or sorrows prevail,
Or climbing the mountain-way steep,
Or walking the shadowy vale.
REF.—Then, quick to the Rock, etc.

IX. **Supt.**—What do God's works testify concerning him?

School.—The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

Supt.—What does the Psalmist say of God's word?

School.—The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

X. **Supt.**—What was David's great desire?

School.—One thing have I desired of the Lord, that I will seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple.

XI. **Supt.**—How is God's goodness here celebrated?

School.—I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.

Supt.—How does the Messiah declare his readiness to undertake the work of redemption?

School.—Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is written within my heart.

XII. **Supt.**—What does the Psalmist say of God's forgiving mercy?

School.—The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever.

Supt.—What is the closing call to praise?

School.—Bless the Lord, all his works in all places of his dominion: bless the Lord, O my soul.

Singing.—*Westminster S. S. Hymnal*, No. 228:

Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
Thou who gav'st thyself for me,
Leave me not in sin to wander:
Bid me come and rest in thee.

REF.—Rest in thee, rest in thee,
Bid me come and rest in thee;
Rest in thee, rest in thee,
Bid me come and rest in thee.

Draw me from each sinful striving;
From myself oh set me free;
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
Bid me come and rest in thee.—REF.

Review-drill on Titles, Golden Texts, Lesson Plans, Review Questions and Catechism Questions.

Singing.—*Westminster S. S. Hymnal*, No. 250:

Lord, dismiss us with thy blessing;
Fill our hearts with joy and peace;
Let us each, thy love possessing,
Triumph in redeeming grace;
Oh, refresh us,
Traveling through this wilderness.

Thanks we give, and adoration,
For thy gospel's joyful sound;
May the fruits of thy salvation
In our hearts and lives abound;
May thy presence
With us evermore be found!

Secretary's and Librarian's Distributions.

Silent Prayer, and Benediction by the pastor.

THE WESTMINSTER TEACHER.

VOL. XII. OCTOBER, 1884. No. 10.

—It is necessary now and then to say that no article or letter sent anonymously can receive any attention.

—The article on "Some Week-day Agencies of the Sunday-school in England" is full of suggestions for workers in city mission fields.

—Particular attention is directed to the Bible Correspondence School, whose plans Dr. Worden sets forth on another page. It ought this year to increase to 10,000 members.

—Just think of what a consistent Christian can do in a long life—three hundred and sixty-five days, every year, for seventy years, spent in kindly thoughts, loving words, unselfish deeds! What a glorious aggregate! And yet there is scarcely a church in which you will not find just such a life, now ripening to its close.

—The subject of which Dr. Pierson treats on another page is one of much practical interest and importance. There are multitudes of young people in most localities whose day engagements are such as to preclude the possibility of their attending any ordinary school, but who would be glad to devote their evenings to study under proper direction. Especially in cities and towns it is believed that nearly every church might greatly extend its influence by the organization of such a school.

TWO MISSIONARY MAGAZINES.—No brighter, better edited, more instructive or more stimulating missionary magazines are issued anywhere than those of our Presbyterian Women's Foreign Missionary Societies, "Woman's Work for Woman," and "Children's Work for Children." The articles in both are full of interesting facts and descriptions, frequently illustrated by good cuts. The editorial and other contributions are of a high order. It would be a good thing if every Presbyterian woman were to read the larger magazine and every child the smaller. The result would soon be seen in still greater efforts in behalf of foreign missions. The editor of both magazines is Miss Mary I. Lombard, who is thoroughly consecrated to her work and is aided by a committee of earnest and intelligent Christian women. The subscription price of "Woman's Work" is 60 cents a year, and of "Children's Work" 35 cents. 1334 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.

Life's Double Ministry.

A TWOFOLD influence attends and follows every life. The one is planned and intentional; the other is unpurposed and unconscious. A man lives fifty years of active life in a community, growing from poverty to wealth, and there are two classes of results. There are the buildings he has erected, the business he has established and organized, the improvements he has made in the town, and the wealth he has accumulated. These are all purposed results. He lived to do these things. But while he has been toiling and building, with earnest ambition and intense energy, he has day by day been leaving another class of results behind him which were not in his plans, and the columns of which he does not foot up when he estimates how much he has made during his life or when he writes his will. These are the things he has done by the words he has spoken in daily intercourse with men, by his manners and dispositions, by his wayside ministries and through the silent influence of his character and example.

Every life has this double history and leaves this double record. In the ordinary reckoning of the results achieved by men the purposed things only are counted. We say he made a million dollars, or we point to the bridges he built, or the cathedrals he planned, or the pictures he painted, or the books he wrote; or we say he traveled so many miles, and preached so many sermons, and made so many visits; and we think we have written his biography. But we have not. There is a part of his biography that is never written, and it is probable that in nearly every life its unconscious, unrecorded, unintended influences aggregate more in the end than its purposed acts.

An artist spends a number of years in a foreign city, studying the works of the great masters, and then with glowing inspiration cuts in the marble the lovely forms of his own thoughts. The figures are packed and sent home. The boxes are carefully opened, and the pieces of statuary removed to be admired and praised for long years. The artist's ambition is gratified. He rejoices in his success. But hidden in the straw in which the marbles were packed, were a number of little seeds; the

straw is scattered about the grounds, and the next spring beautiful foreign flowers spring up in the artist's garden. They grow well, and by-and-bye in hundreds of gardens they are blooming. The pieces of statuary were the purposed results of the sculptor's years abroad; the lovely flowers exhaling their fragrance in so many spots were but accidental results, unplanned, unintended.

Every good life is constantly scattering just such unconscious influences. A mother works hard all day in her home, keeping her house in order, preparing comforts for her family, watching over her children. She can tell in the evening how many garments she has mended, how many rooms she has swept, and the entire day's history. But all day long she was patient, gentle, kind. She had a bright smile for her children at every turn. She had cheering words and fond attentions for her husband. She had a pleasant welcome for the friends who called. In all these things she was unconsciously scattering seeds that will spring up in sweet flowers in other hearts and lives. Who doubts which of these two ministries is in reality the richer and the more effective? Yet the tired woman does not think of counting these wayside influences and services at all in her retrospect of the day's work. If she could do so it would greatly cheer her and strengthen her for a new day's life when it begins.

We do not realize the importance of this unconscious part of our life ministry. It goes on continually. In every greeting we give another on the street, in every moment's conversation, in every letter we write, in every contact with other lives, there is a subtle influence that goes from us that often reaches further and leaves a deeper impression than the things themselves we were doing at the time. After all, it is life itself, sanctified life, that is God's holiest and most effective ministry in this world, pure, sweet, patient, unselfish, loving life. It is not so much what we *do* in this world as what we *are*, that tells in spiritual results and impressions. A good life is like a flower, which, though it neither toil nor spin, yet ever pours out a rich perfume and thus performs a holy ministry.

"Poor indeed thou must be, if around thee
Thou no ray of light and joy canst throw;
If no silken cord of love hath bound thee
To some little world, through weal or woe;
If no dear eyes thy tender love can brighten,
No fond voices answer to thine own;
If no brother's sorrow thou canst lighten
By daily sympathy and gentle tone.
Daily struggling, though enclosed and lonely,
Every day a rich reward will give;
Thou wilt find by hearty stirring only,
And truly loving, thou canst truly live!"

There is no place where this unconscious ministry is so potent as in the home. The lessons parents teach their children are not one thousandth part so important as the life they live before them day after day. This incident has appeared in some of the newspapers: "A gentleman, who has a golden-haired little daughter three years of age, took her to church for the first time the other day. At home she causes much amusement by attempts in cunning baby fashion to do just as her father does. It was an Episcopal Church, and she sat through the service and sermon with mature gravity and sedateness. It happened to be communion Sunday, and being a communicant, her father went with others toward the chancel, unconscious that his little daughter was following him. As he knelt and bowed his head, she took her place beside him and bowed her head upon her tiny hands." The incident illustrates what is going on perpetually in every home. The child is not merely imitating the parents' acts, but is drinking in their spirit as flowers drink in the morning dew and the sunshine, to reproduce the same in permanent dispositions, tempers and principles.

How, then, can we give direction and character to this unconscious ministry of our lives? When we do things voluntarily and with purpose, we can give shape to the effects; but how can we guard this perpetual outgoing of unintended influence? Only by looking well to our hearts. It is what we are when we are not posing that we are really; and it is this which counts in this subtle ministry. We must *be* therefore in our own inner, secret lives what we want our permanent influence to be. This we can be only by seeking more and more the permeation of our whole being by the loving, indwelling Spirit of Christ.

Desert Places.

IN every Western State, and especially along the great frontier which stretches from British America on the north to Central America on the far South, the spiritual destitutions are great. Along all the railways that press their way into the sparsely settled regions, along the bridle paths that extend into the wilderness, among the mining towns on the slopes of the Rocky Mountains, and in the valleys beyond them, are settlements where the voice of a Christian minister has never been heard, and where little or nothing is being done to save the people from sin and endless death. This condition of things is absolutely appalling. Something may be done, ought to be done, and done speedily. Why not multiply at once, a

hundred fold, the number of colporteurs employed by our own Church, and send them into the waste places? Why not scatter the truth, by which souls are born again, in the great furrows of sin and perishing need; such leaves as Edwards, Alexander, Plumer, Newman Hall and men of like spirituality, have gathered from the tree of life, and which are for the healing of the nations? Are there not young men and older Christians who are willing to consecrate themselves to this work, one of the noblest that can engage the hearts and the hands of a redeemed people, and who are only waiting to be sent? They, surely, would prepare the way for the establishment of the house of God in the valleys and on the tops of the mountains, and, like John the Baptist in the Jordan wilderness, prepare the world for the oncoming kingdom of heaven.

The Bible Correspondence School.

BY THE REV. JAMES A. WORDEN, D.D.

THE object of this school is, to aid all those teachers who desire to reach a higher grade of qualification for their work. The studies are conducted at home, and the help is given by correspondence. The success of this school in its first year was very great. More than five thousand members were enrolled, representing nearly all our States and Territories and the Dominion of Canada. A great enthusiasm was developed for more thorough and systematic study of the Bible. The plan for the next course will be the same as last year.

OUTLINE PLAN.

I. The name of the organization is "The Bible Correspondence School," conducted by the Rev. James A. Worden, D.D., Secretary of Sabbath-school Work of the Presbyterian Board of Publication.

II. Its object is to train men and women for work in the Sabbath-school.

III. The members consist of Sabbath-school officers, teachers and scholars, and all others who promise to study the lessons, who shall send their names to the Secretary of Sabbath-school Work, No. 1334 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, through their pastor or superintendent.

IV. The lessons will treat the most necessary and helpful subjects of Bible learning and Bible teaching.

1. The course of lessons will run parallel to the International Series of Sabbath-school Lessons. It will give instruction in those periods of Bible history and those books from which the International lessons are chosen. It will furnish a perspective and connected knowledge of those events and writings, portions of which are selected for study in the regular Sabbath-school lessons.

2. The lessons will be in two parts, the first part treating a Bible topic as just described, and the second part giving suggestions on methods of teaching and practical work.

3. Four of these double lessons will be issued each month.

V. The President of this Correspondence School in each congregation shall be the pastor or the superintendent of the Sabbath-school. In case of the inability of these to act they are requested to appoint a suitable person and report his name at once by postal card. The names of the members are to be secured and recorded by the President, and by him forwarded to the Secretary of Sabbath-school work. The lessons will be forwarded to the President in time to be distributed before the beginning of each month.

VI. Each member is expected diligently to study the lessons at home. Wherever practicable, weekly or monthly meetings of the members should be held for the discussion of the lessons.

VII. *Special Examinations.*

1. Every member is expected each month to present in writing to the President answers to the test questions attached to the lessons.

2. The President will compare these answers of the member with the printed answers furnished him confidentially, will mark in writing all needful corrections, and return the corrected papers to their writers. He shall also each month forward the grade of each member to the Secretary.

3. An annual written examination will be held upon the lessons of the year.

VIII. *The School Year and Terms.*

1. The school year will extend from the first of November to the first of May.

2. The annual dues for text leaves, postage and tuition will be (for clubs of five or more) 50 cents each; for isolated members, whose papers must be corrected and returned by the Secretary, 75 cents each. These dues must be paid before the member is enrolled.

THE ADVANTAGES OF THE SCHOOL.

1. It furnishes to the members weekly contact with an experienced teacher.

2. It gives the members the option of pursuing the course in social organization or in the quiet of home.

3. It is a new and fresh method of advancing Bible study and teaching.

4. It furnishes its members text books with

complete courses of study in popular and scientific form.

5. Its course of study furnishes a necessary supplement to the International Series of Lessons, broadening and deepening the teacher's knowledge of that course.

6. It will bring the teacher who may be far away from any other means of training into pleasant communication with the goodly society of Christian students of the Church in this land.

7. It is furnished to all at the trifling cost of text leaves and postage and mailing. The annual dues barely cover the cost, and if there should be a surplus it is turned over to the Sabbath-school Mission Work.

8. The repeated examinations test the student's acquirements, and give him in accurate form the practical results of his labors.

9. This plan has received the unanimous approval of the Sabbath-school Committee of the Board, and of the Board of Publication itself. It has been approved by two General Assemblies.

HOW TO ORGANIZE IN ANY CHURCH.

1. Let the pastor be requested to preach a sermon on the need, the benefits or methods of Bible study, and explain the plan of the Bible Correspondence School.

2. Let the pastor and superintendent determine who shall be the President in that congregation.

3. Let a meeting be called of the Sunday-school officers, teachers and older scholars, for organizing a local Bible Correspondence School.

4. After a full explanation of the plan let each give his name and dues to the President, to be forwarded as soon as the list is complete to the Secretary of Sabbath-school Work.

5. An executive committee should be appointed to secure a place of meeting and make all necessary arrangements for the meetings.

6. A Secretary should be appointed to record all the proceedings of the school.

For circulars and full information write to Rev. J. A. Worden, D.D., 1334 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.

Bethany Training College.

BY THE REV. ARTHUR T. PIERSON, D.D.

TO educate is to elevate. How far the church should take charge of the general training of its members, and especially of the young, is a problem needing a prompt and practical solution. The Bethany College is a humble contribution toward such a solution.

It was organized in the fall of 1881, in connection with Bethany Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia, to furnish to members of the congregation opportunity and aid for such study and training as may fit them to fill, more satisfactorily and usefully, any sphere of service into which they may be called. At that time only *secular* branches of study were pursued. In 1883, under the charge of the present pastor, a department of instruction was added, covering those studies more especially pertaining to the *religious* life, and proper to a *church* school.

This college seemed to grow, like every other good thing, out of a real need and demand. Here was a large congregation, mostly gathered from those who are dependent upon daily labor for daily bread, and who had but little time or means for pursuing a large and liberal culture. To help and encourage these hundreds of young men and women to make of themselves all that they can for life's great work, was the impulse and inspiration of this endeavor, which God has crowned with signal success.

To accommodate those who are employed in daily labor, the classes of the college have been held on the evenings of Tuesdays and Fridays of each week, during three terms of nine weeks each, the college year beginning about the middle of October and closing about the last of May. To put the advantages of the college within reach of all, a nominal tuition fee, of twenty-five cents a term, entitles members of Bethany congregation to instruction in any or all departments; and persons not members of Bethany congregation may join the classes at fifty cents a term. There are no extra charges, except for material used; and tickets of admission for any single evening may be had for five cents.

Instruction in Christian Doctrine, Church History, Religious Work and Christian Science, is under the personal supervision of the pastor of the church, who is the President of the college. Whenever a sufficient number of students apply, classes are formed for the study of German, Vocal and Instrumental Music, Penmanship, Book-keeping, Mechanical and Architectural Drawing, Elocution and Reading, Telegraphy, Phonography, Dressmaking, Embroidery, Cooking, Painting, etc.

The method of conducting the college is very simple but systematic. Tickets, good for the term, with attached coupons for each evening, are procured of the Secretary; the ticket admits to the building, and the coupon, detached in the class, and bearing the number and name of the student, becomes a record of attendance. The whole college assembles at 7.45 o'clock, for opening devotional exercises, in the large Sunday-school hall; then the secular classes retire to their rooms for about one hour; at

8.45 the bell summons all classes to return to the hall, where the pastor teaches the entire college for a half-hour in one of the four departments of religious study under his control.

There are but few rules, and but a very mild discipline. Students are put upon their honor, though the form of application, signed by each member of the college, contains a pledge of punctual attendance, orderly conduct and faithful attention to duty. Yet there has not been one flagrant breach of good order, or one case of expulsion, during the year. The enrolled number of students was, last winter, over six hundred, and the actual average attendance over four hundred.

As year by year suggests improvement, new features will be added. The college has never yet been quite self-supporting, and it is believed that to double the tuition fee would secure this result without debarring any from these opportunities. It may be well to enlarge the classes and reduce their number, so as to have fewer instructors to employ and larger classes to be taught. These and any other changes or modifications will be made, as experience demonstrates their need, for the system is both simple and flexible.

It seems to us that there is no reason why every one of our larger churches, especially in the midst of our great city populations, may not undertake a similar work, on such scale as circumstances may seem to justify. The bulk of our pastors are thoroughly educated men, who could from their stores of knowledge impart much instruction in departments not covvered by ordinary pulpit-work, and many of whom would be glad thus to enlarge the range of their usefulness. Among our church membership are hundreds of educated men and women who could and would give at least one evening a week to a winter training-school, where classes might be taught in various studies having a bearing upon practical life; and such teaching may largely be secured, gratuitously.

If it be said that evening schools and normal classes are provided by the State, or by private enterprise, and that the Church needs not to attempt, especially, secular training, it may still be answered that everything which draws our people nearer to the Church and creates new and wholesome associations with the Church, becomes a new link between souls and the kingdom of God. Moreover, there is so much teaching that is godless and atheistic, that we see no reason why the sceptical tendencies of the day may not be offset to a large degree by teaching which is from a believer's point of view, and conducted with ultimate reference to the salvation of souls.

In Bethany, one blessed practical result is already manifest. The effect of the college work, last winter, was to develop in young men a taste and desire for religious activity, and an "Evangelist Band" of some thirty members has been organized for special training in Bible study and Christian effort; and already several of its members have declared their purpose to become preachers of the gospel. May a like work, with like results, be done elsewhere!

From Day to Day.

BY MRS. HELEN E. BROWN.

My days are stairs that lead to life's great end,
And one by one I steadily ascend;
Climbing, with purpose true, the upward road,
That brings me to the city of my God.

Sometimes the step is bright with the full sun
That shines in cloudless radiance thereon;
Sometimes a shadow falls upon the way,
But, dark or light, I need not go astray.

One stair is rough with thorn-points all bestrown,
But shoes of iron tread the nettles down;
And one so steep my weary, crippled feet,
The painful ascent scarcely can complete.

Sometimes it is a slippery step I tread,
And fierce temptations make my soul afraid;
But held in Christ's dear hands, so tender, strong,
The next I mount with courage and a song.

Each step in the long course a history has;
I make a mark as one by one I pass,—
A gladsome record here, a tear-spot there,
A rescued soul, a struggle or a prayer.

And on life's mystic ladder to the skies
Bright angels come and go to paradise;
And work grows dearer as the end draws near,
Until I reach at last the golden stair.

And enter through the open pearly gate;
Where, with our King, souls watch for me and wait;
There at his feet I'll cast my trophies down,
And shout the victory which his love has won.

Some Week-Day Agencies of the Sunday-School in England.

IN one particular the Sunday-school in America is far ahead of us here in England, and that is in the recognition of its mission to all classes of society. With us there is a difficulty in persuading parents of the upper-middle classes to send their children to school, though in theory the institution is as all-embracing as it is in America. There are not wanting, however, some signs of an improvement. But in mission schools, as might be expected, the scholars are of the working class, and it is for these especially, who have not such advantages at home, that various enterprises

are set on foot during the week. No word of apology is needed for seeking to improve the temporal condition of those who attend the Sunday-school; and no one would venture to say that the spiritual tone of either teachers or scholars would be lowered by inculcating habits of thrift and forethought. Accordingly, it is quite common for Penny Banks and Sick Clubs to be established in connection with our mission schools. For many years Penny Banks have been doing good service, by receiving deposits as low as one penny, and by thus affording an easy and simple place of lodgment against a time of need. Monday evening is a very usual time for the Bank to be opened, as early in the week money is more abundant than towards its close. Two teachers—one of whom may be a lady, if there be a difficulty in procuring the services of two males—should attend, for at least an hour, one of whom should take the money and enter it on a card, and then on a rough waste-book; the other should have charge of a ledger, posting entries on the spot, when practicable, and referring to accounts when withdrawals are being made. A card ruled for twelve months, with a square for each week, and two columns ruled for deposits and withdrawals during the month, is all the voucher or pass-book which the depositor needs. The few rules which may be necessary may be printed on the back and a penny charged for the card. A small rate of interest may be allowed on certain fixed sums remaining untouched for so many months; and as the deposits may be placed in a bank at interest, this sum will cover all the interest allowed and leave a margin toward the expenses of the Bank. A week's notice may be required previous to the withdrawal of deposits, but it often proves of great convenience to forego this notice and pay on demand, unless the amount be a large one. At my own school, we have in the course of the year upward of 1,300 depositors, and as large a sum as $3,500 is deposited. One could give many examples of the value to the poor of such a Bank in the time of distress or illness; but such may be easily imagined. Previous to the Bank holidays, at Easter, Whitsuntide, and in August, there is a great withdrawal, so as to provide clothes for the holiday, or to pay the expenses of the trip; but at Christmas the savings are generally devoted to the celebration, in some form or another, of this festive season.

Another method of promoting thrift is the Sick Club or Benefit Society, which provides for sickness or death. The one at my own school, by the payment of one penny per week, provides four shillings per week during illness, and two pounds in the event of death; and this subscription is not only sufficient to insure these payments, but it enables us to divide annually a cash bonus, never less than twenty-five per cent., and sometimes as much as sixty-five. One condition of membership is, attendance at the school, and the club serves the purpose of helping to retain our elder scholars. Our club has existed for more than twelve years, and has been a great help to the parents, who are mostly poor, when their children have been ill. The relief goes some way in providing little dainties or luxuries, or even nourishment, during convalescence, which the ordinary wages of the parents would not be able to supply. A balance in hand of some seventy-five dollars is a reserved fund against an epidemic or a season of unusual sickness.

Among the recreative agencies may be mentioned a club, open on Saturday evenings, for reading, refreshment, and games. Two or three class-rooms are all the accommodation needed, in one of which various papers and magazines may be provided, and where silence should be the rule; and in another there may be such games as chess, draughts, dominoes, and other suitable amusements. We have provided at ours a bagatelle-board, which is in great request. A few years since, many good people would have been horrified at the idea of such a game being encouraged on Sunday-school premises. They would have considered it the first step to the public-house or tavern, instead of proving, as it may do under proper management, the first step away from such places. After a small sum has been subscribed to purchase the games, it will be found that the payment of a penny per night, or, better still, ninepence per quarter, will be sufficient to meet demands, of course supposing that no expense for rent is incurred. Care should be taken not to fix the limit of age so low as that the rooms shall be largely occupied by boys, whose presence will be likely to keep away the men, and, even more, those who have just left the age of boyhood. It will be well to take the sense of the scholars themselves as to how members shall be admitted.

At our club we have opened a refreshment-room, where excellent coffee can be had for one half-penny (one cent) per cup, and bread and butter and cake, per slice, at the same rate. At these prices there is a very fair profit, which goes to remunerate the care-taker, and also to pay for gas and firing.

Where the scholars have any desire for self-improvement, the establishment of classes is an advantage, and writing, arithmetic, elocution, shorthand, and even French, may be taught in a simple manner.

There are cases where the teachers of senior classes gather their scholars together during the week and study with them some branch of natural science, or go through some standard works of a historical or biographical character. But where teachers recognize that their care of their scholars should be as widely exercised as possible, and where class-rooms are available, there may be no end to the gracious influences which the Sunday-school may exert during the week. —*Benjamin Clarke in Christian Union.*

The Ladies at Teachers' Meeting.

BY MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

IT has never seemed to me desirable or appropriate for ladies to take an audible part in the church prayer-meeting, except, of course, in its service of song. The *brethren* there should speak and pray, and if, as often happens, there are not many who can do so to the real edification of those about them, they should cultivate the gifts they possess, whatever their measure or degree, more earnestly than they do. I wonder that sensible men, not deficient in wisdom for every-day use, or lacking in business energy, do not see how absurdly they behave in this matter of the prayer-meeting and its conduct. The vague, incoherent, purposeless, feeble and wearisome harangues which I have heard, times not a few, in meetings of God's people for prayer, really make it marvellous as a miracle that the meetings can be maintained at all. Yet, even from these, have I and others gone home rested, renewed, refreshed, re-dedicated to the Master's dear work, and feeling that we have had a breath of heaven on our earthly way. "For, it is not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit," saith the Lord.

But, though I believe that it is well for women to reserve the utterance of their thoughts on sacred themes and the bearings they have on life and duty, for their homes and their own special meetings, I do not think that their practice should be the same when they come to the teachers' meeting. *That* ought to be a weekly Bible-class, a Bible-reading and Bible-study, to which everybody should contribute something. There are many reasons why the ladies should talk here with the utmost freedom. The meeting should not be suffered to resolve itself into a stiff affair for questions and answers, such as, "Who succeeded Joash?" "How many years did he reign?" etc. Neither should it have any place for set and formal speeches, although a brief, clear, incisive exposition of the lesson, with an analysis which shall fix its salient points in the memory, may very properly be given by the leader. After this, there is no reason why Mr. A. should not venture a remark, or ask a question, or make a suggestion; nor if Miss E. has a bright thought, has she any right to keep it to herself, or if a doubt chill her, should she battle with it alone. Ladies and gentlemen should meet on a level in this meeting, and say in turn, precisely as in an unrestrained, well-bred, and vivacious conversation in the parlor, what they think on the subject.

There are fashions which prevail in certain churches and villages and cities, which rule with the soft sway of velvet, yet the rigid firmness of iron, in such matters as this. Perhaps, in your teachers' meeting, it is customary for the ladies to do nothing except read a verse in turn, when the lesson is read, or a Scripture reference. If you could understand how very much more is gained by a free interchange of views, and an earnest and informal talk on ways of teaching, on illustrations and parallels, and the best manner of adapting the lesson to varying ages, you would not be contented till you had brought about a change.

How can you do it?

It is the first step which costs, dear friend. Though your heart beat, and your courage flutter like a timid bird, and your tongue inwardly protest that it dare not speak, summon the high imperial will to the task, and begin. Ask how the teachers would advise the adaptation of this lesson, to some practical issue in the school at present. For instance, if the passage tells how the Jews gave money for the repair of the temple, inquire how best to connect that with the self-denial of children now, and their giving to the missionary cause. Tell your little troubles and worries in your work, if you have any. Tell any interesting incident which you have met with in class visitation. The moment you have decided to do this, and have sent forth your own voice, like a pioneer before you, you will gain strength, and it will not be long ere others will follow your example.

Any lady who can talk at her own table, entertain guests in her own parlor, or converse in the home of a friend, can set the ball of speech in motion in a teachers' meeting. This is, I think, one of woman's special duties, opportunities and privileges. She is the educator of childhood in its earliest stages. She comprehends the perplexities of youth. She is the confidante of boys and girls. She has usually four times the leisure for home-study on the lesson which gentlemen have. By all means let her open her mouth wisely in the teachers' meeting, and though she open it foolishly sometimes, let her speak unforbidden.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FOURTH QUARTER.

1. Oct. 5.—**Solomon's Succeeding David.** 1 Kings 1: 22–35.
2. Oct. 12.—**David's Charge to Solomon.** 1 Chron. 22: 6–19.
3. Oct. 19.—**Solomon's Choice.** 1 Kings 3: 5–15.
4. Oct. 26.—**The Temple Built.** 1 Kings 6: 1–14.
5. Nov. 2.—The Temple Dedicated. 1 Kings 8: 22–36.
6. Nov. 9.—The Wisdom of Solomon. 1 Kings 10: 1–3.
7. Nov. 16.—Solomon's Sin. 1 Kings 11: 4–13.
8. Nov. 23.—Proverbs of Solomon. Prov. 9: 1–16.
9. Nov. 30.—True Wisdom. Prov. 8: 1–17.
10. Dec. 7.—Drunkenness. Prov. 25: 29–35.
11. Dec. 14.—Vanity of Worldly Pleasure. Eccles. 2: 1–13.
12. Dec. 21.—The Creator Remembered. Eccles. 12: 1–14.
13. Dec. 28.—Review.

Lesson I. **SOLOMON'S SUCCEEDING DAVID.** Oct. 5th, 1884.

1 Kings 1: 22–35. Memorize vs. 28–30.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind."—1 Chron. 28: 9.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 1 Kings 1: 5–21...*Adonijah's Usurpation.*
T. 1 Kings 1: 22–35..*Solomon Declared King.*
W. 1 Kings 1: 36–53..*Solomon Anointed King.*
Th. 1 Chron. 28: 1–10. *David's Charge.*
F. Ps. 125: 1–5 .....*Peace upon Israel.*
S. Acts 2: 22–36 .....*David's Greater Son.*
S. Ps. 92: 1–15 .....*The Righteous shall Flourish.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. Adonijah Claims the Throne. 2. David Declares Solomon King. 3. Solomon Anointed King.

Time.—B. C. 1015.

Place.—Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 98. *What is prayer?* A. Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

INTRODUCTORY.—We are now to spend three months with Solomon and the Books of Wisdom. The story of Solomon's life is a very sad one. While it introduces us to a man of rare and wonderful gifts and endowments, it shows us how the richest divine powers may be thrown into the mire of sin and degraded to most unholy uses. Our present lesson opens to us the beginning of this story, the anointing of the young Solomon as king. It gives us a glimpse of the inner history of an oriental court a thousand years before Christ, with its plots and intrigues. The lesson connects historically with Lesson VIII. of the last Quarter. David is old, about seventy years, evidently bed-ridden (chap. 1: 1), and Adonijah takes advantage of his father's feeble condition and resolves to make himself king. The matter is brought to David's attention through Nathan and Bathsheba, and the old king rouses himself and has Solomon anointed at once.

22 And, lo, while she yet talked with the king, Na'than the prophet also came in. [2 Sam. 7: 2, 3, 17: 12: 1–12.]

23 And they told the king, saying, Behold Na'than the prophet. And when he was come in before the king, he bowed himself before the king with his face to the ground.

24 And Na'than said, My lord, O king, hast thou said, A-do-ni'jah shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne? [2 Sam. 3: 4.]

25 For he is gone down this day, and hath slain oxen and fat cattle and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the king's sons, and the captains of the host, and A-bi'a-thar the priest; and, behold, they eat and drink before him, and say, God save king A-do-ni'jah. [v. 19; 1 Sam. 10: 24.]

26 But me, *even* me thy servant, and Za'dok the priest, and Ben-a'iah the son of Je-hoi'a-da, and thy servant Sol'o-mon, hath he not called. [2 Sam. 8: 17, 18.]

27 Is this thing done by my lord the king, and thou hast not shewed *it* unto thy servant, who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?

28 ¶ Then king Da'vid answered and said, Call me Bath'she-ba. And she came into the king's presence, and stood before the king.

29 And the king sware, and said, *As* the LORD liveth, that hath redeemed my soul out of all distress, [2 Sam. 4: 9]

30 Even as I sware unto thee by the LORD God of Is'ra-el, saying, Assuredly Sol'o-mon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead; even so will I certainly do this day. [v. 17.]

31 Then Bath'she-ba bowed with *her* face to the earth, and did reverence to the king, and said, Let my lord king Da'vid live for ever. [Neh. 2: 3.]

32 ¶ And king Da'vid said, Call me Za'dok the priest, and Na'than the prophet, and Ben-a'iah the son of Je-hoi'a-da. And they came before the king.

33 The king also said unto them, Take with you the servants of your lord, and cause Sol'o-mon my son to ride upon mine own mule, and bring him down to Gi'hon: [Esth 6: 8; 2 Chron 32: 30.]

34 And let Za'dok the priest and Na'than the prophet anoint him there king over Is'ra-el: and blow ye with the trumpet, and say, God save king Sol'o-mon. [1 Sam 10: 1.]

35 Then ye shall come up after him, that he may come and sit upon my throne; for he shall be king in my stead: and I have appointed him to be ruler over Is'ra-el and over Ju'dah.

22 *While she yet talked.* Nathan had learned of Adonijah's preparations to declare himself king. It is probable that Nathan knew also that the Lord had designated Solomon to be David's successor. See 1 Chron. 22: 9; 23: 5. When he knew, therefore, of Adonijah's plans he hastened to Bath-sheba, the mother of Solomon, and told her what was going on. v. 11. Bath-sheba, instructed by the prophet, went into the presence of David and laid before him the facts with regard to Adonijah's conspiracy, reminding the king also of an oath that he had made to her. vs. 13–21. *Nathan the prophet also came in.* Into the palace; he did not enter the king's apartment until after Bath-sheba had retired, as appears from v. 28. In v. 14 we learn that this course was suggested by Nathan himself; he would follow and confirm Bath-sheba's words, to make sure of arousing David to action. For other acts of Nathan, see 2 Sam. 7: 3–17; 12: 7, 13, 25.

23 *They told the king.* Nathan could not enter David's apartments unannounced. An oriental sovereign observed great pomp and ceremony. His highest officers and most intimate friends had to wait his pleasure, and when they entered they were required to prostrate themselves with profoundest obeisance, as Nathan did on this occasion, bowing until his face touched the floor.

24 *Hast thou said?* There is no question in the Hebrew, but a strong affirmation—*thou hast said*, assuming that Adonijah was acting on David's command. He wanted to arouse David and call out his declaration in favor of Solomon. *Adonijah.* Since the death of Absalom he was probably David's oldest living son, and therefore his natural successor on the throne. This explains his conduct here. David had been at fault in training Adonijah (v. 6), and he was wilful and selfish. He had elements of personal attractiveness (v. 6), reminding us of Absalom. He was now between thirty and forty years of age. Solomon first pardoned his usurpation, but afterward he attempted again to take the throne and was put to death. 1 Kings 2: 13–25.

25 *He is gone down.* See vs. 9, 19. *All the king's sons.* Excepting Solomon. v. 10. This omission showed that he considered Solomon his rival, knowing no doubt that David designed him to be his successor. *Captains of the host.* Joab, who was chief, and other high officers. v. 7. Joab was now under David's displeasure (chap. 2: 5), and supposing that Solomon would also be unfriendly to him, he was probably quite ready to join the party of Adonijah in the hope of prolonging his own power. *Abiathar the priest.* His defection from David is very remarkable when we consider the life-long friendship of the two men. See 1 Sam. 22: 23 to chap. 27. It has been suggested that the cause may have been jealousy of Zadok, who for some time had been associated with him in the priesthood, and seems to have become more influential than he.

26 *Zadok the priest.* It is not clear in what relation to each other the two priests served. See note on v. 25. *Benaiah.* Chief of David's body-guard. See 2 Sam. 23: 20–22.

27 *Is this thing done by my lord?* See note on v. 24.

29 *The king sware.* He rouses out of his feebleness, and is the old hero again, prompt, energetic, undismayed. *As the Lord liveth.* The common form of oath among the Israelites. *Redeemed my soul.* He did not forget God's many mercies and deliverances.

30 *Even as I sware.* There is no record of this oath to Bath-sheba except what we have in this chapter. vs. 13, 17. *Solomon . . . shall reign.* See 1 Chron. 22: 9, where God points out the characteristics of the times in which he should reign. He should be a man of rest. His name means *peaceable. He shall certainly sit on my throne.* The king had a right to name his successor.

31 *Bathsheba bowed with her face to the earth.* Showing even greater honor to the king, in

token of her gratitude to him for his answer, than when she first entered his presence. v. 16. *Live for ever.* A usual form of honor to royalty in the East. See Dan. 2: 4, 39; 5: 10.

32 *Call me Zadok . . . Nathan . . . Benaiah.* He called these high officers to execute the important business of the hour, to show the people that the proceedings were authorized by the king, as Adonijah's movement was not.

33 *The servants of your lord.* The members of the royal body-guard, the Cherethites and Pelethites. v. 38. This was to give pomp to the occasion. *Cause Solomon my son to ride upon mine own mule.* David had his own beast on which he alone ever rode. No other person was permitted to ride upon it unless at the king's command, as a mark of special honor; and for any one to sit upon it without David's permission was punishable with death. When the people, therefore, saw Solomon riding through the streets on the royal mule they would know that it was David's will that he should be king. *Down to Gihon.* The place is not positively identified, but Gihon was probably the ancient name of the valley, afterwards called the Tyropœum. (See cut of Ground Plan of Jerusalem, page 250, WESTMINSTER TEACHER for July.)

34 *Anoint him there king.* Anointing was the usual form of setting a king apart for his office. The same rite was used in the inauguration of prophets and priests. These were all sacred offices, also typical of the Messiah, and the anointing with oil signified a divine appointment, the oil being an emblem of the Spirit. Isa. 61: 1. It was a tradition of the rabbis that the three kings who reigned over the whole nation, Saul, David and Solomon, and afterward the kings of Judah, were anointed from the flask of oil prepared by Moses in the wilderness; and that the last drops were used on the head of Josiah, with whom the rite ceased. *Blow ye with the trumpet.* Blowing with trumpets seems to have been a part of royal inauguration ceremonies. See 2 Sam. 15: 10; 2 Kings 9: 13; 11: 14. The proclamation of the fact that a new king reigned was made in this way.

35 *Ye shall come up after him.* From Gihon to the palace, publicly recognizing him as king. *Sit upon my throne.* Taking his seat at once and receiving royal honor and authority. *King in my stead.* David really abdicated his throne and placed Solomon upon it. *Israel and Judah.* The kingdom of the whole nation had come to David in two parts, and he speaks of both of these here to intimate that both were united in Solomon.

The king's command was carried out and the joy was very great, "so that the earth rent with the sound." v. 40. Adonijah and his party in their feasting heard the shouts and the trumpets, and soon learned that Solomon was king. The news sent terror to the heart of the usurper and his friends, and they rose up and fled. Adonijah ran to the tabernacle and caught hold of the horns of the altar for protection from Solomon's anger; and Solomon spared his life, promising him that he should live if he would prove himself worthy. However, it was but a little while until he was again engaged in secret plots to seize the throne, when he met the due reward of his treason, and was slain by Benaiah at Solomon's command.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

Nathan the prophet also came in. Good men should always be ready to aid every good cause. They should set themselves in opposition to all the schemes and conspiracies of the wicked. They should espouse the side of those who are being wronged or defrauded. All this Nathan did in this case. There was a conspiracy to overthrow God's own order for the succession to David's throne. Wicked men were in league for this purpose. And the plot was to defraud Solomon of that which rightfully was his. Nathan knew of all that was going on, and stepped in to defeat it. We ought to learn much from his example. We see in him a *loyal friend.* He had been David's friend for years. He had proven his friendship, not by flatteries and adulations, but by faithfulness, even when, to be faithful, he had to reprove the king for his sins. He had enjoyed the king's confidence and friendship for long years. Now, in David's old age, he does not forsake him, but remains to the last true to his interests. Many people would have let things take their own course, not mixing in the quarrel, satisfied with not being disloyal. But Nathan is not that kind of a friend. He makes David's interests his own, and when the king is too feeble to take care of them himself, he interposes. We may profitably study Nathan's conduct as David's friend. But there is here more than personal friendship. His bold, prompt interference on behalf of the right and against the wrong suggests a duty which we should mark well. No one has a right to sit still and see great public wrongs perpetrated, and lift no finger of protest or opposition. This applies to

such usurpations of government as Adonijah attempted, but it applies also to all the plots and combinations of wicked men, and to all great evils. The good men of a community ought to be its defence.

Adonijah . . . is gone down this day, and hath slain oxen and fat cattle and sheep. It may be profitable to look a little into the story of this young man. For one thing, "he was a spoilt child." In the sixth verse of this chapter we learn that his father had not displeased him at any time nor crossed him in anything. He had let him have his own way in everything in his boyhood, and therefore he had never learned self-control. So David had himself to blame in some measure at least for Adonijah's revolt. Parental over-indulgence is bad also for the child, and works his ruin in the end, while it breaks the parents' hearts. Another unfortunate thing in Adonijah seems to have been his good looks, as it is intimated in the same verse. Of course it is no sin to be handsome, yet it is a dangerous endowment, and many a time proves a snare. Then it was Adonijah's ambition that finally wrecked him. He wanted to be king. We should all strive to make the most of ourselves and do the best with our powers. But we must always remember two things: 1. That God has a plan for every one of our lives; there is some particular place he wants us to fill. We have no right to aspire to or try to take the place that he has assigned to any other. 2. In our pressing for place we should never use any but right means. Climbing to position by fraud, by conspiracy, by doing wrong or injustice to others, or by disregarding God's will and law, is always a sin. Both these principles Adonijah disregarded. There seems to be little doubt that he knew of Solomon's designation for the kingdom, that God had chosen him. He had no right, therefore, to the throne, and could only take it by usurpation and only get to it by committing crime. It is important in teaching young men especially, to mark well the lines within which ambition is right and when it becomes a sin. The story of Adonijah should be studied through to the end. He conspired a second time to take the throne, having been pardoned for his first attempt. Then judgment came. His life was a sad failure.—There is an application of another character that may be made. Christ is the rightful King over each one of our lives. When we refuse to submit to him we become usurpers, and the final doom of all such is depicted in the second psalm.

Adonijah . . . hath called all the king's sons, and the captains of the host, and Abiathar the priest. It seems strange that so many of David's own family and life-long friends joined in this conspiracy. Yet no doubt Solomon was, among his sons, very much as was Joseph among the sons of Jacob—a father's favorite and envied by the others, so that they were all ready to sympathize with the plot against him. As for Joab, captain of the host, who had so long been David's officer, he probably had good reason to know that he was not likely to continue in power under Solomon; and when Adonijah desired his services he was ready to aid him. However, it is very sad to see the old soldier who had fought in so many battles for David prove a traitor to his master at the last. It is still more strange to see Abiathar the priest join the company of conspirators. He and David had long been friends. They had together shared Saul's hatred and persecution, and suffering together cements lives. Being the high priest, too, he must have known that God had approved of Solomon as king to succeed David. It has been suggested that envy of Zadok made Abiathar willing to go with the usurper. However, all these cases only show us the infirmity of human faithfulness, and the unreliability of human trusts and dependences. Life-long friends prove faithless and treacherous. Those who have eaten at one's table and grown great under one's shadow combine in foul conspiracy. One's own children join in revolt. All this imperfection of human friendship points us to the friendship of Christ which is constant and unchanging. Yet it must not be forgotten, in thinking of these unfaithful friends, that there were some that were not unfaithful. There *is* loyal human affection, which is like a fragment of the divine faithfulness.

Even as I sware unto thee . . . so will I certainly do this day. Learn a lesson on the duty of keeping engagements and promises. What we have solemnly pledged ourselves to do we should do at any cost to ourselves. One of the marks of the man who shall abide in God's presence, David elsewhere (Ps. 15: 4) says, is: "He sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not." Many consciences need toning up in this regard. There is much carelessness in keeping promises. Pledges sit lightly on many hearts. Vows are thoughtlessly made, and as thoughtlessly broken. An oath should not be needed to make an engagement sacred and inviolable; one's simple word should be held irrevocably binding. We ought to be so faithful in keeping our word in the smallest matters that people should learn to trust absolutely every promise we make.

Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after

me. It is a great thing to be the successor of a good father. We have no line of kings in our country, and therefore none of our young people can succeed their fathers as Solomon succeeded David. But we have a great many noble and kingly men whom their children ought to strive to succeed in position, in character, in usefulness. It is an honor to a son to be his father's successor in business. It is a still higher honor when he is his successor in moral qualities. A good lesson can be learned by comparing Adonijah and Solomon, two of David's sons. The former sought to be his father's successor in place and power, but not in worth and character. He was a type of the "fast young men," who think smoking and drinking and swearing and card-playing make one a man. There are plenty of them, good men's sons sometimes, too. On the other hand Solomon was thoughtful, studious, faithful to all duties as a young man, discarding the vices that his brother loved, and striving after the true manly virtues. The contrast is instructive. Solomon was the true successor of his father, not only in place but in worth. Have you a good father? Are you striving to "succeed" him? There is a sense in which every child of Christian parents may succeed to a throne. An American Christian woman, when traveling in some distant foreign land, was asked by a petty princess, "Have you any princesses in your country?" "Yes," was the quiet answer, "I am one." All Christians are children of a King. You may succeed your father in this sense. Are you doing it?

LESSON POINTS.

1. Good men should not be quiet and inactive when evil men are plotting against Christ's kingdom. v. 22.

2. A true friend should not remain in the background when enemies are conspiring against his friend, but should show his loyalty.

3. A spoilt child often causes a parent sorrow and shame in later years. vs. 6, 25.

4. Adonijah represents the "fast young man," who despises his father, refuses to be controlled by him, yet grasps after his money and his place.

5. Adonijah is the type of those who reject Christ as their King, and determine to be their own king.

6. The end of Adonijah illustrates the doom of fast young men and rejecters of Christ.

7. This lesson teaches the beauty of friendship and the value of friends. Had it not been for friends Solomon probably would not have been anointed king. vs. 32–34.

8. We should hold every vow and pledge, even our lightest promise, sacred. v. 30.

9. God has more to do than we know with the success or failure of men. He sets one up and pulls another down.

10. God's plans and purposes go on without failure, amid all men's strifes and ambitions.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

Nothing is so interesting as life. A teacher can always secure attention to a story. This lesson is full of stirring incidents of actual life; it is, in fact, a thrilling story. It needs only, therefore, to be skillfully presented by the teacher to hold the most thoughtless scholar while its important teachings and truths are impressed upon his mind.

The facts are these: There was an old king who had grown feeble, and had in a measure lost interest in the affairs of his kingdom. He had already named one of his sons, now a young man of fifteen or eighteen, as his successor. But he had other and older sons, and these were envious of the lad who had been chosen to be king. The oldest living of these sons thought that *he* ought to be king, because he was the eldest. He determined, therefore, to take the throne. He found all his brothers ready to join with him, because they all disliked the boy who was his father's favorite. Other men, some of the old king's life-long friends, pledged him their support. So a great scheme was started, and this oldest son was about to be crowned and declared king.

His father knew nothing of this, but there was one good man who heard of it, and hastening to the palace told the queen about it, and she told the king. The old man roused up and had the young son crowned at once, thus defeating the wicked plot of the older son.

Such is the story of the lesson, which may be graphically told, or rather its facts drawn out, by the teacher. Bring out the part performed by each of the principal actors—Adonijah, Nathan, Bath-sheba, David, Solomon, and gather the practical suggestions. Or take the lesson-plan of the Westminster helps.

I. *Adonijah Claims the Throne.* vs. 22–27. Gather all known facts about him. See vs. 5–21. Who was his mother? Her name means *dancer*, and she was probably a gay woman, beautiful but without principle. If so, her son inherited much from her. What is said about his home training? He was a spoilt child, spoilt by parental indulgence. What is said about his

person? He was *goodly*, a handsome young man. What do we learn of his character? He was ambitious, and ambitious to get that which he knew did not belong to him, but had been allotted to another. What did he do? He determined to usurp the throne. What seemed to give him a right to succeed his father? He was the eldest living son. Why did not the throne belong to him? David had chosen Solomon as his successor, and God had approved the choice. What sins did Adonijah commit in usurping the throne? 1. He sinned against God, in rebelling against the divine purpose which gave Solomon the throne. 2. He dishonored his father in plotting to snatch the throne from him in his old age and from the son to whom he had pledged it. 3. He sinned against his brother Solomon in seeking to rob him of his divinely allotted honor.

How far had the plot advanced? Who brought word to David? What are the lessons from Adonijah? From Nathan's part? (See Notes.)

II. *David Declares Solomon King.* vs. 28–31. What was David's condition at this time? What effect had the news on him? What did he say to the queen? What lessons do we learn from his reply to Bathsheba? (See Notes.)

III. *Solomon Anointed King.* vs. 32–35. Gather from class all that is known of young Solomon at or before this time. His age? His habits? Must have been studious and diligent; probably a pupil of Nathan. His character? Evidently good. Contrast him with Adonijah, and draw the lessons. Why was he anointed at once? Who took part in the ceremonies? Describe the order followed. What came of Adonijah's plot? Tell his after story. What are the practical lessons?

SUGGESTIONS FOR BLACKBOARD.

Many excellent superintendents never, others but very rarely, use the blackboard. Others again use it every Sabbath. The way of putting the lesson upon the board should always be determined by what the superintendent desires to teach in his desk review. For example, if Adonijah is to furnish the centre of the review, the following may be put on the board:

A SHORT BIOGRAPHY
A SAD
A SPOILT CHILD.
BAD MAN.
WRECKED LIFE.

The most effective way to make up this lesson will be to question from the school the facts about Adonijah's youth, and then put down the words, "A Spoilt Child," impressing the lesson; next, to bring out the facts of his usurpation, and put down the second line, "A Bad Man;" finally, to recall his end and terrible failure, writing the last line, "A Wrecked Life."

SOLOMON SUCCEEDING DAVID.
DAVID'S GOD'S CHOICE
WORTHY TO REIGN.

Or take for desk review the topic, "The Son that succeeds a good Father," and gather such elements as:

HONORS HIS FATHER.
SERVES HIS FATHER'S GOD.
WAITS GOD'S TIME.
TAKES UP HIS FATHER'S WORK.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

BY MRS. G. R. ALDEN—"PANSY."

The Story Told in Class.—What is this in my hand? (A gilt crown.) Look what name I am fastening to this crown. (DAVID.) Who knows where David was, as told in our lesson to-day? What was he doing? A sick old man. He has but a little while to live. I wonder if his children are doing all they can to make his last days happy?

Here is a square to stand for a room in King David's palace. Here are two marks for a man and woman talking together. Who knows who they are? (The prophet Nathan and Solomon's mother.) This prophet has come to give her some bad news. What is this? (Hold up a crown cut from common brown paper.) This is to stand for the crown that a man put on who was trying to get the kingdom. He thought he was going to have the golden crown, but the plan he made to get it was bad, and the crown he secured was as worthless as this piece of

paper. Whose name shall I pin to this crown? (Adonijah.) Here is a corner on the board which we will have stand for Adonijah's home. This is an outline of an Eastern table. What are all these people gathered here for? Why was Adonijah giving a dinner party? (I am supposing that you have taught your scholars to study, and that some of them at least can supply the details of the story.)

Here is another room in the palace. This mark stands for the old king. This one for his wife. They are talking together. Here comes another guest. (Nathan the prophet.) Now the wife has gone away and left them together. (Erase the mark which stood for her.) What do Nathan and the king say? The wife is called again, and the king repeats to her a promise he had made. What is it?

The teacher must now pass beyond the limits of the lesson, and describe the scene of the inauguration, taking David's name from the crown and pinning Solomon's there. Also describe the dismay of the guests at the dinner party where Adonijah wears his mock crown. The news comes to them while they are feasting. The guests are frightened, now that they are found with this false one instead of with Solomon. They know this means danger for them. The crown which Adonijah thought he had stolen turns to paper in his hands. These details, if carefully studied, can be given in a few words, and will make vivid reality of the whole story.

Application.—The golden crown again, not with Solomon's name, but "JESUS." His Father has given the kingdom of this world to him. But here is a usurper. (Show the brown paper crown with the name "SATAN" pinned on it.) He is trying to get possession. He has many followers. People to whom he promises happiness if they will do as he says. He feasts them with wine, and with cigars, and with false pleasures. He teaches them to lie and to deceive. He coaxes the children. He makes them think that this thing which they are doing is not really wrong, but is only a little fun. He makes many a feast for his followers. Every bit of "fun" which has sin in it is of his getting up. The time is surely coming when the true King will reign. The Father's promise is sure: oh, much surer than David's word. He might have failed; God never fails. God has promised that "he whose right it is shall reign." That means Jesus. Think of the terror of those who are listening to the false promises of Satan and are found among his guests when the King comes to claim his own! Some of King David's officers were found with the enemy. Some of those who go to church or Sabbath-school will be found on Satan's side. Will it be any of you, my scholars? How can you be *sure* that it will not.

Lesson II. **DAVID'S CHARGE TO SOLOMON.** Oct. 12th, 1884.

1 Chron. 22: 6–19. Memorize vs. 17–19.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Arise, therefore, and be doing, and the Lord be with you."—1 Chron. 22: 16.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 1 Kings 1: 36–53... *The Conspiracy Defeated.*
T. 1 Chron. 22: 1–19.. *David's Charge to Solomon.*
W. Ps. 122: 1–9..... *The House of the Lord.*
Th. 1 Chron. 29: 20–30. *David's Death.*
F. Ps. 89: 1–14..... *God's Covenant with his Chosen.*
S. Ps. 96: 1–13..... *Declare His Glory.*
S. John 4: 5–24 ..... *Spiritual Worshipers.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. Solomon's Work. 2. David's Preparations. 3. The Princes' Part.

Time.—B. C. 1015.

Place.—Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 99. *What rule hath God given for our direction in prayer?* A. The whole word of God is of use to direct us in prayer; but the special rule of direction is that form of prayer, which Christ taught his disciples, commonly called, *The Lord's Prayer.*

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—We are now in the closing months or weeks of David's reign. Our last lesson gave an account of Solomon's anointing and proclamation as king. David lived for some time after this, and continued his preparations for the temple which Solomon was to build. He gathered workmen, and they were busily employed in hewing stones. Cedar wood in abundance came in rafts to Joppa, and was dragged to Jerusalem. Iron was purchased in Tyre and imported. Thus the most magnificent preparations were made, showing David's deep and enthusiastic interest in the building. The temple, while erected by Solomon, was really the work of two reigns. In our lesson we have David's charge to Solomon concerning the building of this house of the Lord.

6 ¶ Then he called for Sol'o-mon his son, and charged him to build a house for the LORD God of Is'ra-el.

7 And Da'vid said to Sol'o-mon, My son, as for me, it was in my mind to build a house unto the name of the LORD my God: [2 Sam. 7 : 2; 1 Kings 8 : 17; Ps. 132 : 2–5.]

8 But the word of the LORD came to me, saying, Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build a house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight. [1 Kings 5 : 3.]

9 Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be Sol'o-mon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Is'ra-el in his days. [1 Kings 4 : 25.]

10 He shall build a house for my name; and he shall be my son, and I *will be* his Father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Is'ra-el for ever. [1 Kings 5 : 5.]

11 Now, my son, the LORD be with thee; and prosper thou, and build the house of the LORD thy God, as he hath said of thee.

12 Only the LORD give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Is'ra-el, that thou mayest keep the law of the LORD thy God. [Ps. 72 : 1.]

13 Then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfill the statutes and judgments which the LORD charged Mo'ses with concerning Is'ra-el: be strong, and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed. [Josh. 1 : 7, 8.]

14 Now, behold, in my trouble I have prepared for the house of the LORD a hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver; and of brass and iron without weight; for it is in abundance: timber also and stone have I prepared; and thou mayest add thereto. [v. 3.]

15 Moreover, *there are* workmen with thee in abundance, hewers and workers of stone and timber, and all manner of cunning men for every manner of work.

16 Of the gold, the silver, and the brass, and the iron, *there is* no number. Arise *therefore,* and be doing, and the LORD be with thee.

17 ¶ Da'vid also commanded all the princes of Is'ra-el to help Sol'o-mon his son, *saying,*

18 *Is* not the LORD your God with you? and hath he *not* given you rest on every side? for he hath given the inhabitants of the land into mine hand; and the land is subdued before the LORD, and before his people. [Josh. 22 : 4.]

19 Now set your heart and your soul to seek the LORD your God; arise therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of the LORD God, to bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and the holy vessels of God, into the house that is to be built to the name of the LORD. [1 Kings 5 : 3.]

6 *Then he called for Solomon.* Now probably about eighteen years of age. Some Jewish traditions make him fifteen, others twelve, when he began to reign. *Charged him to build an house.* David was old and soon to leave the earth, and he would make sure that Solomon understood the nature of the great work which he was to do. For other parting words to Solomon, see 2 Kings 2 : 1–9.

7 *It was in my mind to build.* See 2 Sam. 7 : 1–16. [Lesson of July 20th.] We learn there how the thought came into David's mind. He had built for himself a palace of cedar and dwelt in it, while the ark of the Lord dwelt in a tent. This did not seem right to him, and he conceived the purpose of building a temple for the Lord. Compare also 1 Chron. 17 : 1–4.

8 *But the word of the Lord came to me.* In 2 Sam. 7, and 1 Chron. 17 : 4–11 we have the message of the Lord through Nathan, in which David learned that he should not build the temple, but the reason is not there given. It is probable, therefore, that on some other occasion David received another message, giving the ground of the divine prohibition. See chap. 28 : 3. *Thou shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood.* David is not blamed for having shed blood. His wars were for the subjugation of the enemies of the Lord. His work was conquest. One reason of the prohibition was, that David had his hands full in waging the wars that were necessary for the establishment of his kingdom. See 1 Kings 5 : 3. Another reason was, that the country itself was not yet ready in its unsettled condition for such a costly and permanent structure. A further reason was, that the temple should be a type of Christ, the Prince of Peace, and should therefore be built by a man of peace and in a time of peace. There may possibly be a reference also in this prohibition to the blood of Uriah and those who fell with him, which stained David's hands and rendered him unfit to build the sacred temple for God's dwelling place.

9 *A man of rest.* Not engaged in wars, but enjoying peace. See 1 Kings 5 : 4. *I will give him rest.* That he might devote all the energies of his kingdom to the one great work. *Solomon.* The name means *peaceful.* He had another name, Jedidiah, "beloved of Jehovah." 2 Sam. 12 : 25. *I will give peace and quietness to Israel in his days.* See the description in 1 Kings 4 : 20–25 of the profound peace enjoyed by the nation in the days of Solomon's reign. David's wars left Solomon a kingdom broad and strong, without active enemies.

10 *He shall build an house.* See 2 Sam. 7 : 13, 16; 1 Chron. 17 : 12, 13. *I will establish the throne . . . for ever.* The primary reference

here is to Solomon and the promise is conditional (v. 13); but there is no doubt that the promise applied also to Christ and his eternal kingdom. See Acts 2: 30.

11 Thus far David has been explaining to Solomon God's purpose concerning the building of the temple; now he gives him counsel and instruction. *The Lord be with thee.* Or, "The Lord *shall* be with thee." There is no blessing possible in any work unless the Lord be with us. His presence implies his favor and his help. *Prosper thou and build . . . as he hath said of thee.* He knew what God's plan for his life was, and he should now fulfill it.

12 *The Lord give thee wisdom.* This is a prayer that the Lord would qualify Solomon for the great work. See Ps. 72: 1; 1 Kings 3: 12. *Give thee charge.* Necessary instructions. *That thou mayest keep the law.* We can please God and prosper only when we obey his commandments.

13 *Then shalt thou prosper.* Compare Deut. 31: 6; Josh. 1: 7, 8. *Be strong and of good courage.* He must not be a weak and timid man. The work was great, requiring energy and positiveness.

14 *In my trouble.* Margin, *poverty.* David refers to the hard and painful experiences of his own reign, his wars with enemies, and the revolts and other troubles in his own kingdom. In the midst of these he had yet accumulated a large amount of materials for the temple. *A hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver.* It is impossible to calculate definitely the value of these vast amounts, as we do not know the standard of the talent, either in gold or silver, since its worth varied at different times. Gieke has this note, using Kitto's computations: "The gold left by David to Solomon for the temple, as stated in 1 Chron. 22: 14; 29: 4, was equal to 13,500,052 pounds troy; the silver 127,125,000 pounds troy. At the present value of the two metals, this would be equivalent to £1,029,377,496 sterling. This inconceivable sum, however, is obtained by estimating the value of the talent by the Jewish standard. But . . . it has been thought probable that the Chaldean talent is implied. This would reduce the amount to £600,000,000. But if the Syrian talent was in the mind of the sacred writer, the value would only be £120,000,000." It is certain, however, that David had made vast preparations, gathering the gold and silver in spoil from the foreign nations he conquered, and from royal gifts brought to him by friendly kings. In addition to the gold and silver, he had also gathered brass, iron, timber and stone in great abundance. *Thou mayest add thereto.* There was not yet enough for the work, which would be very costly.

15 *There are workmen with thee.* See v. 2. These were already engaged under David in preparing the stones and timbers. *Cunning men.* Skilled in their occupation.

17 *The princes of Israel.* The heads of the several tribes.

19 *The sanctuary.* The holy house. *The holy vessels.* The golden candlestick, the snuffers, the censers, etc., which belonged to the furniture of the tabernacle.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

He . . . charged him to build an house for the Lord. David was an old man about to die. He had to leave unfinished the great work on which he had set his heart. This is often the case in life. Moses died on the edge of the promised land, when the great work of his life was about to be achieved. Raphael's painting of the Transfiguration, wonderful as it is, is an unfinished work. He was engaged upon it when he died, and it was carried after his coffin in his funeral procession. Buckle, the historian, dying at Damascus, in the midst of his years, cried out: "My book! my book!" He had planned a great history of civilization, of which two volumes only were finished. He had to leave it incomplete. Disraeli, dying at Beaconsfield, though full of years and of honors, was heard to utter as his last words: "I am overwhelmed!" He was thinking of the great plans and purposes of his life not yet achieved. So David had a great plan in his mind, to the outworking of which he had given the later years of his life. He would not be permitted to see it accomplished, and now he passes it over to his son, and charges *him* to carry out the purpose. It is a great comfort to a good father to have a son to whom he can commit his business or his unfinished plans, with confidence that the trust will be faithfully executed. The young people who study this lesson should think of this. They will soon succeed their parents. Death will remove the father and the mother who are now so beloved. Will you be ready to take their places and carry on their work? Will you take their places in the church, in the community? Will you be worthy successors? Will you maintain the honor of their name? Will their good qualities be represented in you? It ought to be the highest ambition of the sons of a good

father to continue his influence and his work, to build up the house he has planned.

It was in my mind to build an house. . . . But the word of the Lord came to me, saying, . . . thou shalt not build. God was pleased with his thought and desire, but that was not his work. His part in God's great plan was to conquer the country, subduing the strongholds of old enemies, and thus prepare the way for the building. Besides, he was to gather materials for the house. Every one has his particular work assigned in the divine allotment. Sometimes the things we purpose in our hearts to do we are not permitted to accomplish. They belong to some other worker who is to come after us. There are many people who, like David, are called to do preparatory work. A man goes to the West and clears off a piece of ground, building a rude log hut. His son succeeds him, and in the midst of broad, rich acres erects a palatial home. The father's work was just as necessary and important in its place, though not so showy, as the son's. One set of men make the excavations for a great building, and then put in the foundations. For weeks they toil away under ground, and then another set of men come, and the walls rise up and the magnificent building draws all eyes. The foundation work is buried and hidden, but who will say it is less important, though no one admires it, than the splendid house that towers above the street? This illustrates David's part and Solomon's in the temple-building. But for what David did Solomon never could have built the temple. It is just the same in all Christian work. One sows, another reaps. One prepares the way, another follows and speaks the word which saves. To each one God allots a place and a part, and if we do our own work, that which God gives to us, he asks nothing more. He will not forget our desires and purposes to do more. He accepts the purposes and blesses us for the good intentions, though he lets others carry them out.

A son shall be born to thee . . . I will give him rest from all his enemies . . . I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days. There is something very striking in this promise. God has a great work to be done, requiring all the energies of his people, and all favoring conditions and circumstances, and he commands a period of peace and quietness. Fierce, warlike nations become gentle as lambs; angry feuds are forgotten; human passions rest, while God's temple rises. One lesson is, that when God gives any one a mission to fulfill, he prepares the way for him and makes all circumstances propitious. Another thought is, that God *can* quiet the fierce storms of human passions and make peace about his people. He that shut the lions' mouths when Daniel lay in their den can hold all our enemies in check while we do our work.

Prosper thou and build the house of the Lord thy God, as he said of thee. Here we see the divine purpose and the human duty brought together. God had said that Solomon should build the house, and now David exhorts him to carry out the divine plan. All through the great work Solomon was conscious of doing what God himself had marked out for him to do. It is not often that any one has such clear and specific instructions as to his life-work; yet it is just as true of each one of us as it was of Solomon, that our work *is* laid out for us, and that we have only to build as God has planned. A really successful life is one that finds and does just the work for which it was made and sent into this world, whether that be a great or small work, conspicuous or obscure. The thing God wants us to do is for us the greatest thing possible in this world. But it may be asked, "How can we know what God has marked out for us?" True, we are not all told as was Solomon what our part is; yet we may all learn just as clearly as he did. There are several instructions given here to Solomon which we must observe if we would learn and be able to do what God has allotted.

1. We must have God with us. "*The Lord be with thee.*" We must live in communion with him. Enoch *walked* with God, that is, he lived so as to please God. He kept close to him. There is no danger but that God will be with us if we walk with him. If he is with us all the time he will tell us what to do hour by hour. Once on the throne of Russia sat two boy princes, hearing causes and giving judgments. All were astonished at the wisdom of their decisions and answers. The secret was, that back of their throne, concealed by a curtain, sat the wise princess Sophia, who whispered in their ears the words they spoke. So if God is with us he will guide and direct us, telling us what he wants us to do.

2. We must be prompt and active in doing what God gives us to do. "*Prosper thou and build . . . as he said.*" God would not build the house; Solomon must do that. We have to do the work ourselves when we know what it is, and we must do *what* he gives, and do it *as* he commands. There really is but little perplexity ever in knowing our duty if we are only ready and willing to do it. As fast, therefore, as we learn what we ought to do, we must do it. We must not wait to see our *whole* duty,

unto the end, but do now the duty of the moment, and as we go on God will tell us what to do next. To-day's work is enough to-day; no matter about to-morrow's till to-morrow comes. Let us be sure we *do* all the duty we *know*.

3. We must ask wisdom and help from God in doing our part. "*The Lord give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge.*" We never can find out our part in this world by our own wisdom, or by following our own way. We must recognize our ignorance, and ask God at each step, "And what now?" If God has a plan for our life it is very clear that we must not be for ever making our own plans and taking our own way. That he will show us our duty and give us wisdom and grace to do it, if we ask him, is very clear. Very likely this is not the usual view of life even among Christians, yet there is no doubt that it is the true view. It may set aside many human ambitions, but if we take God's way rather than our own we shall never regret it. Every human plan or ambition should be brought to God; then if it accords with us it should be carried out; if it does not, his should *always* be taken instead.

4. We must keep God's law. "*Thou shalt prosper if thou takest heed to fulfill the statutes.*" No one need ever talk about doing his allotted work in this world who is not keeping God's moral law. The first thing God wants of us is to *be* good; after that he will accept the good we *do*. Holiness must come before service, and holiness is obedience to the commandments.

5. We must be strong and courageous. "*Be strong and of good courage; dread not.*" No weak, timid, vacillating man can ever fulfill his allotted part in this world. It needs strength, bravery and perseverance, for there are difficulties and dangers continually to be met, and if we grow discouraged or lose heart we shall fail. If we would have a finished work at the end we must go on with unwavering fidelity and courage, never faltering. If God gives us a work to do he means to help us through, but it is our part *to do* it.

If we follow these instructions, we, too, shall learn what our work is, and shall be able to do our allotted part.

In my trouble I have prepared for the house of the Lord an hundred thousand talents of gold. Even amid wars and strifes and great trials and sorrows he had kept this work in his heart, and had made all this vast preparation for it. So no matter what cares and anxieties any one of us may have, we may yet be doing something all the time for God and for his cause. If we cannot gather and save money, we may by prayer call down blessings, and may speak many a word that will be a blessing. We may at least be building up the temple-walls in our own hearts. A prisoner suffering for his religion lay in a deep dark dungeon. But once a day for a few minutes a ray of light streamed down and fell on the wall. He found on the floor a nail and a stone, and with these rude implements, improving the moments each day when the light shone down, he cut on the wall of the dungeon an image of Christ on his cross. So in the sorest circumstances we may all at least do something toward the fashioning of the likeness of Christ in our own or others' hearts.

David also commanded all the princes . . . to help Solomon. Every one has something to do in building up the temple of the Lord in this world. Christ is the great Master-builder, but he wants the help of all his people, and will not despise, but will gladly accept, the humblest work of the lowliest one, who loves him and wants to aid in the great work.

LESSON POINTS.

1. It is a good thing when a father can commit his unfinished plans to his son. v. 6.

2. Every one has his own part in God's work; some only prepare the way while others build. vs. 7–9.

3. When God has a great work to be done he prepares the man to do it and the times to favor it. v. 9.

4. God gives peculiar favor to those whom he calls to do great things. v. 10.

5. Those who would do God's work must (*a*) have God with them, (*b*) be ready to do what he allots, (*c*) receive divine wisdom, (*d*) keep God's law, (*e*) be strong and brave. vs. 11–13.

6. Even in hardship and trouble we may all be doing something toward God's temple. v. 14.

7. There is something for every one to do in the work of the Lord. v. 17.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

Last words are always cherished; here are David's last counsels to his son. How old was David now? Who was king? Why was Solomon king while David still lived? This question brings up a review of the last lesson, and prepares the way for our present study. Picture a feeble old man, perhaps on his bed, calling his young son to him and giving him his last charge.

I. *Solomon's Work.* vs. 6–13. What *was* the

work? Who first thought of building a temple? What started the thought in his mind? See lesson of July 20th. Was God displeased with David's plan? Why did he not permit him to carry it out? Bring out the truth here that David's work was not temple-building, but the subjugation of the country and preparation for building. What did God promise him? Many a parent has to leave much to his children to be done when he is gone. How would Solomon be fitted for the work? How would God prepare the country and the times? What personal charge did he give to Solomon? vs. 11–13. (See the points suggested in Notes.) Teach that to every one God allots some particular part in his work, and show how we may learn what our part is and how we can do it.

II. *David's Preparations.* vs. 14–16. What sort of life had David experienced? It was full of trouble. Call out some of his trials and sorrows. What had he done toward the temple in the midst of all his troubles? Talk about these vast piles of gold and silver. Teach that even in hardship and trouble we should be doing something all the time for God, something to help on with his work. (See Notes.) Show that the temple was really the work of two kings; David made preparations and Solomon erected the building.

III. *The Princes' Part.* vs. 17–19. Who were the princes? What did David charge them to do? What reasons did he urge upon them for doing their part? 1. The Lord was with them, showing his favor. 2. He had given the nation rest, and they were free now to devote themselves to this work. 3. He had subdued all their enemies, so that there were no enemies and all of the country was theirs. What counsel did he give them? v. 19. What command? Teach here that there is something for every one to do in the building up of the Lord's spiritual temple. Show scholars how the youngest can do something, and illustrate by telling of what even little children can do.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BLACKBOARD.

ARISE and BE DOING, and
THE LORD WITH THEE.

This suggests two thoughts—Solomon's part, "Arise and be doing;" and then the help he would receive from the Lord, wisdom, direction, etc., as represented in the words of the promise, "The Lord be with thee." These two thoughts hold in them the whole of the lesson.

GOD'S TEMPLE BUILDERS.
THEY WALK WITH GOD,
GET WISDOM FROM
KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS,
HAVE GOOD COURAGE.

This outline suggests the principal points of instruction in the lesson for "God's temple builders." Draw out from school by questioning, and put on board as the review proceeds. This holds attention and impresses the thoughts.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

I would like to suggest to primary teachers to use this lesson and the one for October 26th in a somewhat peculiar manner. I am impressed with the fact that the young people in our Bible classes, as a rule, know extremely little about the work of the Church. What she is doing through her various Boards seems to be an unsolved problem to many of her members. Even the *names* of these Boards have an unfamiliar sound. I have an ambition that when the primary children graduate into the Bible classes, they shall appear there as intelligent Christians, well versed in all the regular work of the Church.

With this thought in view, I mean to teach these lessons by linking them to our Board of Church Erection.

1. *The Scene.* The old man David talking with the one who is to succeed him. What is the message of importance that he wishes to leave with him? Why he wants him to build a house in which to worship God. Why does he think Solomon will do this work? Because God has promised that it shall be so.

Think of the son standing before his honored father listening to his words. "My son," he says, "I wanted to do this, but God said I could not have that honor; he said that I should have a son who would do the work for me, and that he would prosper him in it. Now, my son, you are the one whom God has chosen to this honor. You need not be afraid to undertake it. The Lord will give you wisdom, and if you obey him, will see that you prosper. Be strong and

of good courage." These facts may be put into story-form.

2. *David's preparation for his son's work.* This also may be made very interesting by dwelling on the great sums of gold and silver, and all necessary things which had been gotten ready. It is not such hard work for Solomon after all; his father has done the hardest part.

The two ways of developing the *facts* of the lesson should always be used in the primary class. For the encouragement of those who study, the facts should be called from them by questions. For the purpose of making the scene vivid, as well as for the teaching of those who have not studied, the story should then be told, not quite as you would do it if none had studied; instead, you may appeal frequently to them for the next link in the chain. Experience has proved that they will be even more interested than those who knew nothing about the lesson before they came to class.

PERSONAL APPLICATION.—1. *Our Father's charge to us.*

Lead the children out to the mount of ascension. The time has come when the dear Lord must go back to heaven. What charge will he give his followers? "Go ye into all the world," etc. Then the people must have churches in which to gather to hear the gospel. The children far away must have places in which to gather for Sabbath-school. One great temple made of gold and precious gems will not do now. The people are scattered over a great world. Many temples are needed. That is part of the charge. Gold and silver and iron and wood are needed now as then. Where shall we get them?

2. *Our Father's preparation for the Work.*

Secure if possible specimens of gold, silver and iron ore. Where did they come from? Where does all the gold come from and the silver? God has hidden them in the earth for us to use when the right time comes.

Help the children to get a thought of the vast preparations he has made that his work may go on in the world. Think of the trees in their own woods, in their own fields, in the great rich forests! Think of the gardens which little hands may plant, and the fruit and flowers and vegetables that may be raised and exchanged for copper or silver, with which to help to build churches.

Do you see the possibilities of the lesson, dear teachers? Why not make careful preparation to apply the story in this practical way? God has certainly done the hard work, the part that we could not do. How many ways can your children think of for getting some of this silver or gold into their own hands that they may give it for the churches? God has furnished them each with a pair of hands, a pair of feet, and a mind to direct. What are they doing?

This furnishes opportunity to call out ways of earning money for the cause.

I think it would be well, on the previous Sabbath, to give the class a hint of what is coming. Tell them you want each to tell one way in which he has earned his money for benevolence during the past weeks. Keep in mind the thought that God furnished the materials, but our part is to bring them in. How? Sometimes by weeding the fruits that he has caused to grow. Sometimes by picking the nuts that he made, etc. All the way through, it is God and the child working together.

"I don't earn my money so," said a dear little five-year-old. "God doesn't help me a bit. I just rock the cradle, and mamma gives me a penny."

"Ah, but," said the quick-witted teacher, "where did you get the baby? Didn't God create him for you? Don't you suppose God knew that you could get some of the copper that he has made by taking care of the baby whom he made?"

I have purposely avoided any attempt to work this lesson out in detail. This is just a mass of hints which I throw out to you, hoping that each teacher will delight to plan the best way to develop the truth for her pupils.

Lesson III. **SOLOMON'S CHOICE.** Oct. 19th, 1884.

1 Kings 3: 5-15. Memorize vs. 9, 10.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Wisdom is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom."—Prov. 4: 7.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 1 Kings 3: 1-15...*Solomon's Choice.*
T. 1 Kings 3: 16-28..*Solomon's Wisdom.*
W. Prov. 4: 1-13.....*Wisdom the Principal Thing.*
Th. James 1: 1-12.....*Prayer for Wisdom.*
F. Prov. 9: 1-12.....*The Call of Wisdom.*
S. Job 28: 12-28.....*Where and What is Wisdom?*
S. Prov. 2: 1-15.....*The Lord Giveth Wisdom.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Choice Made. 2. The Choice Approved. 3. The Choice Exceeded.

Time.—B. C. 1015.

Places.—Gibeon, Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 100. *What doth the preface of the Lord's Prayer teach us?* A. The preface of the Lord's Prayer, which is, *Our Father which art in heaven*, teacheth us to draw near to God, with all holy reverence and confidence, as children to a father, able and ready to help us; and that we should pray with and for others.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—The traditions of the Jews say that Solomon was eighteen years old when he became king, although some traditions make him fifteen and others even as young as twelve. David lived about six months after his abdication of the throne in his son's favor. When he was dead Adonijah conspired again to wrest the throne from Solomon, and was slain by Solomon's command. Joab, the commander of the armies, was also slain for his part in the usurpation, and Benaiah was made captain in his stead. Abiathar was deposed from the priesthood, and Zadok filled his place. Solomon's next step was to marry, and he sought and obtained an alliance with Egypt, marrying the daughter of the Pharaoh, who it is probable adopted the Jewish religion and became a proselyte. Solomon began obediently, walking in the statutes of the Lord. It must have been soon after David's death that the incident of the present lesson occurred. Solomon went to Gibeon to sacrifice. He did it grandly, offering a thousand victims on the old altar. While there he had the vision here described.

---

5 ¶ In Gib'e-on the LORD appeared to Sol'o-mon in a dream by night: and God said, Ask what I shall give thee.

6 And Sol'o-mon said, Thou hast shewed unto thy servant Da'vid my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as *it is* this day. [2 Chron. 1: 8; 2 Kings 20: 3; Ps. 15: 2.]

7 And now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of Da'vid my father: and I *am but* a little child: I know not *how* to go out or come in. [1 Chron. 20: 1.]

8 And thy servant *is* in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. [Deut. 7: 6; Gen. 13: 16.]

9 Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people? [2 Chron. 1: 10; Prov. 2: 3–9; Ps. 72: 1, 2; Heb. 5: 14.]

10 And the speech pleased the Lord, that Sol'o-mon had asked this thing.

11 And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; [James 4: 3.]

12 Behold, I have done according to thy word: lo I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. [1 John 5: 14, 15; Eccles. 1: 16.]

13 And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honor: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days. [Matt. 6: 33.]

14 And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father Da'vid did walk, then I will lengthen thy days. [1 Kings 15: 5; Prov. 3: 2.]

15 And Sol'o-mon awoke; and, behold, *it was* a dream. And he came to Je-ru'sa-lem, and stood before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and offered up burnt-offerings, and offered peace-offerings, and made a feast to all his servants.

5 *In Gibeon.* From 1 Chron. 16: 37–40 it appears that in David's time the tabernacle of the Lord which Moses made had been transferred from Nob (1 Sam. 21: 6) to Gibeon. The ark of God, however, David had brought to Jerusalem, placing it in the new tabernacle which he had prepared and pitched for it. The brasen altar that Bazaleel had made was in Gibeon before the old tabernacle, and the record adds that Solomon and the congregation sought unto it. See 2 Chron. 1: 3–6. Gibeon was about six miles north of Jerusalem by direct route. Massive ruins have been found there, also the remains of a large tank, supposed to have been "the pool of Gibeon" mentioned in 2 Sam. 2: 13. The place is known now as El-Jib. Dr. Dulles, in "The Ride Through Palestine," thus refers to Gibeon: "In two hours the village of El-Jib—the Arabic equivalent of Gibeon—rose before us on a gentle hill. Descending into a valley which encircles the hill of Gibeon, and then ascending, we reached the town in less than an hour more. If Gibeon in the days of Joshua was 'a great city, as one of the royal cities,' it is far from being a royal city now. True, its houses bear marks of antiquity, but they are old without the traits that make the old venerable. Solidly built, square, flat-roofed, separated by narrow alleys, they did not tempt us to tarry. Yet the situation of the town is noble. Its hill is rounded and distinct, looking down on all sides on fruitful fields and

orchards. The limestone rocks lie in horizontal strata, as if terraced by the hand of man, each step being clean cut and from six to ten feet high. Adjoining the village on the south is a broad surface, apparently artificially leveled, now planted with olive trees. We fancied that it was here that the tabernacle stood and the altar, when Solomon offered at a high festival a thousand burnt-offerings. It was at that time that the Lord appeared to Solomon, in this very Gibeon, in a dream by night, and said, 'Ask what I shall give thee;' and here he received the boon of wisdom which he craved. Soon after this the altar found its permanent home in the temple built by the young king at Jerusalem. But where is that 'Pool of Gibeon' where the twelve men of Abner's army and the twelve of Joab's army 'played' before the commanders of the two Israelitish factions in so odd a manner? 'They caught every one his fellow by the beard,' says the historian, 'and thrust his sword into his fellow's side, so they fell down together. Wherefore that place was called the "place of strong men," which is in Gibeon.' Is there any such pool? Yes. Go down the eastern slope of the hill, and there you find the reservoir and the field in which this bloody play introduced the battle which crushed the family of Saul and made David king of all Israel." *The Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream.* After the day's great sacrifices. v. 4. No doubt Solomon had been very sincere and earnest in his worship, and had been praying fervently for wisdom while he presented his offerings. In his sleep his thoughts ran on in the same channel, and this vision was the answer to his prayer. The Lord appeared or revealed himself to Solomon in a dream. This was one mode of divine revelation. Compare Gen. 15: 1; 28: 12; 37: 5. *Ask what I shall give thee.* As if asking him to choose that from among all possible divine gifts and blessings which he esteemed the best and most to be desired.

6 *Solomon said.* He remembers God's mercies to his father. *As he walked before thee in truth, etc.* This was true of David in general, although there were such sad blemishes in his life. God calls him the man after his own heart. Acts 13: 22. *This great kindness.* The greatest of all God's mercies to David was that his son should sit on his throne, that the kingdom should stay in his family, as it had not in Saul's. See chap. 1: 48.

7 *I am but a little child.* His age was now perhaps about nineteen, if he was eighteen when he began to reign, but he was inexperienced as a child in ruling. He was of lowly spirit, conscious of his inability to govern the nation without divine help. *How to go out or come in.* How to conduct himself as king. The expression was proverbial.

8 *A great people.* He is thinking of the difficult position he has been called to fill. He is but a little child in experience and wisdom, and the nation is great, great in numbers and great in importance, as chosen of God. *That cannot be numbered.* See Gen. 13: 16.

9 *Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart.* This was his request, his choice of blessings. He saw the difficulty and responsibility of his position; he desired to rule well; he felt in himself utterly incompetent to do so; and he implored God to give him the wisdom he needed for the duties devolving upon him. *To judge thy people.* To decide causes between man and man. *Between good and bad.* Between right and wrong, in matters that would come before him, so as to do justice to all and never injustice. *Who is able?* The question implies that no one alone is able.

10 *The speech pleased the Lord.* Although Solomon was in a dream yet the choice he had made was the true expression of his heart's desire, and was commended and approved by the Lord. God is always pleased when his people make choices and prefer wise requests.

11 *God said unto him.* We cannot tell in what way God spoke, perhaps by an inward voice, since Solomon was asleep and in a dream. *The life of thine enemies.* There were no doubt rivals of Solomon's and tributary chieftains who were his haters in secret if not openly. See Kings 11: 14–25.

12 *I have done according to thy word.* His prayer had been answered. *A wise and an understanding heart.* He had asked wisdom to discern the right in judgment (vs. 9, 11), but God gave him wisdom in a larger sense, both intellectual and moral wisdom. *None like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.* This does not mean merely that he would be the wisest of the kings of Israel, but the wisest of all men, in all ages. His wisdom was not merely shrewdness and penetration, qualifying him to judge wisely and righteously, but it embraced all kinds of wisdom. He was a man of vast learning. He uttered wise sayings. He became famous the world over as the wisest of men. See chap. 4: 29–34. It is said that he wrote one thousand and five songs, although nearly all of them are lost, and no fewer than three thousand proverbs, many of which also are lost, as the Book of Proverbs contains but nine hundred and fifteen, and the

last two chapters of this book are by other authors. He was a student of nature, drawing lessons from the habits and instincts of animals, and writing, as we are told, of all kinds of plants and trees, from the cedar to the hyssop. His wisdom was also religious and practical. The Book of Proverbs is full of suggestions and counsels for life; indicating a high moral culture in the writer.

13 *That which thou hast not asked.* God was so much pleased with the supreme desire and choice of Solomon that he added these things of secondary value. This illustrates in a remarkable way our Saviour's statement of the divine law in Matt. 6: 33. *Riches and honor.* We have but to study the history of his reign to find the fulfillment of this promise. His wealth was almost fabulous. All nations of the world poured their resources into Palestine. Silver became as stones in Jerusalem. He had honor also beyond that of any monarch of the world. The fame of his wisdom and splendor went everywhere.

14 *If thou wilt walk in my ways . . . I will lengthen thy days.* This promise was conditional, and as Solomon failed to fulfill the condition (1 Kings 11: 1–8), he did not live to a very great age—dying probably at fifty-nine or sixty.

15 *Behold, it was a dream.* Yet we are not to understand that there had really been no divine revelation made to him. It occurred while he slept, but the communication was actually made. *He came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark.* Having completed his magnificent religious ceremonial at Gibeon, where the tabernacle was, he returned to Jerusalem and conducted another imposing service before the sacred ark.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

God said, Ask what I shall give thee. Surely that was a wonderful opportunity. This boy-king was in effect given his choice out of all the gifts of God. Has any other one ever had such an offer as this? Do you wish that God would make it to you? Well, really he does. He says to every young person, "Ask what I shall give you." Had Solomon neglected the opportunity that came to him, or had he made a bad choice, how all of us would have blamed and condemned him! Yet are you sure that you would have done as he did? Or, to bring it closer home, *are* you doing as he did? For the opportunity is yours, too. Does not Christ say, "Ask and ye shall receive?" Every young person especially has his choice of objects for which to live, and it is put in his power to choose what he will have. This is so even of earthly things. You may make your life almost what you will. If you choose money and devote yourself to it, you can get it. If you choose power and make its acquisition your one quest, you can gain it. If you choose learning and pursue it with quenchless ardor, you can attain it. Men continually reject splendid opportunities.

"The hypocritic days,
And marching single in an endless file,
Bring diadems or fagots in their hands.
To each they offer gifts after his will—
Bread, kingdoms, stars, and heaven that holds them all.
I, in my pleachéd garden, watched the pomp,
Forgot my morning wishes, hastily
Took a few herbs and apples, and the day
Turned and departed silent: I too late
Under her solemn fillet saw the scorn."

And what is true of earthly things is true still more of heavenly. All the glorious things of God's grace and love are to be had simply for the asking. "Ask and ye shall receive." Christ says that. Of course asking means more than "saying" a prayer. Your *heart* must ask, your *will* must ask, and your whole life must go into the request. No man would ever succeed in the world in any business or pursuit who sought it as languidly as many people seek the blessings of divine grace. But notice also that we must *ask*. We must make the choice ourselves; God will never make it for us. "*Choose* ye whom ye will serve." Moses *chose* rather to suffer affliction with God's people than enjoy sin's pleasures. "Mary hath *chosen* the good part." We *must* choose what we will live for; we *must ask* if we would receive; and the thing we choose and ask we shall receive.

Thou hast made thy servant king . . . and I am but a little child; I know not how to go out or come in. Solomon's answer is very beautiful, showing a true childlike spirit. There was no pride or self-conceit in him. He was conscious of his own ignorance and lack of ability for the great tasks and responsibilities which had come to him. Many young people are wrecked in life, failing utterly in its duties, because of their vain self-confidence. They feel perfectly able to direct their own course. They resent all counsel and reject all advice. They think that they know better how to conduct affairs than old men with years of experience. Then they disdain God's help and direction most of all. A sea captain some years ago refused a pilot into the harbor, saying, with vain conceit, "I am my own pilot." In a few hours there was a terrible wreck with loss of many lives. So men who enter life proud and

boastful wreck all. Solomon made no such fatal mistake at the start. He saw the greatness of his task, and realized his own insufficiency for it. Those who have his spirit are ready to be led and helped to success.

Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people . . . for who is able to judge this thy so great a people? He wanted to do his own life-work well. He knew what that work was. He was to be the king of a great nation. The one strong desire of his heart was that he might be a good king, that he might judge rightly between man and man, and that he might direct all the affairs of the kingdom in a way that would win God's approval, and advance the interests and welfare of his people. Conscious of his own insufficiency for such great responsibilities and duties, he asked God to give him the wisdom he needed. There is a valuable practical lesson here. The first aim of life should be to know its part in this world and then do it well. One of the fine sayings of Mary Lyon, the founder of Mount Holyoke Seminary, was: "There is nothing in the universe that I fear except that I may not know all my duty, or may fail to do it." Solomon knew what his part was, and he cried to God for wisdom to do it faithfully. This should be the great burden of the prayer of every one—for grace to live well, to know and do every duty, to meet every obligation and responsibility, to bear every burden, to endure every sorrow.

Thou hast . . . not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches. The Lord approved of the choice Solomon had made. It was an unselfish choice. He was thinking of his people, and wanted to be a good king for their sake. It was a spiritual choice—not gold and power and victory and fame, but wisdom to qualify him for duty. Such a choice always pleases God. James said that the reason men ask and receive not is because they ask that they may consume God's gifts on their lusts. The prayer of selfishness is never pleasing to God; but he is pleased when we ask for things to use in blessing others. The prayer for mere earthly things, riches and honors, may really be for a curse upon our own lives. The classical story of Midas illustrates this. He desired the power to change into gold whatever he touched, and the fruits he plucked and the food he would put into his mouth became metal, till in the agonies of starvation he was compelled to cry for the withdrawal of the power. So it is with those who live only for wealth; they get it, but their souls are starved. Solomon asked for wisdom only, and left all other matters to God's own choice. Jesus said: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." That is the highest life-wisdom—devote yourself to God and to the doing of his will, and leave to his loving care all other things.

I have done according to thy word. . . . And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honor. This illustrates a great principle in God's government, that when men choose the higher blessings the lower are given with these. Solomon chose wisdom, and God gave with it riches and honor. Now, we are not to infer that every one who chooses wisdom will also get rich and famous. Many a man who has devoted his life to the pursuit of wisdom has remained poor to the day of his death. But every one who chooses the true wisdom and seeks heavenly things will receive with these all the temporal things that he needs for the supply of his wants. "He that spared not his own Son . . . shall he not *with him* also freely give us all things?" Every one who chooses Christ gets with him all other needful things. But mark the words *with him*. It is only when we make choice of Christ that *anything* else is promised.

If thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes . . . then I will lengthen thy days. There is an "if" in every promise. God's faithfulness is eternal; he never changes, nor does any word of his ever fail. With him there are no "ifs," no emergencies, no accidents. But every promise he makes is in the nature of a covenant, and there are conditions. We have our part to fulfill, and if we fail in it the blessing will not come. Obedience to God's commands is the unvarying condition of all blessing. Solomon began well, but he turned his feet away from the paths of obedience, and his later days were shadowed by dark clouds. He did not get the length of days, but it was because he spurned the gift and threw it away. But the lesson is solemn—we can get the good things of the promises only by doing God's will and walking in his ways.

LESSON POINTS.

1. To every young person starting in life a choice of objects is offered. v. 5.

2. Every one *must* choose what he will live for; no one can help it.

3. It is a great thing to have as an inheritance the life and memory of a godly parent. v. 6.

4. Nothing is so hopeful or commendable in a young man, accepting great responsibility, as humility and a consciousness of personal unfitness. vs. 7, 8.

5. Wealth, fame and power are not life's highest prizes, as many think; to attain wisdom is higher success than to grow rich. v. 9.

6. The truest choice in this world is that of wisdom, the wisdom that cometh down from above.

7. Our desires and choices should be not for ourselves, but that we may bless and help others thereby.

8. Our highest earthly ambition should be to do well the work God gives us to do.

9. When our prayers and aims please God, he not only grants them but adds to them. v. 13.

10. Blessings are conditioned upon our obedience. v. 14.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

What is the *place* of this lesson? How did Solomon come to be at Gibeon? What kept Gibeon sacred? The old tabernacle and altar were there. What sacrifices did Solomon offer there? Bring out the fact that Solomon was beginning his reign by making offerings to God, and we should begin our life by giving *ourselves* to God. Rom. 12: 1. It was the night after this great sacrifice that this dream occurred. God accepted the offerings and was pleased, and came now to answer the prayers of the young king.

THE CHOICE MADE, APPROVED, EXCEEDED.

I. *The Choice Made.* vs. 5–9.

Recall other dreams that are related in the Bible. This was one of the ways in which God revealed himself to men in those olden times. Now we have the complete revelation of God's will to men in his holy word, and there is no necessity for any further such appearings.

Fix the scene. It was night. All was quiet. The young king was sleeping, yet even in his sleep his mind was busy with thoughts of the great life-work on which he was entering.

Who appeared to him? What did the Lord say to him? What was implied in the words? 1. That a choice of good things was offered to him. 2. That he must *make* choice. 3. That he must *ask* for the thing he chose. 4. That what he chose and asked should be given.

Is any such offer made to any one in these days? See Matt. 7: 7, 8. It was Christ that said this, and he says it to all. "*Every* one that asketh," etc. Dwell on the fact that Solomon was but a youth, and that it was at the beginning of his life he was called to make this choice. Choice of life's object should always be made in youth. It is too late when one is middle-aged or old. The best of life is then past, and it is hard to change. Press on the young (1) that they have two general life-courses from which to choose, Christ's way and the world's; (2) that they *must* choose one or the other; (3) that it will be a fatal mistake to make a wrong choice; (4) that they choose Christ now. Have a member read Josh. 24: 15; another Heb. 11: 24–26; another Luke 10: 42.

What did Solomon choose of all the gifts offered to him? What did he say about himself? vs. 7, 8. What is there beautiful in Solomon's answer? Teach that humility and modesty in young people are always lovely. Many young persons are vain and self-conceited when they begin to have power or responsibility. What was Solomon's spirit? 1. He was grateful for the honor. v. 6. 2. He realized the magnitude of his responsibilities. v. 7. 3. He was conscious of his own insufficiency for the new duties laid upon him. v. 7. 4. He asked for that which he needed most, wisdom to be a good and just king, and to rule so as to glorify God. v. 9. Define what the wisdom was which Solomon sought, and the wisdom which every one should seek who desires to make life noble, beautiful and pleasing in God's sight.

II. *The Choice Approved.* vs. 10–12.

Start this point with the question, Do you think God cares how we answer when he speaks or how we choose in life? Our parents are pained when we make foolish or wicked choices, and pleased when we choose well. So is God. He was pleased with Solomon's choice. When he sees us making wrong choices he is grieved. Who does not want to please God?

What did the Lord say to Solomon about his choice? 1. He had not chosen money or victory or years. 2. He had chosen the best thing—wisdom. 3. His choice was granted. Show the superiority of wisdom over wealth or fame or power. This is true even of intellectual wisdom; still more so of spiritual wisdom. Recall the special promise of James 1: 5.

III. *The Choice Exceeded.* vs. 13–15.

How was Solomon's choice exceeded? Give some suggestion of Solomon's great wealth and his honor. No name is so enshrined in legend as Solomon's in all the East.

What conditional promise was made to Solomon? v. 14. Did he receive the promise? Why not? Show that all the promises made to us are conditional; we can get them only by obeying God.

Teach (1) that those who choose Christ and live for him only have the promise of all other needful things with him. 2. That the promises of God depend on our obedience; and that he who disobeys is thrusting away from him the blessings of life and glory.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BLACKBOARD.

BECAUSE THOU

HAST NOT ASKED		HAST ASKED
LONG LIFE,		*UNDERSTANDING*
RICHES,	*BUT*	*TO*
THE LIFE OF THINE ENEMIES,		*DISCERN JUDGMENT,*

I HAVE GIVEN THEE A WISE HEART,
and
I HAVE ALSO GIVEN THEE . . . RICHES AND HONOR.

ASK WHAT I SHALL GIVE THEE.

LONG LIFE?	THOU HAST MADE ME KING.
RICHES?	I AM BUT A LITTLE CHILD.
VICTORY OVER ENEMIES?	GIVE . . . AN UNDERSTANDING HEART
WISDOM?	

THE SPEECH PLEASED THE LORD.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

In my primary class we use a star to represent a message from God, either through angel or prophet. Therefore we shall open this lesson by outlining a star; whereupon the children who have not studied the lesson, as well as those who have, will know that *somebody* had a word from God. It remains for the children who have prepared themselves to tell the others who the person was and what the message. The next symbol is a red line leading upward. Somebody prayed. Who was it? What did he ask? What arguments did he use? Answer, Three.

1. God's goodness to his father David.
2. The great work that he, Solomon, had to do.
3. His inability to do it alone.

These three points I would labor to put into very simple language.

The next symbol is a heart, with Solomon's prayer printed in it. "Give . . . an understanding heart." Now an arch with the word "BECAUSE" printed on it in large letters. "Because thou hast asked this thing and hast not," etc. This is one of the verses which may profitably be read from the Bible to the class, pausing to analyze each phrase. Under the arch should be printed the words, "I HAVE" and "I WILL," to stand for the emphatic promises, and to impress the fact that they are linked to the "Because."

Finally, there is a very important "IF." Another blue arch of promise should be made, and this put on it. "If Solomon will do thus and so, then God will," etc.

We have now the entire lesson pictured very simply on the board. What of it? What has Solomon's experience of so long ago to do with your little children? Much. In the first place there is the message, "Ask what I shall give thee." Jesus said to all his people, "Ask what ye will;" a message from God to us more direct than though an angel had brought it. What have we asked for to-day?

Second. Solomon's arguments. God's goodness in the past. Is there a child in your class who cannot use the same plea? This thought

needs to be placed simply before the children, illustrated by their own experiences. They know that they trust the friend who has already done great things for them.

Third. Solomon's work. Not a child but has a work as great. What does God want of them? To help him save souls. There is nothing greater.

Fourth. Solomon's weakness. "I am but a little child," he said. Surely each child can appeal to his heavenly Father with the same plea. It is a powerful plea. There was a dear little girl, named Minnie, who used always, when she wanted anything very much, to put up her small hands pleadingly and say, "Please help the baby."

Fifth. Solomon's request. He was the wisest man who ever lived; and he asked for the most important thing in life. The golden text says it is the principal thing. How many want a heart that will understand God's will? How many will ask for it every day? Who can claim the arch? Has God given you great help because you have asked for it?

Sixth. God gave Solomon much more than he asked for. He is "the same yesterday, to-day and for ever." He will give to you as willingly as to Solomon.

Finally, the "IF." There is an "if" in all our promises. Make a perfectly straight line to stand for God's ways. The "if" is the same to-day as it was in Solomon's time. "If thou wilt walk in my ways." How shall we find out God's ways? He has given us a guide book, and told us to ask him all the time for help to understand it.

The lesson bristles with "points." Each teacher must select the one to dwell upon. Of course the central thought is that which names the lesson—"Solomon's Choice." And of course the central application is, "Have I chosen this?" If not, will I?

Lesson IV. **THE TEMPLE BUILT.** **Oct. 26th, 1884.**

1 Kings 6: 1–14. Memorize vs. 11–13.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Mine house shall be called an house of prayer."—Isa. 56: 7.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Ex. 26: 1–37.....*The Tabernacle.*
T. 1 Kings 5: 1–18.....*Solomon and Hiram.*
W. 1 Kings 6: 1–14.....*The Temple Begun.*
Th. 1 Kings 6: 15–38....*The Temple Finished.*
F. Heb. 9: 1–28.....*A More Perfect Tabernacle.*
S. Ps. 84: 1–12.....*Longing for God's House.*
S. Rev. 21: 10–27.....*The New Jerusalem.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Building. 2. God's Promise.

Time.—B. C. 1012.

Place.—Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 101.—*What do we pray for in the first petition?* A. In the first petition, which is, *Hallowed be thy name*, we pray, that God would enable us, and others, to glorify him in all that whereby he maketh himself known, and that he would dispose all things to his own glory.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—The building of the temple began in the fourth year of Solomon's reign; but the preparations for it no doubt were commenced at once, as soon as Solomon was established in his kingdom. The site had already been fixed by the appearance of the angel to David on Mount Moriah. The threshing-floor of Araunah had been purchased for the purpose. The hill had to be leveled and the space enlarged by great masses of masonry. Part of the old wall still remains. The excavations are still to be seen north of the city, where the stones were quarried for these vast substructures. Arrangements were made with Hiram of Tyre by which timber was obtained for the temple. These preparations occupied three years, and in the fourth year the work of building began.

---

1 And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Is'ra-el were come out of the land of E'gypt, in the fourth year of Sol'o-mon's reign over Is'ra-el, in the month Zif, which *is* the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD. [Acts 7: 47.]

2 And the house which king Sol'o-mon built for the LORD, the length thereof *was* threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty *cubits*, and the height thereof thirty cubits. [Ezek. 41.]

3 And the porch before the temple of the house, twenty cubits *was* the length thereof, according to the breadth of the house; *and* ten cubits *was* the breadth thereof before the house. [Ezek. 40: 16; 41: 16.]

4 And for the house he made windows of narrow lights.

5 ¶ And against the wall of the house he

built chambers round about, *against* the walls of the house round about, *both* of the temple and of the oracle: and he made chambers round about. [Ezek. 41: 6; vs. 16, 19-21.]

6 The nethermost chamber *was* five cubits broad, and the middle *was* six cubits broad, and the third *was* seven cubits broad: for without *in the wall* of the house he made narrowed rests round about, that *the beams* should not be fastened in the walls of the house.

7 And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor axe *nor* any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building. [Deut. 27: 5, 6; ch. 5: 18.]

8 The door for the middle chamber *was* in the right side of the house: and they went up with winding stairs into the middle *chamber*, and out of the middle into the third.

9 So he built the house, and finished it; and covered the house with beams and boards of cedar.

10 And *then* he built chambers against all the house, five cubits high: and they rested on the house with timber of cedar.

11 ¶ And the word of the LORD came to Sol'o-mon, saying,

12 *Concerning* this house which thou art in building, if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgments, and keep all my commandments to walk in them; then will I perform my word with thee, which I spake unto Da'vid thy father: [ch. 2: 4; 9: 4; 2 Sam. 7: 13.]

13 And I will dwell among the children of Is'ra-el, and will not forsake my people Is'ra-el. [Ex. 25: 8; Lev. 26: 11; 2 Cor. 6: 16; Rev. 21: 3.]

14 So Sol'o-mon built the house, and finished it.

1 *The four hundred and eightieth year.* This statement is the basis of the "received chronology," for the dates assigned to the earlier events. It is easily ascertained that Solomon's accession to the throne was *about* 1000 B. C.—1015 is taken as the accurate date. The building of the temple began in the fourth year of his reign, or 1012 B. C. Add to this the four hundred and eighty years and the time for the exodus is located 1491 B. C. There is some uncertainty, however, concerning the accuracy of the text in these figures, and some difficulty in reconciling them with other chronological data. For a discussion of the subject, see the larger commentaries. It is claimed by some that a hundred years should be added to this period, which would affect all the early dates of the chronology as marked in our English Bibles. However, many excellent authorities believe the date to be correct. *The month Zif.* Corresponding to parts of our April and May—the period covered by the April moon. The name means "splendor," referring to the beauty of the season, with its flowers and verdure. *He began to build.* Seven and a half years were occupied in the erection of the temple.

2 *The length thereof was threescore cubits.* If we knew the exact length of the Jewish cubit measure we would have no difficulty in determining the dimensions of the temple. This, however, is uncertain, whether it was the measure of the forearm, or from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger, or from the elbow to the knuckles. Taking eighteen inches as the cubit measure, the temple was ninety feet in length, thirty in width, and forty-five in height. It will be observed that its dimensions were all precisely double those of the tabernacle. It will be noticed also that even at the greatest estimate the building was really small, in comparison with many modern cathedrals or even churches. But it will be remembered that it was not intended at all for public assemblage, the people never entering its sacred apartments, but gathering in its courts instead.

3 It must be kept in mind that no details are given by which we can form any conception of the architectural form of the temple. We have barely the general dimensions and proportions, but the exact shape of the building cannot be determined. *The porch before the temple.* A portico, vestibule or entrance way. *Twenty cubits.* It thus extended across the entire front of the temple, and was *ten cubits* in width. Its height is not given here, although in 2 Chron. 3: 4 it is said to be one hundred and twenty cubits. This, however, seems so out of proportion with the other dimensions of the house that some critics think there must be an error in the text, and the Septuagint gives *twenty* cubits. This portico was supported by two great pillars of brass, called Jachin and Boaz, which were famous for their fine workmanship.

4 *Windows of narrow lights.* Either "windows narrow without and broad within," or "windows with fixed lattices;" but which, commentators cannot decide. These windows, if we understand aright the following verses, must have been high up in the walls, above the three-storied chambers.

5, 6 *Against the wall . . . he built chambers.* The word rendered "chambers" is in the singular, referring to the whole structure, which appears to have been what in architecture is called a "lean-to," its rafters and beams leaning against the walls of the main building. *Of the temple and of the oracle.* The holy place and

the most holy place, the two apartments of the building. This "lean-to" extended entirely around three sides of the house, while the porch or portico covered the fourth side or front of the building. *Narrowed rests.* Or "rebatements." There must be no real connection of the "lean-to," which was for secular purposes, with the sacred house, and therefore the joists or beams must not pierce the wall. To meet this difficulty the exterior of the wall was made in "steps," which served as rests for the beams. (Diagram 1.) These "rests" were each a cubit in width, and consequently the second story chambers were a cubit wider than the first, and the third a cubit wider than the second. From v. 10 we learn that each story was five cubits in height, and that the timbers used were of cedar. These chambers, it is supposed, furnished the necessary apartments for the priests and other attendants, and for store-rooms. The diagram (No. 2) annexed gives a general idea of the form of the temple with the "lean-to" against its walls without. The figures represent the dimensions in cubits.

Diagram 1.

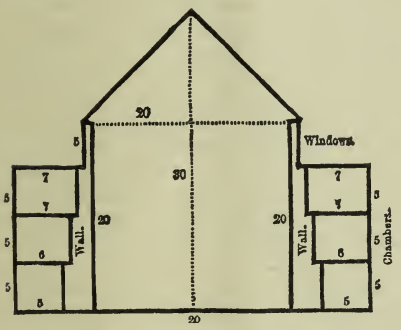


Diagram 2.

7 *Stone made ready before it was brought thither.* The command to Moses (Ex. 20: 25; Deut. 27: 5) was, that no iron tool should be used in building *an altar.* Solomon seems to have carried out this same plan in the erection of the temple. However, in the latter case the stones were hewn, but the work was done in the quarry. They were dressed and prepared, every stone fitted to fill its own place, so that no cutting was necessary in laying them.

8 *The door for the middle chamber.* That is, the second story of the "lean-to." The entrance into the lower story was doubtless through a door or doors in the outer wall. Into the second, however, access was had by winding stairs outside, on the right, or south side; and into the third, or upper story, by a stairway from the second.

9 *So he built the house.* The temple proper, finishing it, that is, the walls, the interior work being described afterward. vs. 15–22. *Covered the house.* Roofed it. Some authorities suppose that the roof sloped, like modern roofs, inasmuch as the temple was modeled after the tabernacle; while others think that the roof was flat, as in all oriental buildings. But all efforts to settle these questions of architectural form are useless.

11, 12 *The word of the Lord.* Perhaps through Nathan the prophet. *If thou wilt.* The Lord reminds Solomon of his promises, and also of the condition of their fulfillment. This divine communication would both encourage the king and serve as a warning, if he was in any danger of departing from God. *My word . . . which I spake unto David.* See 2 Sam. 7: 10, 12; Ps. 132: 11, 12. God now confirms these words to Solomon, but expressly restates the conditions.

13 *I will dwell.* Manifesting himself in the temple as he had in the old tabernacle. *Will not forsake.* See Deut. 31: 6, 8; Josh. 1: 5.

The following notes, selected from Dr. Geike's "Hours with the Bible," vol. 3, chap. xvi., will prove instructive:

Stone for the temple was gotten from huge quarries in the twin hills on which Jerusalem and the temple stood. Immense blocks were cut, hewn into shape and bevelled, ready for use, before being brought to the spot where they were required. Vast excavations are still to be seen on the north side of the city, seven hundred feet long, and in some places, as broad, showing a labyrinth of chambers, in which the pillars supporting the roof are still standing. The great stones for the foundations and walls were got from these quarries, in which one huge monolith, that had split as it was being removed, still lies as it was left in Solomon's day.

The site itself needed to be prepared. The hill did not offer a level space sufficient for the building intended, and had to be cut away at one part and built up to the needed elevation at another. This involved the raising across the south of the hill of a wall of solid masonry, almost equal in height to the tallest of our church spires. Inside the open spaces thus created long rows of arches and chambers helped to bring the surface to a level. Before beginning the temple itself, moreover, provision had to be made for the water supply, so essential

for the innumerable sacrifices to be offered. There is no spring in the hill, so that vast cisterns had to be hewn out, and a series of these were therefore excavated, capable of holdover 10,000,000 gallons. All these were supplied with water brought by an aqueduct from Solomon's pools near Bethlehem, a system of channels connecting the whole. The final overflow, after they were filled, passed off by a conduit into the Kedron.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

In the fourth year of Solomon's reign . . . he began to build the house of the Lord. He began early and promptly to do his great work, probably just as soon as the necessary preparations could be made. In this he furnished a good example for every young person. Promptness is always a commendable virtue. There are many people who lose half their life-time in loitering. They are laggards in everything. This is specially true in the starting of a Christian life. God means every one of us to be the builder of a temple. Solomon stands as the type of every young person, and the temple he erected as the type of the building every one should erect for God. We are not to build with stones and timbers, with gold, silver and iron, as Solomon did, but are to erect spiritual temples in our own hearts, in which God may dwell. And the time to begin this work is *at once*. . . . Solomon spent a considerable time in preparing the *foundations* for the temple. Portions of the great sub-structures his workmen put in are found there yet, after three thousand years. The first thing to be thought of in building any house is its foundation. How strong and broad this shall be made, and how deep it shall be laid in the earth, depend upon the size of the house to be built. A small cottage does not need a foundation as strong as a mill or manufactory. When the great bridge across the Mississippi was built at St. Louis, the first stones of the foundation were laid one hundred and six feet below the surface of the water. And that wonderful structure, the Brooklyn Bridge, rests on a foundation whose lowest stones are placed seventy-eight feet below the surface of the water. If any one had told the engineers of these massive creations of man's skill that it would not matter what the foundations were if only the superstructure looked pretty, was painted and finely ornamented, they would have shaken their heads and said, "We know better than that. We know that success depends upon our foundation." It is the same in the building of life-temples. The first thing is, to lay the foundation deep and strong. The finest structure without a foundation has no strength, and will be carried away by the storms. Christ is the great Rock on which we should build; every true life must begin with faith in him and dependence on him. We must, then, lay a foundation of good principles, good habits, holy living. I saw a fine and costly church once whose walls were cracked and the tower of which had to be taken down; and the cause of the wreck of the beautiful edifice was in the foundation. It did not go down to solid rock, and gave way under the great pressure. Many characters fail for the same reason. In mid-life, or later, when a man has risen to power and responsibility, all at once he fails at some point in his character, and the whole fabric is wrecked. When the cause is looked for it is found in the foundation-work. Let every young person make sure of having the foundations of his life strong and deep. The time for attending to this is in youth. When the building is half-way up or completed is no time to put in foundations or even repair or straighten them. Few things are more pitiable than to see a man at middle age trying to get a foundation into his life. Youth is the time for foundation work, and the structure that will rise in mature life can be no more secure than the foundation on which it rests.

The house which king Solomon built for the Lord the length thereof was threescore cubits. From 1 Chron. 28: 11–19 it appears that God had given definite instructions to David regarding the dimensions of the temple and its various apartments and furniture. David says the Lord made him know in writing by his hand upon him how the different parts were to be made. So God has given us a pattern for the spiritual temple we are to build for him. Every part is described minutely and accurately. We have but to open the Bible and look into its pages to learn how in every point our characters should be fashioned. And we have more than descriptions and instructions merely; we have a divine pattern. Jesus Christ came and lived out on this earth a true and perfect human life, thus setting us an example and giving us a model by which to fashion our lives. This model we should study with care and follow in every minute particular. We may not make our own designs nor build our life-temple after any fashion we may conceive. God himself must be the architect of his own temples. He only knows of what form they should be. It is our part, therefore, to learn from his written word and from a study of the life of Christ as portrayed for us in the gospel, exactly what he has

laid down as the pattern, and then to follow that pattern with undeviating fidelity.

Against the wall of the house he built chambers round about. These were for various secular purposes—sleeping apartments for the priests and attendants, store-rooms, etc. While not *in* the holy building itself, they were attached to it, making in fact one house. This illustrates what every Christian life should be. Within, it is a temple of the Holy Ghost. 1 Cor. 6: 16. There he dwells. But every life has also its secular relations and duties. We cannot always be engaged in praying and singing praise, and in acts of a specifically religious character. We must earn bread for ourselves and those dependent on us. We must take our places in the world's work and diligently attend to our business. Children and young people have their studies and other duties at school and home, and must sometimes play. No life can be devoted solely and exclusively to worship. God does not mean that it should be. Yet in every true life the secular and spiritual are so combined as really to be one. In the midst is the temple, and grouped around it are the apartments for affairs. Thus the whole is sanctified. There really is nothing secular in a truly consecrated life. If the heart be right, God is as much honored in the common employments of each day, in the household, in business, in school, in play, as he is in the exercises of devotion. We must remember also that we are to carry the spirit of our worship into all our secular life, doing all things for the glory of God. It is not enough to be Christians merely on Sabbaths; our religion must flow down into all the week-days. It is not enough to pray well and praise sweetly; we must live our prayers and make our whole life an anthem of praise. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that *doeth the will* of my Father." Let us see to it that the temple within indeed makes our whole life holy—that is, honest, true, pure, unselfish, faithful, loving.

The house . . . was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither; so that there was neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron heard. There is something very striking and suggestive in this. Every block of stone was hewn in the quarry to fit into its place, and every piece of timber was dressed and adjusted, so that when all were brought no changes were necessary. It is the same in Christ's spiritual temple. It is rising in silence. The world is the quarry and the workshop where the parts are prepared; and the preparation goes on through life, all the means of grace and all providential influences combining and co operating to fit each redeemed soul for its own place in the great heavenly fabric. Every Christian who dies is a "living stone" made ready now and carried away by the angels to fill a place in the great building. The thought is very beautiful. How important that we all submit ourselves to the processes needful to prepare us for filling our own niche in Christ's temple! We are rough blocks at first in the quarry, and have to be dressed and polished so as to fit into our place. The great Master-builder has a Plan for his temple, and for each stone and piece of timber. Let us be content to fill the place which he has assigned to us, and to permit him to make us ready for it in his own way. Rev. F. N. Peloubet has this note on the world as the quarry in which the stones are prepared for the heavenly temple: "This world is the quarry where the living stones for God's beautiful temple in the heavens, the completed and perfected church, are being shaped and polished for their places in the building. Few places are more rough, more lacking in every element of beauty, than a stone quarry. I began my ministry among the quarries of Queen Ann, which have since been multiplying over its granite surface. Were I to take the owners of some of the newer quarries and walk with them over the familiar places, I could say to them, 'I remember when I used to walk here among stately trees, or sit under the shadow of a great rock and feast on the surrounding beauties; but now you have blasted the rocks, you have cut down the trees, you have littered the fields with broken fragments. What does it all mean?' Then they could take me to some noble buildings in various cities, and say, 'Do you see those stately buildings, beautiful cornices, graceful arches, lofty columns? Well, there is the meaning of the quarry.' So the heavenly temple is the solution of the mysteries of Providence in this world. The cares, burdens, sorrows, joys, work of this life are fitting us for our place in that temple where no sound of the tools shall be heard while it is in building."

So he built the house and finished it. It is interesting to think how many different agencies were employed in the erection of the temple. The gold and silver were gathered from all the nations, largely during David's time, being the spoils of war. Phœnicia furnished architects, artists and skilled workmen of all kinds. Lebanon furnished cedars, Ophir and Parvaim furnished precious stones and metals, the foundries of Succoth and Zarethan furnished brass. Then what multitudes of laborers of all classes there must have been employed in cutting and

transporting and hauling the timber, and in quarrying, moving and setting up the stones! The temple when completed represented the gifts and labor of many lands. So in Christ's great spiritual temple rising now, all lands and kingdoms contribute their part. Art, literature, commerce, trade—all things and all men are made to serve in some way.

LESSON POINTS.

1. To every one of us is given the task of building a temple for God to dwell in.

2. The first thing to do in building this temple is to lay deep and strong foundations.

3. The pattern for the temple is given us from heaven, drawn and described in the Scriptures, and must be followed exactly.

4. The whole of each Christian life belongs in a sense to the temple—the holy place within and the secular parts attached.

5. In another sense each Christian is a living stone preparing here in the quarry to fill a place in the heavenly temple.

6. The heavenly temple rises silently, is rising now unseen; Christ's kingdom is growing in this world in silence and unobserved; in each individual life the work is going on silently.

7. All the world is helping to build God's great spiritual temple.

8. God dwells in each temple built for him.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

There are two lines of teaching in this lesson, both of which should receive attention: 1. The historical. 2. The spiritual. All the facts that can be gathered from Kings and Chronicles and any other sources about the building of the temple should be used, so as to give as clear, full and accurate idea as possible of all the various steps in the erection of this wonderful edifice. The following points in the history should be recalled and fixed:

1. David's vast preparations for the building during his reign.

2. The work on the foundations. This was immense. See special note.

3. The foreign help, received especially through Hiram, king of Tyre, and the materials brought from abroad, gold, silver, precious stones, cedar wood, etc.

4. The quarries and workshops where all the stones and timbers were prepared before being brought to the building.

5. The building itself—its form and dimensions, and the uses of its various parts.

6. The erection of the building, silently rising, every stone and other part being prepared before it was brought, so as to fit into its exact place.

7. God's promise to dwell in the temple.

It is very important that the teaching on all these different points of history shall be full and clear. But little is really known by most Christian people about the temple of Solomon, the conceptions of it in most minds being vague and confused. While we have the present opportunity for research and for teaching, the millions of pupils in the Sabbath-schools of the world should get clear and faithful ideas of the great building, so far as the knowledge can be gathered.

The second line of teaching is spiritual. The temple was a type. We are all *builders*. We are all *temples*. We are all living stones, being prepared now in the quarry for a place in the heavenly temple, which is rising silently through the years. For the working out of these analogies, see the Illustrative Notes.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

There are now to be had building blocks which, set up before the eyes of the children while you talk with them about the temple, its extent and grandeur, will help to make the little people realize that they are being taught about what actually occurred. These blocks, with directions for using them, can be found at any of the large supply stores for Sabbath-schools, or your bookseller will order for you. It is well for the teacher to have all these appliances at hand, as they are furnished at moderate cost, and help to illustrate many lessons.

This lesson properly opens with a review of the one taught two weeks before. In that one, Solomon received his directions, and in this, having sought wisdom from God, he carries them out.

If you have not the building blocks, I advise that you make as careful a blackboard model as, after close study, you can produce, while you call from class the important facts connected with the building of the temple.

It is not desirable, I think, to try to enter into elaborate detail in teaching little children about this temple; but hold yourselves to general facts. The golden text is a sort of Sabbath-school dedication of the temple. God told what was the use of his house—"Mine house shall be called an house of prayer;" and we, the teachers, must not forget that the verse closes with the words, "for all people."

This thought brings us to the personal application. God needs houses still, houses of

prayer for all people. He has told all his children to help build them.

In pressing home this thought I should resort again to building blocks; selecting some home mission field in which you wish to interest the children, and supposing a great number of Sabbath-schools resolving to build a church there. Imagine the pennies rolling in. Not enough of them in one Sabbath, nor in two, nor in many, to build a church. It took King David years and years to gather the material for the temple. Not enough money in one Sabbath-school, nor in two, nor in several, to build a church. It took the gifts of many people for the temple. But the Sabbaths come and go, and the money rolls in. It is sent to the Board of Church Erection. They do all the necessary work, and by-and-bye the bricks go up to build the wall. (At this point it will add intense interest if you allow a boy to come to the platform and build of actual blocks a church wall. Different children may be chosen to come and add bricks to the pile, and the very youngest should crown the church with the steeple. With the prepared building blocks, all these things are easily accomplished.) If, by the use of such means, you can impress the fact of what the Board of Church Erection is doing, and of how the children in the Sabbath-schools can help, your labor will not have been in vain. It is a "House of prayer," to help those men and women and children where it has been built, to find the way home to the "house not made with hands."

There is a spiritual application to this lesson with which it would be well to close it. God has built a house for each of us. We name it "the body." He says it is a temple for the Holy Spirit to dwell in. God built it for a purpose. It should be a house of prayer. There should be nothing done in it which God does not approve. In connection with this presentation of the truth, I would like to call attention to the lesson hymn found on *Westminster Primary Leaf:*

> "A wonderful house have I,
> That God has made for me."

It is a beautiful motion song, built on the description of the human body, found in Ecclesiastes. Children should have its allegorical language carefully explained to them. Words and tune are found in Mrs. W. F. Crafts' new book, "Little Pilgrim Songs."

SUGGESTIONS FOR BLACKBOARD.

YOUR BODY
IS THE TEMPLE
OF THE
HOLY GHOST.

THE FOUNDATION. -	John 3 : 36.
THE WALLS. - - -	2 Peter 1 : 5–7.
THE INDWELLING.	1 Cor. 6 : 19.

There are two analogies for the temple in the New Testament. Each individual believer is a temple in which the Holy Spirit dwells; and the whole Church is the temple. The above arrangement represents the former of these. Christ is the foundation. In John 3 : 36, read the first clause, and emphasize the "on"—"*on* Christ." On this foundation the walls are built up—elements of Christian character. The temple is occupied by the Holy Spirit. Illustration: One summer when Queen Victoria was rambling through Scotland she called on a poor old woman and sat down for a few moments in her rude hut. When the party had gone one of the attendants lingered behind and told the old woman that it was the Queen that had sat in a certain chair. With great reverence she lifted the chair and set it away in another room, saying, "No one shall ever sit in this chair again, because my Queen sat in it to-day." If the Holy Ghost comes even as a guest into our hearts, that should make them for ever sacred and holy; but he comes to *abide* with us and in us.

The other analogy is presented in Eph. 2 : 20–22, which words may form a basis of a blackboard lesson. Here we have *the foundation; the building* going up in silence, as souls are saved one by one and built into the rising fabric (see also 1 Pet. 2 : 5); the completed temple—*an habitation* of God through the Spirit. This may be represented on the board by a simple drawing of the temple. One practical thought here is, that every believer is a stone, with a place to fill in this temple; we must be sure to fill *our own place.* Another thought is, that we are not the Church; we are but a mere fragment of it. These walls began rising at the beginning of the world, and the temple will not be completed until the last soul is saved and the redeemed gathered home.

ABOUT NEW BOOKS.

..MITES AGAINST MILLIONS; or, Childhood Against the World. This little book tells "how a church was built and paid for through a bequest of $4.41." The church that was thus built stands at the corner of Montgomery Avenue and Eighteenth Street, Philadelphia. The story of this little child and her work is graphically sketched. She was only seven years old. Her work began in the leading of her father and mother to Christ. Like many other children she had a little iron bank into which she put the bits of money that came to her. Just before she died she had this bank opened and put its contents, $4.41, in her pastor's hands and said, "I want you to take this money and promise, so that when I am in heaven I shall know that it is done, and build with it a church for poor people like us." He took her hand and said, "Fannie, with God's help, I will try." The burden of the covenant rested upon his heart, and the result was that after several years, the pastor, Rev. S. A. Mutchmore, D.D., entered upon the fulfillment of his promise. This little book tells the wonderful story of this enterprise. To condense it into a book-notice paragraph is impossible. Much of the money needed was raised by the pastor's telling in other cities and churches the tender story, and showing the child's gift. Large and small sums were received at home from those who were touched by the recital. The author of the book is Dr. Mutchmore, the pastor in whose hands the dying child's box was laid, and who is now the pastor of the new church built through the influence of that sacred gift. The book is from the press of the Presbyterian Publishing Company, Philadelphia. 75 cents net.

..MARGIE'S MISSION. By Marie Oliver. Margie's mission was to carry into a loveless, godless family the sweet, patient, unselfish spirit of Christ. Such a "mission" as hers as nearly as possible repeats the very life-mission of Christ in this world. Going out from a loving atmosphere where all was tenderness and truth, she entered this wholly heathen household, purely for the purpose of blessing it and lifting it up. At great personal sacrifice she stayed there, and in due time fruit came. The entire story is full of the same spirit, and the reading of it cannot but do good. Boston: Lothrop & Co. Young Folks' Library. Price, 25 cents.

..The *Lutheran* gives an intelligent notice of A POCKET SYSTEM OF THEOLOGY (price, $1.00), from the able pen of the Rev. John Reid, recently published by the Presbyterian Board, a book which we also would warmly commend to our teachers. Says the *Lutheran:* "Prof. Henry B. Smith makes the remark 'that he who would spend his strength for that which is really influential, and always abiding in its influence, can best spend it in the service of Christian theology.' The Bible was never studied more generally than it is at present. Would it not be wise, and contribute to spiritual strength, to study the *doctrines* more thoroughly? Because this volume of Mr. Reid is of such moderate size, and the theology is called a pocket system, it must not be inferred that it is a mere skeleton. Dr. John Hall styles it 'a body of divinity in miniature, having a full complement of bones and flesh and blood.' Such a book could be criticised as to what should be left out and what retained; but beyond question, it is admirably fitted for the use of Sabbath school teachers and church members generally. Its thorough reading would make stronger Christians and more efficient workers in the Church."

..The Presbyterian Board is glad to be able to offer to its wide circle of constituents a volume from the skilled pen of Jennie M. Drinkwater Conklin. Its title, WILDWOOD, gives no clue to its contents, but those who have read Mrs. Conklin's previous books, "Rue's Helps," "Miss Prudence," etc., will accept it on the author's reputation. The *Advocate and Guardian* says of it: "There is always pathos, purity and piety in the books of this gifted author. In the present volume she introduces several unique characters; a brother and sister of wealth who learn to hold possessions in trust for the Master—as all ought but so very few know how to—and to esteem his service their highest joy; and a little waif, Joan, as wild as a colt and as docile as a lamb, teachable, wise and witty, a child one could hardly help pitying and loving, yet almost too good to be real. This child's life is brought into contact with the inmates of Wildwood, and proves an education and a blessing to them, and they to her. It is a story that cannot fail to interest the reader." Price, $1.25.

..HOURS WITH THE BIBLE; or, The Scriptures in the Light of Modern Discovery and Knowledge. By Cunningham Geike, D.D. No greater service has been rendered to Bible research in recent times than Dr. Geike has rendered in his series of "Hours with the Bible." The present volume covers the time from the exile to Malachi, thus completing the series on the Old Testament. In some sense this volume will even surpass the others in interest, because the period and the sacred writers included in it are the least known by most Bible students of all the periods and writers of the Bible. The prophets are read in the light of the history of the events to which their prophecies refer. The story of the siege of Jerusalem with its horrors is graphically told, and then we follow the captives to Babylon, and have vivid descriptions of their experiences there, and then of the return. He that sits down with this volume in his hand to read the prophets from Isaiah to Malachi, and the books of Nehemiah, Ezra and Esther, will find them intensely interesting. The modern discoveries in the countries which form the scenes of this period of Bible history are well used in the elucidation of allusions and references. The gratifying announcement is made by Dr. Geike that a like series of "Hours" with the New Testament will follow in due course. New York: James Pott & Co. Vol. VI. 12mo, cloth, pp. 544. Price, $1.50.

..NATURAL LAW IN THE SPIRITUAL WORLD. By Henry Drummond, F.R.S.E., F.G.S. This book came at once into great prominence upon its issue, earlier in the year. It is not an attempt to reconcile science and religion, but to "exhibit nature in religion." The author's own words are: "The real problem I have set myself may be stated in a sentence. Is there not reason to believe that many of the laws of the spiritual world, hitherto regarded as occupying an entirely separate province, are simply the laws of the natural world? Can we identify the natural laws, or any one of them, in the spiritual sphere? . . . In a word, is the supernatural natural or unnatural?" The author claims that natural law *can* be traced in the spiritual world, and his book is to illustrate this. The result is not a new theology, but the same old truths developed

THE WESTMINSTER TEACHER.

VOL. XII. NOVEMBER, 1884. NO. 11.

—*"Half-Hours with the Lessons of 1885" is a volume of bright, brief, practical sermons on the lessons, prepared by twenty-four Presbyterian preachers. This is the third year of the publication, and to put the volume within the reach of all it has been bound in paper covers and the price reduced from $1.50 to* **85 Cents.**

—There is a good deal of talk about the low standard of morality in Christian churches, but it has been well said that there is not a man in New York, Philadelphia or Chicago, or any city in America, who is rich enough to buy admission into a Christian church if he is known to be dishonest, immoral or corrupt.

—Particular attention is directed to the advertisement on last page of cover, of the Bible Correspondence School. There are several new features which will greatly add to the attractiveness of this new scheme for awakening interest in Bible study. Dr. Worden is brimful of enthusiasm over this school and will give his whole heart and strength to it.

—A lady teacher in a Sunday-school finds herself wretchedly annoyed by an ill-managed class of giggling girls in a form adjoining her own. She wants to know what she can do; how she can protect herself or be protected from this nuisance. It can only be said in reply that her responsibility for the order of the school does not extend beyond her own class. If other teachers are negligent, and their classes an annoyance to their neighbors, the appeal for protection must be made to the superintendent. It is his duty to see to the general order of the school, and to guard faithful teachers from the ill-ordered classes of the unfaithful or incompetent. The teacher who suffers in this way should at once lay the case before the superintendent, and seek a remedy for the evil through him.

—One thing the Sunday-school teacher should not fail to know, whatever else he may be ignorant of, that is, what is the religious condition of the members of his class. Many other neglects may be palliated, if not excused, but for a teacher not to know whether his scholar is truly endeavoring to follow the Master is inexcusable. If you are in doubt with regard to this point in the case of any of your pupils, seek at once to remedy this culpable ignorance. Wisely but earnestly seek to discover where your pupils stand as to the great question of following or not following Christ. If you are convinced that they have all truly turned to God, then make it your business sedulously to watch over their spiritual growth and to learn, for their sakes, whether they are growing in grace or turning back to worldliness. Know where they stand and how they are walking.

PRIMARY TEACHERS' UNION.—A National Union of Primary Sabbath-school Teachers has been organized, the object of which is, "mutual helpfulness by correspondence, interchange of papers on practical topics, and by occasional meetings." It is desired that local primary unions may unite with this association, and that individual teachers and mothers of young children, and those desiring to fit themselves to teach young children, shall give their names as corresponding members. All members who take the prescribed course and pass a satisfactory examination, will secure a diploma. The annual fee for individual members is fifty cents, in return for which printed suggestions, lists of Lesson Helps, topics for discussion, and timely suggestions, will be sent from time to time. Inquiries may be sent to Frank Hamilton, Secretary, Navy Department, Washington, D. C.

YOU NEED IT.—There are still not a few Sunday-school teachers who think that, after all the talk about Teachers' Meetings, they can do quite as well by studying the lesson at home. They have abundant "helps" within their reach; they are intelligent, and they are sure that they lose little or nothing by not being at the meeting. Now, however sure these good men and women may be with regard to their own ability to master the lesson so as to make it available for teaching, they are greatly mistaken. The very ablest teachers, those of the highest qualifications and greatest opportunities, who make it a practice to attend the Teachers' Meeting, frankly admit that they get there what they do not get at their homes. The contact of mind with mind calls out views of the lesson which cannot be acquired by study alone; questions from one and another teacher call out facts which they had not thought to inquire after; the suggestion of difficulties, either real or fancied, prepares them to meet the very points

that may be raised by their scholars. The mind is quickened, new lines of thought suggested, and unforeseen lessons drawn from the Scriptures through the collision of mind with mind. In addition to this great help for teaching, the social influence of this mingling with one's co-workers is as valuable as it is important.

THE INCORRIGIBLE PUPIL.—A Sunday-school teacher with a class of young boys wishes to know what she is to do with one of her pupils who is incorrigible, at least, past all her powers of correction. It may be that the teacher's powers are not yet exhausted, that there are some things which she can do which remain yet undone. Has she tried the full power of patient kindness, of prayer, of visiting at the home? If she cannot perceive what is to be done to remedy the evil, it will not be amiss to ask confidentially some other one of her class whether he can tell what is the matter with the troublesome member. Sometimes one of the boys will know more about his fellow-companion than the teacher knows, and will be able to put the teacher upon the right track. But, if every effort has been exhausted by the teacher and she really feels that she can do no more, the proper course is, to state the case fully to the superintendent, and to ask for the removal of the boy from her class. It is not proper that one pupil should be permitted to destroy a teacher's usefulness. It very often happens that a change of class makes a complete change in the behavior of the boy; whilst a "thorn" in one class he may do well and receive great good in another. Sometimes, where a boy seems hopelessly mischievous in a class with those of his own age, it works well to place him in one of much older boys or young men; he will feel himself honored in being put with such company, and they will be too old to be upset by his pranks. This has been found to work well in practice. The Hindus tame an unruly elephant by placing him between two heavy, steady and solid old elephants.

The Value of Proverbs.

PROVERBS are in this world of thought what golden coin is in the world of business—great value in small compass, and equally current among all people. Sometimes the proverbs may be false, the coin counterfeit, but in both cases the false proves the value of the true. Sound words, sought out and set in order by wise men and handed down from age to age, in the speech of common life, are teachers that take firm hold of the hearts of the people. Great truths travel best, and are best lodged in human hearts when they are put into compact form and are least overladen with words. The short sayings of the sage are more easily carried and comprenended than the long sermon of the preacher. In the hot haste of business, in the perilous scene of temptation, in the dark hours of pain and sorrow, men will not listen to long arguments; they cannot feel the force of profound reasoning. When passion and conscience are in conflict, the truth that turns the tide of battle must speak in terms short and sharp as the word of command on the deadly field. It must show the path of danger, as the lightning at midnight shows the precipice to the traveler who thinks he is walking in safety when the next step would hurl him to death down the steep. The proverb condenses the meaning and power of a thousand words into one short and simple sentence, and it is more effective because it carries so much force in so compact a form. The great orator sways the popular assembly and awakens thousands to instant and terrible action, not by long periods and loud declamation, but by some clear, sharp-cut, homely sentence that everybody can catch in an instant and carry away, as men carry away gold coin and pass it from hand to hand without marring its beauty or lessening its value. Long words, involved sentences, figures of speech far fetched and hard to find, may interest for the time. But they do not touch the main springs of the actions. They do not mould the life of the people. Simple words, short maxims, homely truths, old sayings, are the masters of the world. In them is the hiding of the power that forms character and controls conduct, and makes individuals and nations what they are and what they are to be. Great reformations, great revolutions in society, great eras in human progress and improvement, start from good words, right words, sound words, spoken in the fitting time, and finding their way to human hearts as easily as birds find their home and rivers find the sea. These short, simple sentences that stir the springs of life and flash light into the secret places of the soul, when thrown out at the fitting time, will be taken up and carried by the mind of the people as the wind carries the cloud. Whoever puts the rising thought, the struggling aspiration of the time, into a proverb so plain that the people grasp it and make it their own, becomes a teacher to millions. His word was what the world was waiting for, and yet when it was spoken everybody wonders that it was not spoken before. The orator makes a long speech, the author writes a great book, the preacher delivers a hundred sermons, and in them all was one sentence which was thrown in without thought, and it proves to have come

from the inspiration of the Almighty. It is taken up and sung and chanted and shouted over a whole land. It is written on a thousand flags, and it is repeated at a thousand firesides. It is carried down on the current of history as one of the great words that shook the world. Such being the power of proverbs to inspire, to control, and to teach men, we are not surprised to find one whole book of the Bible given to this mode of instruction. In no other way could the great practical truths of religion and life be conveyed more directly to the hearts of the people in the Eastern land and Bible times. They lived without books, and what they learned was passed by tradition from father to son, and from age to age. For them the precepts of duty and the principles of faith must needs be put in the most compact form. The proverb was the one manner of speech they could best comprehend and carry with them in all the scenes and occupations of life. It was quoted as the law of conduct and the arbiter of debate at all times and for all classes. It was under the guidance of some wise saying of the ancients, some inspired proverb of the preachers, that the shepherd climbed the hills, the pilgrim pursued his journey, the fisher cast his net, the vintager pruned his vines, the sower cast the seed, the trader made his bargains, the husbandman agreed with his laborers, the mistress assigned tasks to her maidens. When the elders adjusted causes in the gate, when kings and ambassadors resolved to seek peace or proclaim war, when priests and scribes gave decisions upon hard questions of law, when the young were directed in the way of life, when the sorrowing were comforted in their affliction, when the doubting were strengthened in faith, when Divine Providence was recognized in the affairs of the world, it was by some sacred proverb that every word of warning, of instruction, and of judgment was confirmed. So the Book of Proverbs was wrought into the whole practical life and conduct of the Hebrew people. And with all their faults it made them wiser than the Greeks, juster than the Romans, purer than the best of the pagan nations. In all the literature of heathen antiquity there is no collection of maxims for the wise conduct of life that will for a moment compare in excellence with this that bears the name of Solomon. We must go back to the old and inspired Book of Proverbs to find the best lessons to teach men purity and justice and generosity toward each other, reverence and faith and love towards God. This sacred book is adapted to all times and to all persons. It is especially fitted to teach the lesson of calmness and moderation and self-control in these times of haste and excitement and wild expectation. It is just the book to teach the young how to make the most and best of life while they live, and how to be always ready for a better and higher life to come. The young man who makes the Proverbs his companion and counsellor cannot fail to bear himself nobly in any position, and to give a good account of his work when it is done. The grief that consumes the heart of the defeated and dishonored will never come to him. Whatever the position which he holds in the world, he will make it honorable by the nobleness and fidelity with which he fulfills its duties. The trials, burdens and temptations of the world will only give beauty and strength to the character which is built up by a diligent study of this book, and by daily obedience to its sacred maxims. Let the young take their lessons of truth and purity, of temperance and industry, of patience and kindness, of faith and piety, from this infallible guide, and the best that the world has to give shall be theirs, and when they pass away from the world their names shall be held in everlasting remembrance.

The Teacher's Preparation.

BY JAMES A. WORDEN, D.D.

SECRETARY WORDEN had a pleasant and hearty reception in London where he conducted an Institute on the American plan. The *Sunday-school Chronicle* gives an excellent report of the exercises, from which we extract the substance of Dr. Worden's "conversation" on the "The Teacher's Preparation."

He divided the subject into three parts—the need, the nature and the methods. Having asked why preparation was necessary for the teacher, some one answered, "To feel our ignorance." That is good. Until a man feels his ignorance he does not know anything. Another fact? "Ignorance of our scholars." "Importance of what we have to teach." Well, but it is an easy work. It is a plain book; nothing is so plain and simple as the Bible. What is the use of studying it? Can't an ignorant man learn the way of life readily? "Yes." Why, then, should we have to study it? Why is it an important book? "It is God's word." If these millions of people in England are to be saved they are to be saved by this truth. If your scholars are going to be converted, lo, the word is perfect, converting the soul. If they are going to be built up, it is the word that buildeth up. Is it honest for a teacher to go before his class and offer unto the Lord burnt-offerings without any cost? On the Sabbath morning he gets up a little earlier, and hurries through the lesson;

or on the Saturday evening, after he has wasted his time on himself, his business, or society, he gives the remnant of his time. Is it right? Are we doing as Mary did, who brought out her costly box of ointment and broke it and poured it on the Saviour? There ought not to be an hour too precious in our business to take it and devote it to the Sabbath-school.

How many of the scholars go to day-schools? "Nearly all." What kind of teaching do they have there? "Good teaching." These girls and boys of yours, if they go to day-schools and have good methods of teaching, and go to the Bible-school and have poor teaching, what is the result? "They turn away." Yes, and have contempt for any such thing as that. And the awful fact is, that their contempt is not only for the teacher and the Sabbath-school, but for religion, for Christ and his work.

What ought the teacher to do? "Pray." Yes, pray in the study, at home, in the street, in the closet. And the question comes, How can I become filled with God's truth? "Commit it to memory first." That is a good thing. With an ordinary memory we can learn ten or fifteen verses in an hour. What next? "Get at the central truth." There must be unity in a lesson, and you have to get the great central truth and weave and twine the lesson about it. What else ought you to do? "Get illustrations." You want feathers for your arrows, something to make them go straight and stick.

Anything else you are to prepare? "Questions." Questioning unveils the soul. Nothing escapes a question. You can dissect a man's whole life if he will answer your questions. Prepare your questions. Next we have what? "Practical applications." When should you make the applications? "As we go through the lesson." That reminds me of the cannon ball which takes 3,000 years to go from here to Saturn. A comic writer observed that it would give Saturn a good chance of dodging. If you save your heart-work until you get through it will give the scholar a good chance of dodging. Apply it as you go along.

What ought we to prepare? "Prepare the heart." Yes, manners make the man, because manners are simply the crystal through which you look into the man. You have got your face ready, washed your hands. Have you washed your soul? Have you got your heart cleansed from all sin? Is your heart bubbling over with love for others? Prepare your introduction. Prepare your line of approach. If a general is going to take a fort, how careful he is in approaching it. How careful he is to make his first line and second line, and to get everything ready before he goes into the deadly breach. Vary your lines of approach. Don't always make them the same.

How is the average teacher to accomplish all this? "Begin early." What do you call beginning early? "Sunday night." How much should you do on Sunday night? "Read the lesson." I think that is about all. I do not think I should work hard on Sunday night. Turn in the lessons and let the mills begin to grind as soon as possible in the week. The real work begins on Monday morning. John Wesley got up for fifty years at four o'clock in the morning, and they mobbed him one morning for preaching at five o'clock and turning the people out so early. Most of us ought to be willing to sacrifice a little sleep for the Lord. I think it important, however, that we should have enough sleep.

When we begin our lesson, what is the first thing? "Get a dictionary and find out the big words." "Teacher, what does purge me with hyssop mean?" Suppose you could not tell? What is the method of preparing? "Writing it out." "Letting it simmer down before you begin on your illustrations and anecdotes." That is right; go to the fountain before you seek illustrations. You remember what Bacon said, "Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, writing an exact man." To test yourself write it down; then you will know how little you know. What are you going to do with the manuscript? "Scratch a lot out." An editor once said, "How it will improve a manuscript to erase every other sentence, and cut out every other adjective in the remaining sentences. Would you use the manuscript in the class? "Not the first notes." "Would you carry any notes into the class? "No" and "Yes." "A teacher could not possibly carry references in his mind." No. Well, I say, do that which is best for you in the sight of God. Pray and think and experiment, and that plan which is best for you, follow.

The Church and the Training College.

BY THE REV. ARTHUR T. PIERSON, D.D.

NATURE has been said to "break her die" in the moulding of some men, so that they can never be reproduced; and doubtless the providence of God leads, at certain times, in certain places, to peculiar methods and measures, which, like indigenous plants, are at home only in that soil and amid those surroundings. Man thinks he *invents* what is spontaneous growth.

The previous paper, on Bethany College, prompted the very natural question, whether the work done at Spurgeon's Tabernacle and Beth-

any Church, and by Pastor Simpson, in New York, is not peculiar, unique, precluding imitation or reproduction save in rare and exceptional cases. We answer that in all its main features, similar work is practical and practicable in many other fields, and especially where young people abound, and where the working classes do, or are desired to, identify themselves with a congregation.

The pastor of Bethany has tried the experiment on a smaller scale elsewhere, and with success commensurate with the effort. While pastor of the Fort Street Church, in the city of Detroit, the destruction of the church building by fire, in 1876, led to the use of the Grand Opera House, where for sixteen months the gospel was preached to the people with great plainness and without price. Those were months when God wrought mightily by his Spirit, gathering in hundreds of families not before connected with any church, many of whose members needed training in the knowledge and practice of godliness.

The obvious need seemed to *create* the supply. It was determined to form an Evening Training School, to meet at least weekly, and it was thought that perhaps one hundred persons would find time and inclination to pursue the studies proposed in Evidences of Christianity, the Books of the Bible, Practical Methods of Christian Work, etc. At the first meeting over three hundred were present, and at the second the number was nearly double, and two neighboring congregations had sent in a request that the night of meeting might be changed so as to make it convenient for members of other churches to attend. This request was complied with, and during the winter a most interesting body of students, young and old, met, notebooks in hand, to pursue purely religious studies. The interest there developed led to a course of lectures in the Opera House on Sunday afternoons, which were given by the pastor at the written request of some sixty persons of different denominations.

Other brethren, clerical and lay, were invited to lecture before these training classes, from time to time, on various themes; and most valuable help was obtained, notably from the Rev. F. T. Bayley, then pastor of Westminster Church.

That winter's experiment fully proved that in our congregations generally there is a *felt need* of such training. The most constant and studious pupils in those evening classes were the last we expected to see, namely, members of our most intelligent Christian families, and even the elders of the church. The numbers who came to join our classes from other churches showed that in all congregations there is an unsupplied hunger for more instruction in Bible themes and practical Christian work.

The experiment in the Fort Street Presbyterian Church was absolutely without any previous experience upon which to base a wiser and ampler method of conducting a training school. The writer believes that a much greater success would have resulted *there*, had the scope of the studies been more extended, and class instruction been combined with the lecture system. Subsequent experience in Indianapolis and Philadelphia shows that to organize students into classes and select competent instructors for each department will secure far the most satisfactory results.

If the writer were now again in that church with present experience to reinforce him, he would reorganize that lay college on a larger scale. He could name an accomplished woman there who would gratuitously teach a department of music, and another who would teach decorative art; a gentleman who is singularly fitted to infuse enthusiasm into the study of missionary biography, while at least three gifted pastors in Detroit would gladly help him by conducting classes in Christian doctrine, evidences and systematic work for souls.

If every large congregation cannot feasibly have its training school, why may not *neighboring churches unite* for such a purpose. Pastors may associate, as a faculty, so that the labor of preparation and teaching may both be distributed more economically and expended more widely and usefully. In a city like Philadelphia, our churches with their accomplished pastors and gifted members, might furnish to the people, especially in studies connected with the Christian religion, the advantages of a university. The results of a score of years of careful study in Bible exposition, prophecy, church history, modern scepticism, teaching the word, Christian science, etc., might be made available to hundreds who have neither leisure nor facilities for such studies themselves. While we are sometimes perhaps over zealous to gather in large numbers as additions to our roll of members, we are in danger of forgetting how important it is to make those who have become children of God strong men and women for the work and war of life. Our text-books are often atheistic; our popular magazines are streaked with the green leprosy of scepticism, our very newspapers are full of materialism and an adulterated moralism. What is the Church doing to offset all these disastrous influences, and put into the hands of trained warriors weapons defensive and offensive against the day of battle, the Armageddon of the ages?

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FOURTH QUARTER.

1. Oct. 5.—Solomon's Succeeding David. 1 Kings 1: 22-35.
2. Oct. 12.—David's Charge to Solomon. 1 Chron. 22: 6-19.
3. Oct. 19.—Solomon's Choice. 1 Kings 3: 5-15.
4. Oct 26.—The Temple Built. 1 Kings 6: 1-14.
5. Nov. 2.—**The Temple Dedicated.** 1 Kings 8: 22-36.
6. Nov. 9.—**The Wisdom of Solomon.** 1 Kings 10: 1-3.
7. Nov. 16.—**Solomon's Sin.** 1 Kings 11: 4-13.
8. Nov. 23.—**Proverbs of Solomon.** Prov. 9: 1-16.
9. Nov. 30.—**True Wisdom.** Prov. 8: 1-17.
10. Dec. 7.—Drunkenness. Prov. 25: 29-35.
11. Dec. 14.—Vanity of Worldly Pleasure. Eccles. 2: 1-13.
12. Dec. 21.—The Creator Remembered. Eccles. 12: 1-14.
13. Dec. 28.—Review.

Lesson V. **THE TEMPLE DEDICATED.** Nov. 2d, 1884.

1 Kings 8: 22-36. Memorize vs. 22-24.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee."—1 Kings 8: 27.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 1 Kings 8: 1-21 ..... *The Temple Dedicated.*
T. 1 Kings 8: 22-35 ..... *Solomon's Prayer*
W. 1 Kings 8: 36-66 ..... *The Dedication Complete.*
Th. 2 Chron. 7: 12-22..... *Solomon's Vision.*
F. Isa. 56: 1-8 ..... *God's House for All.*
S. Ps. 118: 1-29..... *Psalm of Thanksgiving.*
S. Ps. 100: 1-5..... *Glad Service.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. God's Promise Recalled. 2. God's Presence Sought. 3. God's Help Invoked.

Time.—B. C. 1004.

Place.—The temple in Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 102.—*What do we pray for in the second petition?* A. In the second petition, which is, *Thy kingdom come*, we pray, that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed, and that the kingdom of grace may be advanced, ourselves and others brought into it and kept in it, and that the kingdom of glory may be hastened.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

INTRODUCTORY.—The building of the temple occupied seven years and six months. The house was completed in the eighth month. The dedication, however, did not occur immediately, nor for nearly a year. These festivities were probably deferred until the time for the annual feast of Tabernacles, which brought the people from all parts of the country to Jerusalem. This occurred in the seventh month, and as the temple was not completed till the eighth, some suppose that the public dedication ceremonies were deferred till the following year. Others, however, think that the building may have been dedicated the same year it was finished, a month before its entire completion. Read parallel passage. 2 Chron. chaps. 5-7.

---

22 ¶ And Sol'o-mon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Is'ra-el, and spread forth his hands toward heaven: [Ex. 9: 33.]

23 And he said, LORD God of Is'ra-el, *there is* no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart: [Ex. 15: 11; Neh. 1: 5; Gen. 17: 1.]

24 Who hast kept with thy servant Da'vid my father that thou promisedst him: thou spakest also with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled *it* with thine hand, as *it is* this day.

25 Therefore now, LORD God of Is'ra-el, keep with thy servant Da'vid my father that thou promisedst him, saying, There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Is'ra-el; so that thy children take heed to their way, that they walk before me as thou hast walked before me. [Ps. 132: 12]

26 And now, O God of Is'ra-el, let thy word, I pray thee, be verified, which thou spakest unto thy servant Da'vid my father. [2 Sam. 7: 25; Ps. 119: 49.]

27 But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded? [Acts 17: 24.]

28 Yet have thou respect unto the prayer

of thy servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer, which thy servant prayeth before thee to-day: [Phil. 4: 6.]

29 That thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, *even* toward the place of which thou hast said, My name shall be there: that thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which thy servant shall make toward this place. [Deut. 12: 11.]

30 And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Is'ra-el, when they shall pray toward this place: and hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place: and when thou hearest, forgive. [Dan. 6: 10; 1 John 1: 9.]

31 ¶ If any man trespass against his neighbor, and an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear, and the oath come before thine altar in this house: [Lev. 5: 1.]

32 Then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness. [Deut. 25: 1.]

33 ¶ When thy people Is'ra-el be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee, and shall turn again to thee, and confess thy name, and pray, and make supplication unto thee in this house: [Lev. 26: 17.]

34 Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy people Is'ra-el, and bring them again unto the land which thou gavest unto their fathers.

35 ¶ When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou afflictest them: [Lev. 26: 19; Deut. 28: 23.]

36 Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Is'ra-el, that thou teach them the good way wherein they should walk, and give rain upon thy land, which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance. [Ps. 25: 4; 27: 11; 1 Sam. 12: 23.]

The preparations for the dedication were very grand. An enormous assemblage of people was present from all over the country. No one who could be present failed to come. The old tabernacle of Moses and the ancient altar were brought from Gibeon to be laid away in the temple as sacred relics of the past. The ark was also brought and borne by the priests into its place in the Holy of holies. Once at rest there, the staves used to carry it were drawn out of the rings and so placed that their ends appeared through the veil. The people thronged the temple area outside the court of the priests. A great choir of Levites were present to render the musical part of the service. A platform of brass 4½ x 7 feet had been prepared and set in the midst of the court for the use of the king. See 2 Chron. 6: 13. He entered by a private gate, surrounded by a magnificent display of court officers and attendants. The ceremonies began with a burst of music. The temple was filled with thick darkness, the cloud, symbol of the divine presence. Solomon understood it —God accepted the holy house—and in the silence that had fallen upon the vast throng he spoke. See vs. 12–21.

22 *Solomon stood before the altar.* See 2 Chron. 4: 1, for the dimensions of this altar. From 2 Chron. 6: 13 we learn that he *stood* but a very brief time, and that before beginning his prayer he knelt down on the brass platform. See also 1 Kings 8: 54.

23, 24 The prayer begins with expressions of gratitude and praise. *There is no God like thee.* See Ex. 15: 11. *Keepest covenant.* Does what he promises to do. *Thy servants that walk.* This is the human side of the covenant. *Who hast kept with . . . David.* Solomon's heart was full of gratitude and trust that day.

25, 26 *Therefore . . . keep with . . . David.* Fulfill *all* that thou didst promise him. See 2 Sam. 7: 12–16.

27 *Will God indeed dwell on the earth?* A sense of God's majesty and glory comes into the heart of the king, and it seems for the moment impossible that a God so great should make his abode in any temple of earth. *Heaven and heaven of heavens.* The widest expanse of heaven. *Cannot contain thee.* Cannot contain *all* of thee. God's omnipresence is in Solomon's thought as well as his immeasurable glory. *How much less?* He does not mean to say that God would not dwell in the temple, but that he could not be *contained* in such a house. He has in mind the local deities of the heathen who dwelt entirely, were wholly contained, in the little temples built by their worshipers. The Lord was too glorious for such limitation, although in very truth he would dwell in the temple that Solomon had built. See Isa. 66: 1; Acts 7: 49; 17: 24. See also Ps. 139: 7–10.

28, 29 *Yet have thou respect.* Though so great. *That thine eyes may be open.* To see when any one was praying there and to hear and answer. *The place of which thou hast said.* Probably referring to such promises as are found in Deut. 12: 5, 11, 18; 14: 23; 15: 20; 16: 2. No particular place had then been chosen, but the promises referred to the place which God would choose in one of the tribes "to set his name there." From 1 Chron. 22: 1 it seems that Jerusalem was announced to David, at the time he bought the threshing-floor of Araunah and made his offering there, as the place which

the Lord had chosen. See also Ps. 78: 68; 132: 13. It was not David's choice, but God's, that located the capital at Jerusalem. *My name.* The name stands for the person as revealed. *That thou mayest hearken.* So as to hear every prayer. *Toward this place.* From this time on the Jews did always turn their faces toward Jerusalem when they prayed. Far off in their captivity, when they could not go to the temple to worship, they would *look toward* the sacred place and pray. See for illustration Dan. 6: 10; also Ps. 5: 7; 28: 2; 138: 2.

30 *When thou hearest, forgive.* More literally, *Both hear and forgive.* He is referring especially to confessions of sin and prayers for forgiveness.

31, 32 There are now a number of cases definitely described which would lead men to cry to God. *If any man trespass against his neighbor.* See Ex. 22: 10, 11. In cases where trespass was alleged or supposed, yet where no witnesses could be produced, an oath of innocence was taken by the party accused and was accepted as proof. It is such cases that are here referred to. Here the prayer is, that God would hear every such oath and interpose to do justice; if a false oath were made, that he would punish the perjurer; if the suspected person were really innocent, that he would vindicate and protect him.

33, 34 *When thy people Israel be smitten . . . because they have sinned.* Connecting defeat in every case with sin, for the promise was positive that if the people would faithfully serve and obey God he would be with them, and no enemy would be able to stand before them. See Lev. 26: 3–8; 14: 17. This is a prayer that when in captivity the people would repent and cry toward Jerusalem, God would hear and deliver.

35, 36 *When heaven is shut up . . . because they have sinned.* See Lev. 26: 19; Deut. 11: 17. *Teach them the good way.* By the chastisement, for this is God's design in all chastening of his people, to bring them to repentance and save, not destroy them.

There are four other petitions in vs. 37–53, referring to plagues, to foreigners, to the armies in battle, and to national captivity.

When he had ended his prayer fire fell from heaven and consumed the burnt-offering and sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the house. See 2 Chron. 7: 1, 2.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

Solomon stood before the altar. It is a great thing when a king is able and ready to lead his people in the exercises of religion. It is a great thing when men who occupy important places anywhere in life are praying men, and are not ashamed to confess Christ before men. Notice where Solomon stood, before the altar, implying that God can be approached only by way of the altar, that is, by sacrifice and atonement. The altar stood between the suppliants and the Holy temple in which the divine presence was abiding. So between the sinner and God's throne the cross stands. There is no other way of access. We can approach God only through Christ's atonement. "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me," said Jesus himself.

And spread forth his hands toward heaven. We learn also that he *knelt* while he was praying. Kneeling implies humility and reverence. No attitude of the body while in prayer is prescribed in the Bible. Form is not important in God's sight, but he looks upon the heart, and *it* must be both lowly and reverent. The spreading forth of the hands implied the holding up before God of the wants of the suppliant, the pressing of his plea at heaven's gates. The hands held up implied also faith and expectation; they were held up and stretched out to receive the blessings God had to bestow. We should learn these lessons in prayer—earnest pressing of our pleas into the very heaven, and strong expectation of blessings in answer. It is not enough to "*say* our prayers;" we must have intense earnestness and large faith.

There is no God like thee . . . who keepest covenant . . . with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart. Prayer is not all request and supplication. We ought not to speak to God only when we want some favor. Much of all true prayer is adoration and praise. A loving child-heart always seeks to express its love and confidence. "There is no God like thee." The heathen have their idols, their imaginary gods, but our God is not like them. They see not, hear not, love not, care not for those who worship them. Our God loves and keeps covenant. What he promises he always performs. His word never fails, is never broken. What a strong confidence it gives us to be sure that the God in whom we trust always keeps his word. Not a promise of his ever has been broken, and none ever shall be broken. There is something else here we must not overlook. We must never cut Bible sentences in two in

the middle, for if we do we shall get only half-truths. God keeps covenant, but to every covenant there are two sides, and *we* have something to do too to secure what he has promised. He keeps covenant with those who *walk before him with all their heart.* That is our part, and it should be our continual care to be faithful to God in all our ways. There is no danger that he will fail in his part; let us take heed that we do not fail in ours.

Who hast kept with thy servant David . . . that thou promisedst . . . and hast fulfilled it . . . as it is this day. Solomon saw in the glorious accomplishment of his own hopes and plans concerning the temple, not a great triumph of human ambition, but the fulfillment of one of God's promises made long before to David. Do we not forget sometimes when we have received blessings or achieved something good or great that God has just been fulfilling a promise or granting a prayer? We think that we have been doing something fine with our hands, and do not remember that it really is God's work, not ours, that our eyes see. What his *mouth* speaks his *hand* always fulfills.

Lord . . . keep with thy servant David . . . that thou promisedst him. God wants us to plead his own promises when we pray. He wants us to remind him of them, and ask him to fulfill them. That is faith—taking God at his word, believing that he will certainly do what he has pledged himself to do, and claiming the promised blessing or favor. Really, all our prayers should be based upon divine promises. If we cannot find a word of God that covers what we want, we have no ground for our request. If we would use the promises more in prayer we should be richer.

Will God indeed dwell on the earth? We may ask the same question. When we think of God's glory, greatness and holiness, it seems almost incredible that he would ever take up his abode on the sin-cursed earth. Yet he surely does. He has promised to dwell with every one of his people. "I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." He does not merely look down upon us from his high and holy place, but he comes down to us; he does not merely visit us now and then, but dwells, abides with us continually. "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Nor is that all, for he even promises to come into our hearts and live there. "Ye are the temple of the Holy Ghost." So the question is answered. God will indeed dwell on the earth, and not merely in a gorgeous temple, but in the lowliest human heart that loves him, trusts him and obeys him.

That thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day. Solomon's thought was that God would keep his eye always upon the temple, that whenever any suppliant came there with a request, or with any burden, God would see him and listen to his cry, and send blessing or help. That temple has long since been destroyed, but wherever in all the earth a suppliant bows in prayer God's eye is upon him, and his ear is open to catch the words that fall from his trembling lips. It may be out in the desert, far from human habitation, or in a dreary dungeon, or on a plank on the wide sea after the wreck, or in some lonely garret in the heart of the crowded city—wherever any one bows in supplication and calls upon God, there his eye falls. "Night and day," this is true. We need never be afraid that by reason of the darkness or the remoteness or the solitariness or the crowd, God will not see us when we kneel in prayer nor hear us when we cry to him.

Hearken thou to the supplication . . . of thy people . . . when they shall pray toward this place. All prayer is to be made toward God's holy place. In all the wanderings of Israel when they prayed they turned their faces toward Jerusalem. Not toward Jerusalem now, nor any holy *place* do we need to pray, but we must direct all prayer to Jesus. He is our altar, our mercy-seat, our high priest. Through him we have access, and through him alone.

When thou hearest forgive. God's people always have sins to be forgiven. Every prayer needs to have confession in it. We should live holy lives, keeping ourselves unspotted from the world, but the holiest and the purest will always sin in some way and need pardon and cleansing. And there is no place to go with sin but to Christ and to his cross.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Every one has a "temple" for God which we ought to dedicate to him. 1 Cor. 6: 19; Rom. 12: 1.

2. If we make the dedication, sincerely and truly, God will accept the temple and take possession of it. 2 Chron. 7: 1–3; Rev. 3: 20.

3. When we pray we must take our place before the altar—that is, must depend on Christ's sacrifice for acceptance. v. 22.

4. We should reach up our requests in hands of faith, when we pray, then have hands open to receive the answer. v. 22.

5. Our God is a covenant-keeping God, who will never fail to fulfill a promise. v. 23.

6. If we would get what God has promised we must walk before him in love and obedience. v. 23.

7. We should plead God's promises in prayer. vs. 25, 26.

8. Even the glorious God will dwell in human hearts on the earth. v. 27; Isa. 57: 15.

9. God's eyes are open night and day on all the earth to see every trembling suppliant. v. 29.

10. We should pray for others as well as for ourselves. vs. 30–36.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

BY JAMES A. WORDEN, D.D.

How to Begin.

1. Draw out the scholars in describing the temple. Call for its location, size, foundations, its ornaments and beauty. 1 Kings 6: 15–36; 7: 1–51.

2. Describe the multitude who were present. 1 Kings 8: 1, 2, 65.

3. The procession of elders and priests who brought up the ark (vs. 3, 4); the sacrifices (v. 5); the placing the ark. vs. 6–9.

4. The awful cloud which filled the house. vs. 12, 13. Point to the fact that Solomon the king and not the high priest performs the priestly act of blessing the people and offering the dedication prayer. What posture did Solomon take in offering this prayer? v. 54 and 2 Chron. 6: 13. Always keep in mind *the practical applications*, as for example:

I. *Each of us should dedicate himself a temple to Christ.* Read 1 Cor. 6: 19; 3: 16. What is a temple? On what account are Christians set apart to God? How can a believer dedicate himself to Christ?

II. *Christ dwells in each Christian as his temple.* Jehovah's glory filled Solomon's temple. vs. 10, 11. What said Christ? John 14: 23. What said Paul? 2 Cor. 6: 16. Show that Christ by his Spirit dwells in the Christian. Illustrate by the cloud of glory which filled the temple. Eph. 2: 21, 22. Believers are called *the habitation of God.* Christ is "closer to us than breathing, and nearer than hands or feet."

III. *The Christian is a nobler temple than Solomon's.* Have class depict the glory of Solomon's temple—its cost, beauty, the visible presence of Jehovah in it, etc. In what respects is a believing, purified Christian a nobler temple? 1. He is *alive.* What is marble or cedar or gold to a *living* man or woman? 2. He *thinks.* Solomon's temple could not think one thought of God. 3. He *loves.* All the costly building and furniture of Solomon could give no throb of love to Jehovah. The humblest Christian can say, "We love him because he first loved us." 4. The least Christian shall *endure for ever.* Solomon's temple was destroyed by the Babylonians. 2 Kings 25: 9, 13–17; 2 Chron. 36: 18, 19. The feeblest believer shall last for ever indestructible. 2 Cor. 5: 1, etc.

IV. *Each Christian should be a temple of prayer and praise.* In treating the thanksgiving of Solomon (vs. 23, 24), apply by asking, For what should we praise God in dedicating ourselves to him? The petitions of Solomon (1) that God would hear the prayers of his people (vs. 29, 30); (2) that God would judge his people (vs. 31, 32); (3) that he would forgive the sins of the nation and overrule their defeats (vs. 33, 34); (4) that he would give rain. vs. 35, 36. Apply by bringing out that the soul of every believer should be a temple where "supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks be made for all men." 1 Tim. 2: 1.

V. *The temple—each Christian—should be undefiled.* 1 Cor. 3: 17. Right in this truth, that the believer's soul *and body* are the true temple of God, you will find your best ground for urging personal purity. "If any man defile the temple of God," with intoxicating liquor, with impure thoughts or feelings, with poisonous tobacco, with idolatrous worship of money, "*him shall God destroy.*" Apply this both to their treatment of their own body and to their treatment of others.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

BY MRS. G. R. ALDEN—"PANSY."

Special aim in teaching this lesson—

1. To teach the children to pray for the church.

2. To ask them to dedicate their own temples to God.

Review previous lessons on the temple. Use a model or a blackboard outline.

All is now complete, and God has shown by a miracle the fact of his presence there. (The incidents not included in the text of the lesson should be briefly explained to the class.)

What next? What does this red line represent? Yes, somebody prayed. Who was it? Since Solomon was so wise a man we may learn from him a lesson about how to pray. Let us see what we can find. We will draw a sort of branch from this red line to stand for the first thing that Solomon said. What was it? Draw out, by questioning, the fact that Solomon first praised God for his goodness. Place the word "PRAISE" on the branch line. What have *we* to praise God for?

Now we will make three more branches of prayer. Develop the fact that Solomon asked God to WATCH over his house night and day, to LISTEN to the people who came to the temple to pray, and to FORGIVE them. At the proper time print the words which are in capitals on the red lines. Put the word "ASK" on the main branch.

We have now taken, in my judgment, as much of the lesson as the little people can profitably receive. The application thus far is obvious. God still loves his Church; he still wants people to pray for it. It still needs his watching care, day and night. How many have asked God to bless the church which they attend? How many have asked him to listen to the words spoken in his house to-day?

The children should be led to remember that not only the particular temple which they attend, but all the houses where God's people gather, may be included in their prayers. It would be helpful just here to pause a moment, and unite in a very brief prayer for all the men, women and children who are in Sabbath-school this day.

Solomon dedicated the temple to be used for God. How about those little temples which God himself has built and given to us? Have we dedicated them to him? (Carefully explain the word "dedicate," questioning on it until you feel sure it is understood.

Sing, "A wonderful house have I," and close the lesson with an appeal to each child to give this wonderful house to God, asking him to watch it night and day, to hear the words spoken in this house, and to forgive what is wrong.

In teaching this part of the lesson the golden text may be impressively brought in. "Behold the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee." So great and wonderful is God that he can fill all heaven, all space, yet he stoops to live in the heart of each little child.

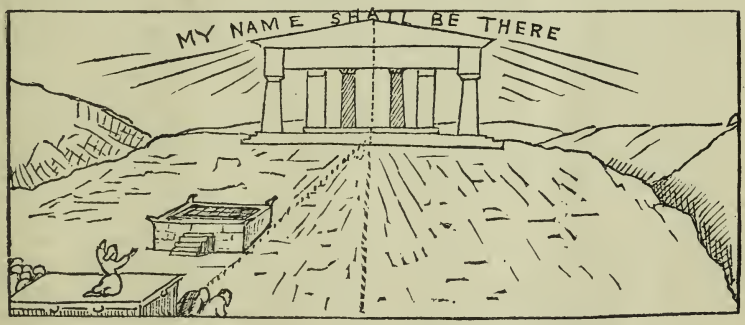
I hope that all primary teachers will use this lesson also in trying to help the children in cultivating a habit of coming to the temple each Sabbath day; not to Sabbath-school merely, but to the *church* service. In connection with this thought, the little hymn—

"Bim bome, bim bome, rings the church bell
from the steeple,
Calling to meeting the people,"

may be very effectively used. It may be found in "Gems for the Little Folks," along with many another gem.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BLACKBOARD.

BY THE REV. P. H. BROOKS.



Aids in Drawing Design.—The distance from the top of the temple porch to the first line below it is the unit of measure by which all parts of the picture are measured. Five of these distances give the height, and eight the width of the temple porch. The shaded pillars are Jachin on the right and Boaz on the left. The dotted lines are only to aid in drawing. The figures bowed in prayer may be omitted.

Aids for Closing Words.—1. Let us not have broader or narrower foundation truths than Jesus had. The temple looks rather low for its breadth. Solomon builded after the divine pattern. Zerubbabel builded twice as high, but on the same foundation, and Herod three times as high, but he did not tamper with the foundation.

2. To-day in our school we have been *building up* this lesson. Will God now own our work or leave it unaccepted? (At this point erase the letter T in the last word in the motto, and with the side of a crayon nearly cover the temple, as in a cloud of smoke, and the altar.) The priests could not stand by reason of the smoke, so while we all now dedicate ourselves and work and prayers over this lesson, will our God give us some token of his approval and fill our hearts?

Lesson VI. **THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON.** Nov. 9th, 1884.

1 Kings 10: 1-13. Memorize vs. 8, 9.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Behold, a greater than Solomon is here."—Matt. 12: 42.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 1 Kings 9: 10-28....*Solomon's Allies.*
T. 1 Kings 10: 1-10....*Solomon's Wisdom.*
W. 1 Kings 10: 11-29...*Solomon's Wealth.*
Th. Matt. 12: 28-50.....*The Queen of the South.*
F. Deut. 28: 1-14 .....*Prosperity to the Obedient.*
S. Prov. 2: 1-15 .....*The Lord Giveth Wisdom.*
S. Ps. 33: 1-22...*The Nation whose God is the Lord.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Queen's Visit. 2. The Queen's Amazement. 3. The Queen's Presents.

Time.—B. C. 992.

Place.—Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 103. *What do we pray for in the third petition?* A. In the third petition, which is, "*Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven,*" we pray, that God, by his grace, would make us able and willing to know, obey, and submit to his will in all things, as the angels do in heaven.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—Solomon's reign was one of great magnificence. He built palaces and docks and ships and cities and fortresses, and constructed gardens and aqueducts and roads, and his fame spread everywhere, and many came to see the splendor of his capital and to hear and admire his wisdom. Among others came a queen from Arabia.

---

1 And when the queen of She'ba heard of the fame of Sol'o-mon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to prove him with hard questions. [2 Chron. 9: 1; Luke 11: 31; Judg. 14: 12.]

2 And she came to Je-ru'sa-lem with a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones: and when she was come to Sol'o-mon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart.

3 And Sol'o-mon told her all her questions: there was not *any* thing hid from the king, which he told her not. [Isa. 50: 4.]

4 And when the queen of She'ba had seen all Sol'o-mon's wisdom, and the house that he had built,

5 And the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cup-bearers, and his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the LORD; there was no more spirit in her.

6 And she said to the king, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom.

7 Howbeit, I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen *it:* and behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard.

8 Happy *are* thy men, happy *are* these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, *and* that hear thy wisdom. [Prov. 8: 34.]

9 Blessed be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Is'ra-el: because the LORD loved Is'ra-el for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice. [Dan. 2: 21; 2 Sam. 8: 15.]

10 And she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of She'ba gave to king Sol'o-mon. [Ps. 72: 10.]

11 And the navy also of Hi'ram, that brought gold from O'phir, brought in from O'phir great plenty of almug trees, and precious stones. [1 Kings 9: 27.]

12 And the king made of the almug trees pillars for the house of the LORD and for the king's house, harps also and psalteries for singers: there came no such almug trees, nor were seen unto this day. [2 Chron. 9: 10, 11.]

13 And king Sol'o-mon gave unto the queen of She'ba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, besides *that* which Sol'o-mon gave her of his royal bounty. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants.

1. *The queen of Sheba.* Sheba, or Sabæa, was a country in the southern part of Arabia, east of the Red sea. It was famous for its spices. "The name has been traced to Sheba, the son of Joktan, of the family of Shem. Gen. 10: 28. The first settlers of the region were descendants of Cush. Subsequently the descendants of Sheba planted colonies among them. Finally the two families were mingled together, the Semitic branch having the preeminence, and giving their name to the country." It is proper to say that there was also a Sheba in Ethiopia, but it is now generally agreed that this Sheba was in the southern part of Arabia Felix. If Ophir is also in Arabia, as many of the best authorities think, it is easy to understand how the fame of Solomon reached Sheba, as he had much commerce with Ophir. Chap. 9: 28. *The fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord.* The temple he had built for the Lord gave character to his fame. Then, he was the king of a nation which worshiped Jehovah. Besides, his peculiar gift of wisdom was from the Lord. *She came to prove him.* To put his wisdom to the test. *Hard questions.* Riddles and puzzles of various kinds.

2 *She came to Jerusalem.* The distance was probably fifteen hundred miles, and by the methods of traveling in those times the journey would require at least seventy-five days in

coming, and the same in returning. The way lay through a desert, exposing the royal party to much hardship and peril. *With camels that bare spices.* See v. 10. The chief spices of Sheba were "frankincense, myrrh, opobalsam, gum tragacanth and ladanum." The abundance of spices in that part of Arabia has been noted by profane writers. Herodotus says that "the whole tract exhaled an odor marvelously sweet;" Diodorus, that "the odor was carried out to sea to a considerable distance from the shore." The profits of the trade were enormous. *Gold and precious stones.* Gold is not now found in that country, but it may have been at that time. Or the gold may have been brought to Sheba from other countries in exchange for spices. The amount is given in v. 10, supposed to be above three million dollars in our money. Of precious stones now found in Arabia the onyx, the turquoise and the emerald are the chief, but anciently there were others. These things she brought as a present to the king, as it was customary in paying such visits to monarchs to bring gifts to them. *All that was in her heart.* All the questions she had in mind to put to him.

3 *Told her all.* Answered all her inquiries and solved all her enigmas. The Oriental legends profess to preserve a number of the tests to which she put the wisdom of Solomon.

4, 5 *All Solomon's wisdom.* As shown not only in his answers to her hard questions, but also in many other ways. *The house that he had built.* The king's house, not the temple. *The meat of his table.* The costliness and variety of the food on the king's table. See chap. 4: 22, 23. *The sitting of his servants.* Courtiers or officers. *His ministers.* Probably those who served at table. They were richly dressed. *Cupbearers.* Those who attended to the wine and other drinks. *Ascent . . . unto the house of the Lord.* Probably a private way leading from the king's palace, on the western hill, across the ravine and up the eastern hill, to the temple. It must have been a magnificent structure. The remains of a bridge have been found at one corner of the temple area which some think may have belonged to this "ascent." *No more spirit.* She was so utterly amazed by the splendor of all she saw.

6–8 She had not been disappointed, but on the other hand the reality far surpassed the fame.

9 *Blessed be the Lord God.* This does not imply that she had been converted to the worship of the God of Israel, but that she admitted his power, perhaps only as the God of that nation and country. The Jewish tradition is, that she was converted, but there is no proof of it.

10 See note on v. 2.

11, 12 *The navy of Hiram.* King of Tyre, with whom Solomon had formed a friendly alliance, who aided much in the building of the temple. The navy was Solomon's, but it was manned by Hiram's sailors, as they were familiar with the sea. See chap. 9: 26–28. *Ophir.* Thought to have been in Arabia, near to Sheba, although many other places, even Peru in South America, have been suggested as the place. *Almug trees.* It is not known what sort of tree this was, but many suppose it to have been the sandal-wood. This wood being hard and fine-grained, was suitable for the pillars and for the harps and other instruments which Solomon made from it.

12 *Pillars.* Perhaps railings or balustrades, rather. See 2 Chron. 9: 11, where he is said to have made "stairs" for the temple and the king's house from this same wood. *Harps.* Of triangular shape, and with ten strings. *Psalteries.* Stringed instruments which were played with the hand, probably similar to the guitar.

13 *Solomon gave.* The queen had brought costly presents to Solomon, and then she had a right, according to custom, to ask presents in return. He let her choose whatever she desired. It was not unusual in the East to *ask* for presents.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

When the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon . . . she came to prove him with hard questions. The golden text applies here. This queen heard in her far country of Solomon's wisdom, and came all the great distance to see him and to hear his words. The journey was very laborious and costly, and its fatigues must have been very great; yet so eager was she to see this wonderful king and to listen to his wisdom, that she endured all the hardship and expense. "Behold, a greater than Solomon is here," said the Saviour. He referred to himself. He was greater than Solomon in every way. He was the eternal Son of God, Solomon's Lord. His wisdom infinitely surpassed Solomon's. His ability to enlighten and help excelled Solomon's as divinity excels humanity. If one woman came so far, at such cost, to see Solomon and hear his wisdom, the whole world should have come to see and hear Christ. We have ever fresh illustrations of the same truth. There are men and subjects in every community and in every age, that attract attention and draw people to see and study them. But all the while there stands One among us whom men know not, nor desire to know, who surpasses in interest and wisdom all the objects of attraction in the world. People throng to hear the scientist, or the novelist, or the orator, or the singer, but only a sparse few gather about the divine Teacher. Men are interested in "the questions of the day," in politics, in railroads, in scientific researches, in inventions, but how few sit down to study the profound and eternal truths of revelation. They think these things suited only to children and to women, and to the old or the dying, forgetting that they are the things into which "angels desire to look."

She came with . . . spices, and very much gold and precious stones. Solomon is not a type of Christ, yet this incident furnishes an *illustration* of the way we should come to Christ our King. We should bring presents to him, not the poorest and least costly we can find, but the richest and the best, the most precious hours of our time, the finest gold of our youth, the sweetest fragrance of our love. Thus the wise men when they came from the far East brought their treasures and laid them at the feet of the new-born King. Thus Mary brought her alabaster box of precious ointment, broke the box and poured the nard on the head and feet of her blessed Lord. So should we all do. The queen of Sheba brought spices, gold and precious stones as a present to Solomon, and "a greater than Solomon is here." Solomon was rich and did not need her gifts, but he accepted them; Christ though rich in all things and needing nothing, accepts also our smallest gifts with joyful heart. Even the poorest things, if they are our best and if given with love, he will receive. The widow's mites he took from the offerer's thin, wasted hand with blessed words of recognition. I saw a well-dressed gentleman, worth his million, take a bunch of withered flowers from the hand of a ragged child in the mission school, and he could not have shown more gratitude and pleasure if from a jeweled hand he had received the choicest flowers of the conservatory. So Jesus accepts our poorest gifts if love bestows them.

She communed with him of all that was in her heart. When we come to Christ we should do the same. We should speak to him all our desires, we should carry all our burdens to him, we should bring all our perplexities and cares and tell him all about them, we should ask him whatever questions arise in our minds; in a word, we should lay bare our very hearts before him. This is true prayer—not merely reciting a familiar form of words, nor making a few requests, but talking to Christ about whatever is in our heart, communing with him in the most familiar and intimate way.

Solomon told her all her questions. So again does our King. We all have many questions which we want to have answered, and which no worldly wisdom can answer. There are questions about God, questions about the future life, questions about duty, perplexing questions about the strange ways of providence. There is no one among men that can answer them. If we were to shut up the Bible and blot out from the world, all its teachings and influences, wherever they have extended, and if we were to lock up the gates of prayer so that no one could ever go again to God with an inquiry, the deepest questions of life would have to remain for ever unanswered. But Christ has an answer for every question, and we have but to open the inspired word or enter the closet of prayer to have all things made plain and clear to us.

The half was not told me; thy wisdom . . . exceedeth the fame which I heard. So no one is ever disappointed who comes to our heavenly King. No matter how glowingly others have depicted Christ's love, his grace, his mercy, his wisdom, the splendor of his kingdom and the blessedness of his service, none who come ever fail to find all that was promised, and far more. Many cannot believe before coming that what they hear is true; but when they see for themselves and learn from actual experience of the

riches of his grace and wisdom, they find that there has been no exaggeration. Too much has not been said by his friends. Indeed, the half has not been told. The love of Christ infinitely surpasses the power of language to describe. So of heaven's glories, after all we can know of them here, we shall learn at last that the half has not been told.

Happy are these thy servants which stand continually before thee. It surely was a great privilege to belong to Solomon's household or court, so as to be continually in his presence, to hear the words of wisdom that fell from his lips. But again, a greater than Solomon is here. It is the highest privilege extended to any creature to stay near to Christ, to have him for a friend, to walk with him, to stand in his presence and hear his words. Happy, indeed, are *his* servants. To be a Christian is the greatest honor that earth can give. Then what blessedness it will be to dwell for ever in his presence in glory!

King Solomon gave unto the queen . . . whatsoever she asked. "Behold, a greater than Solomon is here." Solomon gave her all that she desired, and she carried away from his hands rich gifts. *Our* King never sends any one away empty who comes to him. In all his kingdom there is no good thing that he will withhold from the lowliest and humblest who love and trust him. We bring our little poor gifts to him, not always even gladly, sometimes reluctantly, and he gives to us the richest, most precious, most glorious things from his infinite fullness.

[In using this beautiful story as I have, I do not regard Solomon as a type of Christ, but taking our Lord's own reference to the incident as a key, have sought to draw profitable analogies from the queen's visit and her reception. This seems to me perfectly allowable, and an instructive use of the story.]

LESSON POINTS.

1. Wisdom wins renown. v. 1.

2. "A greater than Solomon is here," and we should all flock to see and hear him. (Golden text.)

3. No distance or hardship should keep us from coming to Christ. v. 2.

4. When we come we should bring gifts to our King, our love, our whole being.

5. We should bring all our questions and perplexities to him, and he will answer them all. vs. 2, 3.

6. When Christ reveals himself in all his brightness and splendor, the manifestation is overwhelming. v. 5. (Compare the apostles when Christ was transfigured. Matt. 17.)

7. Those who have not yet seen Christ are slow to believe the reports others give. v. 7.

8. When we come to Christ and know by experience of his love we find that the half had never been told us.

9. The highest privilege on earth is to be a servant of Christ, and to stand in his presence continually. v. 8.

10. Christ never sends any one away empty who comes to him. v. 13.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

Approach by asking, For what purposes do people go to foreign lands? Some go just to see the strange countries, the mountains, the rivers, the cities, art galleries, etc. Others go to get a better education. Others go to make money. Sometimes men go to other lands for war. Our lesson is about a traveler who came a long, wearisome journey to Palestine. Thus you come to the lesson. You will find no difficulty in interesting your scholars in it. The only hard thing will be to profit them by it.

I. *The Queen of Sheba was a model for seekers of religion.* Bring out all we know of her, then ask, What brought the queen of Sheba to Jerusalem? "The fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord." So a sinner should seek first of all to know Jesus.

II. *Like her, the sinner should go to the right person.* To whom did the queen come? Why to Solomon? He alone in all the world could teach her true religion. Who alone can save us? Why not be satisfied with going to the minister? To whom alone must every sinner go for himself? John 6: 68. Read Matt. 12: 42. In what respects is Jesus greater than Solomon? 1. As God is greater than man. 2. As the Saviour is greater than a teacher who tells of the Saviour. 3. As having all the treasures of knowledge and of wisdom. 4. Jesus has greater love and sympathy for us. 5. We can always remain with Jesus, while the queen had to depart to Sheba from Solomon.

III. *Like her, the sinner should go in spite of difficulties.* What difficulties had the queen of Sheba to encounter? The way was long and dangerous; the camel is a tiresome animal to ride, etc. What difficulties has the sinner to meet in coming to Christ? Jesus is not far off. Rom. 10: 8–10. But there are hindrances—his unbelief and sins, Satan's darts and excuses, the sneers of others, etc.

IV. *Like her, the sinner should thoroughly*

seek. How did the queen of Sheba prove Solomon? With hard questions. What is the sinner to ask of Jesus? Why are we to tell Jesus all that is in our heart? What difficult questions will Jesus himself answer for us? How are we to be saved? What must we give up for Christ?

V. *Like her, we are to bring to Jesus our best.* What did the queen of Sheba bring to Solomon? v. 2. What are we to bring to Christ as an offering? Our best love, time, influence, talent, money, etc. Prove that Christ has "need of these things." What are you bringing to Jesus?

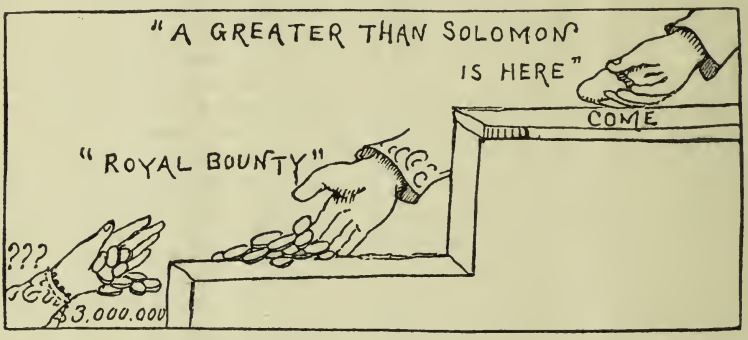
VI. *Like her, the sinner will find all questions answered by Christ.* Is the Bible true? Is there a heaven? A hell? Jesus will tell you?

VII. *Like her, the sinner finds the half has never yet been told of Christ.* Why are travelers so often disappointed in scenes of foreign lands? Their expectations were raised too high. What did the queen of Sheba say of Solomon's magnificence and wisdom? v. 7. Why cannot the half be told of Jesus' glory and love, his pardon and peace, etc.?

VIII. *Like her, the sinner thus finding Christ will praise God.* In what words did the queen of Sheba bless God? v. 9. The saved sinner always sings.

IX. *Like her, the sinner receives gifts from Christ.* What did Solomon give the queen? v. 13. What gifts does Christ give the seeking sinner? Have the scholars mention all they can think of. See John 14: 13, 14.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BLACKBOARD.



Aids in Drawing Design.—This design should be all drawn before the Sabbath-school session. Begin by drawing the hand in the lower corner, amid the questions. Use yellow crayon for the gold pieces. Next draw the higher hand, with more gold, "according to the hand of King Solomon." Then draw the pierced hand, with a portion of bread like his body broken for us. Then draw the steps, showing the gradation of the large, larger, largest bounty, with the words as in the cut.

Aids for Closing Words.—Who among us are coming to the King? Have you started yet from that dark, distant, lonely land of death? Are you coming alone with your hard personal questions about sin and pardon? Has your soul had its first communing with our King? Do your eyes look with loving wonder at his church-house which he has built? But come nearer. See that mark in his hand. Did it only give a *little*, lose a little, risk a little? Will you only sin a little in rejecting his offer once again?

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Design of Lesson.—To impress the truth found in golden text.

The Teacher Before her Class.—What have we here? (Hold up a golden crown cut from gilt paper.) About what king have we been talking for several weeks? Then I will pin his name to this crown. What did he ask God to give him? What was God's answer? (After asking these and several other questions designed to review former lessons, spend a few moments in telling about Solomon's great wealth, how gold was brought him from one country, precious stones from another, etc.) Let us make a picture of this crown up here on the right hand corner of the board. Now, what am I making down in the left corner? Yes, another crown. This is the crown of a queen. What is her name? Now Solomon is going to have company. Let us make a road from her kingdom to his. How many miles do you think it was? (Encourage conjecture, then teach that it was about a thousand miles.) Do you think she traveled by the cars? (With questions like this, call out and impress the

fact that it was by no means so easy a matter to take a journey of a thousand miles in Solomon's day as it is now.) Why was the queen of Sheba going? (Question, to call out what she had heard about Solomon, which roused her desire to know more.)

Look! These dots are for camels. They carry great loads on their backs—gold and spices and precious jewels. What is the queen taking them for? (Imagine the great train required to carry such immense stores, and the long journey across the country. Make a picture, as vivid as possible, of the scene on her arrival. The magnificence of the palace and the temple, the marvelous feast spread, and all the glory of the occasion. The picture will have to be given briefly, but it is worth your while to study the art of presenting a vivid scene in few words.) Was the queen disappointed? Dwell on the thought that though she had heard enough to rouse her into taking a long journey, yet she says the half was not told her. Call out from class what she did with her gifts. Call from them the fact that Solomon showed himself wiser than she. Her hard questions could not puzzle him.

Application.—How many would have liked to visit King Solomon and seen the wonderful temple, and the wonderful palace, and have received his gifts? Every one of you. How much trouble do you think you would have taken? What would you have carried to him for a present? What is our golden text? "Behold, a greater than Solomon is here!" But Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived, and probably the richest. How can one be greater? (Lead class to give you the name to put on your crown.)

"KING JESUS."

How many miles do we have to go in order to get to him? Dwell on the thought of his constant presence with us. How many of you have heard of the wisdom and power of this great King of ours? Let me see how many things you can tell me that you have heard about him? Encourage rapid answers to this question until you have received enough to set all the children to thinking of the greatness of God.

King Solomon gave gifts to this visitor of his. Has your King given you any gifts? (Another lists of answers, called for rapidly.) Now think carefully over this question: The queen carried the *best* things she had to give. Suppose Solomon had sent her word what he wanted, do you think she would have tried to bring it? Well, now, King Jesus has told us just what he wanted us to bring. What is it? Having received the answer, which all carefully taught children will give, viz.: "Our hearts," hold up a black heart. What, such an one? Mustn't we make it clean first? No, he is willing to take our poor sinful hearts and make them pure and fit for his palace. But the queen brought jewels to King Solomon. Are there any jewels we can gather for *our* King? Close this lesson by singing—

"Little children, little children,
Who love their Redeemer, Are the jewels," etc.

Two things for us to do—give him first our hearts, then hunt jewels for him. Have we started on the journey to his palace?

Lesson VII. **SOLOMON'S SIN.** **Nov. 16th, 1884.**

1 Kings 11: 4–13. Memorize vs. 9, 10.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."—Prov. 4: 23.

HOME STUDIES.

M. 1 Kings 11: 4–13..*Solomon's Sin.*
T. Prov 4: 14–27....*"Keep thy Heart."*
W. 1 Kings 11: 14–25.*Solomon's Adversaries.*
Th. 1 Kings 11: 26–43.*Solomon's Death.*
F. Isa. 40: 18–31 ....*"To Whom will ye Liken God."*
S. Isa. 45: 18–25 ....*"No God beside Me."*
S. Ps. 97: 1–12.....*"High Above all the Earth."*

LESSON PLAN.

1. Solomon Turning from the Lord. 2. The Lord Turning from Solomon.

Time.—B. C. 984.

Place.—Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 104. *What do we pray for in the fourth petition?* A. In the fourth petition, which is, *Give us this day our daily bread*, we pray, that of God's free gift, we may receive a competent portion of the good things of this life, and enjoy his blessing with them.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—In many ways the glory of Solomon's reign waned before its close. His immense improvements and the extravagance of his government impoverished the nation and made the taxes very burdensome. His system of slave labor sapped the loyalty of the masses.

His kingdom became more and more despotic. His wide commerce with other nations affected the religious character of the people, bringing in the heathen among them. But the particular phase of deterioration marked in our lesson passage is in Solomon's own life. The time is near the close of his reign.

---

4 For it came to pass, when Sol'o-mon was old, *that* his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as *was* the heart of Da'vid his father. [Deut. 17: 17; Neh. 13: 26.]

5 For Sol'o-mon went after Ash'tor-eth the goddess of the Zi-do'ni-ans, and after Mil'com the abomination of the Am'mon-ites. [Judg. 2: 13; 2 Kings 23: 13.]

6 And Sol'o-mon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as *did* Da'vid his father. [Num. 14: 24.]

7 Then did Sol'o-mon build a high place for Che'mosh, the abomination of Mo'ab, in the hill that *is* before Je-ru'sa-lem, and for Mo'lech, the abomination of the children of Am'mon. [Num. 33: 52.]

8 And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods.

9 ¶ And the LORD was angry with Sol'o-mon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Is'ra-el, which had appeared unto him twice, [ch. 3: 5; 9: 2.]

10 And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded. [ch. 6: 12; 9: 6.]

11 Wherefore the LORD said unto Sol'o-mon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. [ch. 12: 15, 16.]

12 Notwithstanding, in thy days I will not do it for Da'vid thy father's sake: *but* I will rend it out of the hand of thy son.

13 Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; *but* will give one tribe to thy son for Da'vid my servant's sake, and for Je-ru'sa-lem's sake which I have chosen. [2 Sam. 7: 15; Ps. 89: 33; Deut. 12: 11.]

4 *When Solomon was old.* That is, near the end of his life, although he was but fifty-nine or sixty when he died. The words indicate that his strength of character and power of resistance had been weakened through long indulgence, and that he then fell easily under the influence of the heathen women in his harem. *His wives.* See v. 3. *Turned away his heart after other gods.* It does not seem from this that he wholly apostatized. We are nowhere told of Solomon that he "*served*" other gods, as we read of later kings. He did not abandon the worship of Jehovah, but continued to offer his sacrifices in the temple. He seems, however, to have grown tolerant of the worship of other gods, and to have built temples to idols, temples which were the scene of cruel and impure rites. His wives were from idolatrous nations, and their influence was to weaken his attachment to the true God and to draw him toward their own deities. *His heart was not perfect with the Lord.* Did not give its whole undivided allegiance to Jehovah. *As was the heart of David.* David grievously sinned, but his heart never turned from the true God to idols.

5 *Went after Ashtoreth.* Whether or not he actually *worshiped* the idol cannot be determined, but the expression certainly implies that he attended upon the rites and ceremonies which were performed in the idol temple and gave his encouragement to the strange religion. Ashtoreth was a female deity, and the worship was probably impure. *Zidonians.* Sidon was a wealthy city on the Phœnician coast, about twenty miles north of Tyre. *Milcom.* Supposed to be another form of the name *Molech*, which occurs so often in the Scriptures. The Ammonites worshiped Molech by offering human sacrifices, even their own children. The idol was made of brass, and being hollow was heated red-hot when the victim was thrown into its arms and burned to death. The *Ammonites* dwelt among the mountainous regions east of the Dead Sea, and were descendants of Lot.

6 *Not fully.* Dividing his allegiance, and trying to blend the worship of Jehovah with that of idols.

7 *An high place.* Hill-tops have been chosen by all nations for the location of their places of worship, as being nearer heaven. The term is used in the Bible to describe any place of worship besides that appointed by Jehovah. *Chemosh.* The supreme deity of the Moabites. He was worshiped as king of his people and as a God of war. On coins he is represented with sword, shield and lance, and with two torches by his side. *The hill . . . before Jerusalem.* The Mount of Olives. See 2 Kings 23: 13.

8 *For all his strange wives.* He built places of worship for the gods of all. He seems to have tried to make Jerusalem and its environs almost a pantheon. On all sides these heathen altars stood, their priests ministering and their sacrifices smoking.

9, 10 *The Lord was angry.* Not as we use the word, wrought into a passion, but angry in the sense of deep indignation against sin. The Lord is represented as a "jealous God," and the turning away of Solomon's heart toward

other gods grieved him sorely and stirred up his anger. *Which had appeared unto him twice.* See chaps. 3 and 9: 3. This is mentioned as an aggravation of Solomon's sin. One to whom God had twice revealed himself should never have been so disloyal. *Had commanded him.* He was not unwarned, and his sin was not through ignorance.

11 *The Lord said.* Probably by a prophet, and since Nathan was gone, it may have been by Ahijah. See v. 29. *As this is done.* Referring to the departing of Solomon from God. He had other sins, but this was the one that brought the curse upon him. *I will surely rend.* Take away violently, sundering the kingdom and dividing it. *Thy servant.* Jeroboam. He was at this time in Solomon's service.

12 *In thy days.* During his lifetime. *For David thy father's sake.* Had it not been for the faithfulness of David and God's covenant promise to him (see Lesson of July 20th), God would have even in Solomon's days set him aside as king. *Out of the hand of thy son.* Rehoboam.

13 *I will not rend away all.* This also was for David's sake, and because of the promise made to him. Thus two blessings came through David—a postponement of the penalty and the continuance of a *part* of the kingdom to Solomon's son. This was necessary for the fulfillment of the promise of a Messiah made to David's house. *One tribe.* See chap. 12: 1. Benjamin seems not to have been counted, having been virtually absorbed in Judah.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

When Solomon was old his wives turned away his heart after other gods. A good wife is a good thing. Many a man owes everything to his wife. But Solomon made two mistakes. First, he had too many wives. Any plural number is too many. *One* wife is a good thing, if she is a good and true woman, but more than one brings a curse and not a blessing. Solomon had *many* wives, and it is no wonder they turned both his head and heart. The other mistake was, that his wives were not *good.* He did not follow God's counsel in choosing his wives, but married heathen women. They did not convert to Jewish faith, but remained heathen in the holy city. They must have chapels and priests for their different gods, and in the very shadow of the temple the smoke arose from many a heathen altar. At first Solomon probably only *permitted* these ceremonies, tolerating all religions; but later, as he grew older, he attended upon the rites, and his heart was turned away after heathen deities. The lesson has its solemn warning for all young people, not to form intimate relations with those who are wicked. To do so almost surely leads to apostasy from God and to ruin in the end.

Turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the Lord. The trouble was all in his *heart.* It was his heart that was not perfect with the Lord. The life follows the heart wherever it leads. The heart determines the character, *is* the character, as God sees it. It is the heart, therefore, that needs watching and keeping with all diligence. A "perfect" heart, as used here, does not mean a sinless heart, but a heart wholly devoted in its aim and motive to God and his service. None but Christ was ever perfect in character. David's heart is here referred to as "perfect." Yet he was not free from sin. He was perfect in his devotion to God. He never turned away after any other gods. He fell once into sad sin, but his deep penitence afterward shows how true was the cleaving of his life to God. David had an undivided heart for God; Solomon had a corner in his heart for the Lord, and then other corners for the gods of all the other nations. The Saviour's words come in here: "Ye *cannot* serve God and mammon." No one can serve the Lord *and any* other God. We need to be on our guard against this Solomonian religion. There is plenty of it all about us. It is a very broad church, and liberal. It abhors the preaching of the stern truths of God's word about sin and penalty, and about holiness. It sends well-nigh everybody to heaven, and regards hell as a mere fable. It calls strict Christians "puritanic" or "straight-laced." It calls great sins "escapades," and finds no use for such psalms as the fifty-first. It is not hard to see in this verse, however, which of the two kinds of religion pleases God best, and which leads to the best end. If what his religion did for Solomon is a fair sample of the outcome of that sort of religion, it does not appear to be quite satisfactory.

The Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the Lord. We must not forget God's uncompromising hatred of sin and his inflexible justice, while we extol his mercy and love. It is utterly impossible for us to turn away from him, and yet have him remain near to us in his gracious, favoring presence. We cannot turn out of his ways and hope to have him walk with us. Holiness of heart and life is the one unvarying condition of divine blessing. God does not withdraw his love from his children when they sin, but he

does withdraw his approving smile, without which life withers; and the blessedness of his favor can be restored only when we come back to him with penitence and renewed consecration to obedience and holy living.

The Lord . . . which had appeared unto him twice. Old Matthew Henry says: "God keeps account of the gracious visits he makes us, whether we do or no; knows how often he has appeared *to* us, and *for* us, and will remember it against us, if we *turn from him.*" Every such gracious visit to us adds to our responsibility for obedience and holy service. The more we know of God and the greater the favor he shows us, the sorer is our sin if we forsake him and go back to sin. A sculptor had a vision of Christ, which he reproduced in stone. He firmly believed that he had seen the Christ in his vision, and that the form he had chiselled in the marble was the very image of the glorious Person that had appeared to him. He grew famous afterward, and was asked to make statues of certain heathen deities. But he refused, saying, "A man who has seen Christ would commit sacrilege if he were to employ his art in the carving of a pagan goddess. My art is henceforth a consecrated thing." When Solomon had seen the Lord in vision, not once only, but twice, he should have been for ever a consecrated man. The eyes that had looked upon the Lord should never have lusted after earth's pleasures. The hands that had fashioned a glorious temple for God should never have built chapels and altars for heathen deities. Solomon's sins were far greater because of the special favors God had granted to him. Have we seen Christ? Has he appeared to us in his word, or in prayer, or at the holy table? Let us not forget that having seen Christ should set us apart for ever for his service and for holy living.

Forasmuch as . . . thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes . . . I will surely rend the kingdom from thee. God will not leave his work in the hands of those who will not obey him. The vessels that he employs must be clean. He tries men with trusts. If they prove faithful he continues the trusts in their hands, and adds others. If they prove unfaithful and unworthy he takes from them the things he has committed to them. It is *personal obedience* that is here made the test. Solomon may still have been a wise king, a good administrator, but he was no longer a *good man.* His heart was not right, his life was not holy, he was disobedient to God's commands; and it was on account of this personal unholiness that the kingdom was to be rent from him. In these days there is a great deal of talk about "public" and "private" character in men who aspire to high office. Some contend that the people have no right to inquire into a man's personal character; that they have to do only with the questions of his statesmanship and general abilities for government. Very clearly it was Solomon's private and personal character that brought upon him the divine wrath. God wants men with clean hearts and lives to represent him in places of power and authority.

In thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake; but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Here we have a double illustration of the way our lives cast shadows. A good man transmits blessings to his children, and one who turns away from God robs his children of blessings that ought to be theirs. David's good life kept from Solomon the visitation of the full consequences of his sin. There are many of us who are enjoying blessings on our thoughtless, reckless lives because we had pious parents who walked in the ways of God and pleased him. Their prayers form a shelter over our heads that shields us from the consequences of our own sins. But there are many people who, just like Solomon, live so as to rob their own children of the honors and privileges that they might and ought to transmit to them. Solomon's son did not get the kingdom of all Israel, getting but a fragment of it, and it was Solomon's fault. The man who by drunkenness or stock gambling or indolence or extravagance, wastes the fortune God has given him and transmits beggary to his children, is guilty of the same sin. There are many other obvious illustrations of the same fact.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Sin works a gradual and sometimes slow decay, and not till a man is old are its full effects seen. v. 4.

2. Bad marriages always bring trouble and sorrow.

3. It is the heart that determines character and leads the life.

4. There is no room for any other god where the true God is worshiped.

5. The essence of all sin is departure from God. v. 6.

6. God's anger is a terrible reality. v. 9.

7. Special privileges increase the guilt of sin. vs. 9, 10.

8. God will not leave sacred trusts in the hands of unclean and unholy men. v. 11.

9. The blessing of a good man's life descends to his children. vs. 12, 13.

10. The consequences of sin do not stop with one's self, but involve others. v. 12.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

Beware of doing all the talking yourself. Teach—cause your scholars to think and know. Question—wake up their minds. Arm yourself with just the questions which will open up the lesson, and the eyes, ears and hearts of your scholars.

I. *What was Solomon's sin?*

1. "His heart was turned away after other gods." "His heart was turned away from the Lord God of Israel." What are some signs by which we may know if our hearts are being turned away from Jesus? Neglect of prayer, of the Bible, indifference as to God's worship.

2. Solomon went after other gods. Bring out what these were, and their abominable worship. What gods are *we* in danger of going after? Money, fashion, etc.

3. He tried to serve other gods and Jehovah, too. By doing this he insulted and dishonored the one only true God. He thus broke the first and second commandments. What gods are men now trying to serve with Christ? The world, themselves. Why are we not to have any charity or toleration of feeling toward false religions? They breed all kinds of abominable sins. How are we to feel toward the poor victims of false religions? Pity and love.

4. By his sin Solomon led Israel into sin. By him probably were sown the seeds which came up in Jeroboam's idolatry. On what accounts are we to blame if our example leads others into sin?

II. *What aggravated Solomon's sin?*

1. God had made him the wisest of men. With what knowledge has God favored us? How will our Bible and Sabbath, etc., increase our doom?

2. God had given Solomon riches and honor, so that there was not any among the kings like unto him all his day. 1 Kings 3: 13. What great temporal blessings has God given to us? How will these gifts add to our condemnation if we turn away from Christ?

3. God had honored Solomon by appointing him to build the temple. How would this great privilege add to his guilt? What work has God given us to do for him? How will this increase our doom if we prove unfaithful?

4. Solomon was old enough to know better. He was now fifty or fifty-five years old. Why is sin worse in an old experienced Christian than in a young disciple?

5. Solomon had the best of training when young. How will our home blessings aggravate our doom if we are lost?

III. *What led Solomon into sin?*

1. Riches, power, honors and flattery had spoilt him. What did the Saviour say of riches? Luke 18: 24. What should we learn from this?

2. Against God's law and warning Solomon had married *many* wives. Deut. 17: 17; Matt. 19: 4–6.

3. Solomon married *heathen* women. "Even him did outlandish women cause to sin." Neh. 13: 26. Read 2 Cor. 6: 14. Boldly and faithfully warn every Christian in your class not to marry an unbeliever.

4. Solomon made pleasure his object. Eccles. 2: 1. Who now is making pleasure his great pursuit? The frequenter of ball-rooms, theatres, etc. How does God describe them? 2 Tim. 3: 4.

5. Solomon tried being exceedingly *broad* and *liberal*. He thought he would show his great mind by tolerating the false religions of his wives. So some men now want to be thought liberal. They want to make out all religions to be good. Show that the religion of Jesus is exclusive.

IV. *How was Solomon punished?*

1. He was the most miserable of men. The whole book of Ecclesiastes shows this.

2. Solomon's reputation was lost. His idolatry turned away from him the hearts of the true and faithful in Israel.

3. God rent ten tribes from his kingdom in Rehoboam's day. v. 11.

4. What is the practical lesson which most nearly comes home to me from this story of Solomon's sin?

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The lesson taught with the golden text for a centre.—Who can repeat the golden text? What is it about? Then we will draw a heart on the board. What man is this lesson about? Then we will call this a picture of Solomon's heart. What does the golden text say we must do with our hearts? Then Solomon ought to have taken good care to keep his heart safe. In fact, he did take care, for a time. Let us build a fence around this heart. Do you remember once what Solomon prayed for when his prayer pleased God? We will make the lowest rail of this fence "WISDOM," because God made him a very wise man. What was it Solomon used to do before he began any work? Whom did he ask to direct him? Then we will print the word "PRAY" on these bars, because those are very good bars indeed to place around the heart, and Solomon seemed to use them. On this side we will print "WATCH," because

after praying about a thing he had to watch carefully to see that his part of it was done. The bars of prayer are always close to the bars of "WATCH," because those who truly pray are sure to watch. What did Solomon have to do that took a great deal of time and money and care? Then we will print the word "WORK," for he had to work faithfully.

Those are very important bars, because a man or a boy or girl who is hard at work at the thing which he or she ought to do, is not half so easy to coax to do wrong as one is who is idle. Here is one more side to be fenced in. I am going to put the word "OBEY," because if you pray, and watch and work, and then fail to do just as God says, your fence will be weak.

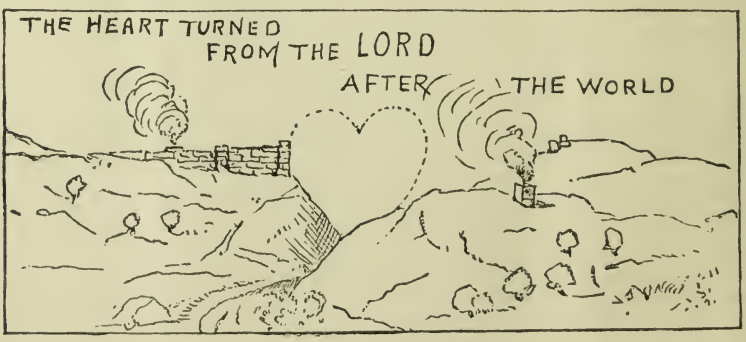
Now we have this heart of Solomon's all fenced up safely. What did you say the golden text was? I think he has obeyed it, and his heart is safe inside this fence. Outside are dangers. He lived in a country where they worshiped idols. These dots outside the fence stand for different idols. What is the name of this lesson? (Solomon's Sin.) I will tell you what I feel sure of—that is, that he let down some of these bars before sin came in. We may be sure he let down those which say "PRAY," for if he had been praying every day to God he would never have done as he did. What was it he did? Think of it. These bars over here must surely go down. They say "OBEY," and this was one of the things that God had warned him against. He surely disobeyed. And it was not because he had not wisdom enough to know what was wrong, because you will notice that I have not taken away this lower bar marked "WISDOM." He knew he was doing wrong.

Now the bars are down on two sides, three indeed, for who believes that he was all this time keeping watch not to do anything wrong? Now Satan can get hold of him. He is ready to work under Satan's direction; to build altars for those dreadful idols that ought to have been all fenced out; to burn incense to them. We will make marks in the sin-color for those altars. Now what happened?

The lesson is now before the minds of the children in a complete form. The personal application lies on the surface. The directions of the golden text apply as fully to your children as they did to Solomon. God has given them wisdom enough to follow the right way. The fence is a good one. It must be made of prayerful, obedient watching, and whatever work they have to do, whether it be to help build churches, or to amuse the baby at home, it will help to hedge them in. How many hearts are thus hedged in with daily prayer, and daily study of the Bible? Are there any of you who are letting down the bars for Satan to come in?

The special ways in which he tries to tempt your children may be called out according to the judgment of the teacher. It will be found a very fruitful and profitable lesson if prepared with care.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BLACKBOARD.



The Design and Aids in Drawing it.—The cut represents the southern corner of Moriah—the Lord's hill, and the southern slope of Olivet, where Solomon built altars to his wives' idols—the idolatry hill. Between these two hills is the Hinnom valley. From either hill the smoking altar can be seen on the other. Do not draw the dotted heart sliding down between the hills toward Tophet shadows until the closing words. Heavy outlines are better without shading.

Aids for Closing Words.—Solomon tried in vain to serve, although in different measures, both on the Church hill and the world's hill, and fell between them. The four temptations from the world-hill are:

1. Make your religion broad enough to include both hills.

2. Or, if you must separate, keep within calling and inviting distance.

3. Or, if *you* prefer to remain on only one hill, place your money, your children, on both.

4. Or, if *duty* keeps you and yours on the Lord's side, come over on the world's side for your *pleasures*. How do we answer each of these strong modern temptations?

Lesson VIII. **PROVERBS OF SOLOMON.** Nov. 23d, 1884.

Prov. 1: 1-16. Memorize vs. 8-10.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge."—Prov. 1: 7.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Prov. 1: 1-16.....*The Proverbs of Solomon.*
T. Prov. 1: 17-33....*Counsels of Wisdom.*
W. Prov. 9: 1-12.....*The Fear of the Lord.*
Th. Ps. 25: 1-22.....*The Secret of the Lord.*
F. Ps. 36: 1-12.....*"No Fear of God."*
S. Ps. 37: 1-15.....*Evil-doers Cut Off.* [*Him."*
S. Ps. 34: 1-10.....*"No Want to them that Fear*

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Counsel of Wisdom. 2. The Counsel of Folly.

Time.—B. C. 1000.

Place.—Written at Jerusalem, by Solomon.

Catechism.—Q. 105. *What do we pray for in the fifth petition?* A. In the fifth petition, which is, *And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*, we pray that God, for Christ's sake, would freely pardon all our sins; which we are the rather encouraged to ask, because by his grace we are enabled from the heart to forgive others.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—This book does not contain all the proverbs that Solomon wrote. See 1 Kings 4: 32. The "three thousand" probably included a wide range of subjects, and we may suppose that Solomon selected from these the proverbs here preserved, all of which have a moral or ethical bearing. It will be observed, too, that the proverbs contained in chaps. 25-29, while written by Solomon, were "copied out" of some other collection in Hezekiah's day; also that the sayings in chaps. 30, 31 were written by other persons, Agur and Lemuel.

---

1 The proverbs of Sol'o-mon the son of Da'vid, king of Is'ra-el; [1 Kings 4: 32.]

2 To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding;

3 To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity; [ch. 2: 1, 9.]

4 To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion. [ch. 9: 4.]

5 A wise *man* will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels: [ch. 9: 9.]

6 To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings. [Ps. 78: 2.]

7 ¶ The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of knowledge: *but* fools despise wisdom and instruction. [Job 28: 28; Ps. 111: 10.]

8 My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother: [ch. 4: 1; 6: 20.]

9 For they *shall be* an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.

10 ¶ My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. [Ps. 1: 1; Eph. 5: 11.]

11 If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause: [Jer. 5: 26.]

12 Let us swallow them up alive as the grave; and whole, as those that go down into the pit: [Ps. 28: 1; 143: 7.]

13 We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil:

14 Cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse:

15 My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path: [Ps. 119: 101.]

16 For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood. [Isa. 59: 7; Rom. 3: 15.]

1 *The proverbs of Solomon.* This is the title

of the book. The Hebrew word rendered "proverb" has in it the idea of comparison or similitude. (Gold, silver, precious stones, the habits and instincts of animals, and many other familiar things, are made the bases of these comparisons, and moral teachings are thus illustrated. However, the proverbs of Solomon are not all of this character.) They are brief maxims, concise and condensed statements of important truths, which are capable of universal application. Some may wonder at the choice of Solomon as one of the writers of inspiration, but the fact that he was endowed with wisdom above all other men rendered it important that some of his words of wisdom should be preserved. Besides, many of the lessons taught in his books are such as could be taught only by one who knew from experience the perils of life.

2 *To know wisdom.* Here (vs. 2–6) the writer states the aim and purpose of his book. It is to teach particularly the young how to live. *Wisdom.* Not intellectual wisdom merely, but that broader, practical wisdom which applies to all life. Many who are intellectually very wise live very foolishly. Solomon himself is the highest example of this. *Instruction.* The application of "wisdom" to life in detail, the putting into practice, so to speak, of the high lessons of wisdom. *To perceive.* To see, to recognize as true. *Understanding.* The power of discerning between right and wrong in making life's choices.

3 *Wisdom.* Not the same original word as in v. 2, meaning discretion or thoughtfulness. The phrase "instruction of wisdom" implies good and wholesome or discreet advice or counsel. *Justice.* Right or truth. *Judgment.* The quality of judging of human actions, whether in official capacity or privately. *Equity.* Uprightness in all one's relations to God and man.

4 *Subtilty.* Shrewdness, used here in a good sense, used sometimes however in a bad sense, as craftiness (Ex. 21: 14, guile). *The simple.* The first class for whose instruction the book was written, the inexperienced, the easily led, those who are ignorant and yet are ready to be taught. *The young man.* The second class, those who by reason of youth do not know how to live, and have not wisdom to guide them aright. *Knowledge.* Of the right and wrong way. *Discretion.* Wary, so as not to be deceived or misled by false counsellors.

5 *A wise man will hear.* True wisdom does not puff one up so that he will not listen or cannot be taught, but makes him teachable and ready to hear, that he may increase in knowledge. *A man of understanding.* Intelligent, one who has been instructed. *Attain unto wise counsels.* Good steersmanship, and become able to direct his course safely through life's perilous seas.

6 *To understand a proverb.* A further object of the book—that those for whom it was prepared may become able to understand dark sayings. It requires knowledge as a key to open other stores of knowledge.

7 Here is the text or motto of the book. *The fear of the Lord.* Not dread, but true reverence, arising from love and leading to honor and obedience. *The beginning of knowledge.* The foundation of true knowledge, that without which other knowledge avails nothing. *Fools despise wisdom.* All are really fools who despise the wisdom whose beginning is the fear of the Lord.

8, 9 *My son.* Not necessarily addressed to his own son, but writing to the young as a father. *Hear . . . forsake not.* The first lesson for the young to learn is, to honor their parents in the practical way here marked out. *They.* The "instruction" and "law" of v. 8. *Ornament . . . chains.* The garland and chains of gold worn by kings and their favorites were esteemed the highest ornaments and badges of honor. See Gen. 41: 42; Dan. 5: 29. The meaning of the verse is, that obedience to parental counsels is to the character what a garland and a chain of gold are to the person.

10, 11 *Entice thee.* Try to lead thee to do wrong. *Consent thou not.* Firmly and obstinately resist the enticement. *Lay wait.* As a band of highway robbers. Such bands infested Palestine, and such solicitations often came to young men. *Without cause.* In vain. The words seem to belong to "innocent"—"innocent *in vain*," that is, their innocence does them no good, does not save them. It is a sneer like that which Christ's enemies flung at him on the cross. See Matt. 27: 43; Mark 15: 32.

12 *Let us swallow them up.* Destroy them utterly and suddenly, leaving no trace of them to tell of the crime.

13, 14 *We shall find.* These tempting banditti promise profits and rewards in the treasures which they will take from those they slay and rob. *One purse.* Promising to share equally with those whom they urge to join them. They were communists.

15, 16 *Walk not.* Avoid their ways; do not associate with them. *Their feet run to evil.* Both to wrong-doing and to destruction, the sure penalty and destruction of all such paths.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

The proverbs of Solomon. A book with this for a title ought to have in it very much that is profitable for us. Solomon was the wisest of men, and we surely ought to read what the wisest man had to say about life. Solomon learned a great deal of truth by experience. He put all the resources of this world to the test to see just what they could do for a man. His proverbs are not, therefore, mere gems of theory, like many wise words we see; they were all wrought out in the crucible of actual experience. They are way-marks which this pioneer left as he went through life. Some of them mark dangers—"Don't turn this way!" Some of them point to the true and safe path—"This is the way!" Whatever he found out in life he set down here for the benefit of those who would come after. It is wonderful, too, at how many points these proverbs touch life, and how intensely practical they are. They should be the hand-book of every young man. To ponder these and to follow their instruction is to live well and grandly. It is wonderful also that while Solomon himself wandered so far from God, there is not in all his writings a single word that approves or excuses his sins. Everywhere he points away from the wrong path and to the right.

To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity. The object of the book is, to teach. The writer had been gifted with extraordinary wisdom, and his aim was to gather into the concentrated sentences of his book the best things his wisdom had taught him, that they might be preserved and passed down to benefit after ages. No one has the first true thought of life's meaning who is not eager to learn wisdom. Ignorance in this age of books and opportunities for instruction is dishonorable. And the kind of instruction one should aim to get is also defined here—wisdom, justice, judgment, equity—not merely knowledge in the abstract, but knowledge applied to life. True education teaches not merely how to speak grammatically, but how to speak the truth in love; not merely how to make correct arithmetical calculations, but how to carry honest arithmetic into all business transactions. It not merely puts knowledge into the head, but into the heart, where it affects all the life.

To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion. Here are two classes for whom especially the book was written—the *simple* and the *young*. The simple are the inexperienced, those who have not seen much of the world and do not know its ways. These are easily deceived and led into wrong paths, and should be taught with care. The young also are inexperienced, their powers are untrained, they are undisciplined, and therefore unprepared for life. They need knowledge and discretion. Both these words should be studied. A young man goes through college, and if he has improved his opportunities he has "knowledge;" he knows chemistry and botany and Greek and Latin and mathematics and literature. Yet he may not have acquired a particle of discretion. "Discretion" is judgment, thoughtfulness, common sense—in a word, the science and art of true living. This book contains the counsels of discretion. It is more important to learn these than to learn arithmetic, grammar and philosophy.

A wise man will hear and will increase learning. He never stops studying. He never gets to a point where he feels satisfied with his attainments. No matter how much he knows, he is ever learning more. This is a most important truth, and there are a great many people who need to remember it. There are many even of young people who do not feel the necessity for learning anything more. When they leave school they put their books away for life, and instead of learning more soon forget what they have learned. Instead of this, they should continue their studies, learning something more every day. No one is so busy but that he can devote at least an hour of each day to reading and study. Then there are countless little fragments of time in every one's life, five minutes now and ten minutes again, which diligent earnestness can seize and devote to good reading. Then there are whole evenings devoted by many to idle pleasure in "society," gossiping in parlors or clubs, or lounging about stores and offices, all of which were better given up to profitable study. There might be a little less "fun" in the years of youth, but there would be a good deal more man or woman, in brain and heart, a few years later. But not to the young only does this lesson apply. No one should ever get too old to learn. To stop learning is to stop growing, and then comes a sort of "dry-rot." People wonder why a preacher doesn't preach as he used to preach, or why a good layman never has anything fresh to say in the prayer-meeting. It is because they have stopped learning and, like a hand-organ, have to grind out the same old things over and over again. Many a man who starts out with great promise in early life by-and-bye loses his energy and fails of his early prophecy, because in the

elation of his first successes he stopped learning and then growth was at an end; and when growth stops, decay begins. An old artist had for his motto: "Nulla dies sine linea" (*No day without a line*). Every day he would add one line at least to his knowledge and attainment. There could be no better motto for any life, young or old. *Every day* we should learn something we did not know before, add some new fact to our store of knowledge. Every day we should get some new practical lesson into our life, learn at some point to live better. This applies to secular life—there should be daily improvement in the business or profession we pursue; it applies to spiritual life—we should grow in grace; no day should be without its added line of likeness to Christ.

A man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels. The idea is, that a man who uses his opportunities for acquiring knowledge, and who learns from experience, gets wiser and wiser, and at length is able safely to guide his life, literally, "to steer his course rightly" on the dangerous seas of this world. We ought to live better every day. It is expected that beginners shall make mistakes. We all have to *learn* to live, and learn largely from our own experience. The experience of others ought to help us, but it does not to any great extent. We have to work the lessons out for ourselves. Each new life is in reality a new voyage over an uncharted sea, and we must all find the course for ourselves. It follows, therefore, that we all make many mistakes at the beginning. But if we are living wisely the mistakes should be fewer and fewer every day. A really wise life is not one free from errors, but one that learns from its errors and does not repeat them. *Never make the same mistake twice*, is the maxim of wisdom. Every new bit of knowledge we get we should put straightway to practice in our next day's living. The figure here is of the "steersman." A steersman does not run on the same rock twice. When he finds it he puts it down in his chart, and avoids it ever after. Men are such fools in nothing as in living. The mark of real intelligence here indicated is, that a man grows wiser and wiser in the guiding of his own life. What shall we say about those who never do grow wiser, but make the same blunders over and over again, year after year, till they die?

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. You may set down six ciphers—000,000—and they count for nothing; but if you put a five or any figure before them, they all count—5,000,000. Merely human knowledge alone only adds up a row of ciphers, long or short, as one knows much or little. A young man goes through the university and then passes through his medical or law school, graduating with honor, a learned man, but he is not yet a Christian. His acquirements make only a long row of ciphers. These are the elements of power if he only gets in before them something that counts; but as it is, all yet stand for nothing in God's sight. Then he gives himself to Christ, consecrating all his gifts and attainments to him, and every one of his acquirements assumes a high value, adding to the aggregate of his power. He has written a figure before the row of ciphers, and 000,000,000 has become 6,000,000,000. All knowledge is valuable if consecrated to God and used in his service. The more a man knows the more of a man he is, if he has, before all, "the fear of the Lord," if he loves, reverences and obeys God. But this is the first thing in all true wisdom. Not to have it is to make failure and wreck out of life; and the greater the other knowledge and acquirements, the greater the failure and wreck.

Hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother. One's parents ought to be one's best and wisest counsellors. This is assumed here. What a responsibility this lays upon parents! Then the child should accept their teaching and guidance. It is the beginning of the downward path that ends in ruin, when a child rejects the parental counsel and becomes disobedient and willful. It is the most terrible mistake he could make. He may think his father old-fashioned and his mother too particular, and consider it more manly to be independent; but there are no ornaments of character so beautiful as the spirit of submission and obedience to those who are the divinely appointed teachers and guides of the early years.

If sinners entice thee, consent thou not. This peril every young person must meet. There are sinners everywhere who are not content to go in wicked paths themselves but must also try to lead others in the same paths. The form of the enticement varies, but the end is the same if the enticement is listened to, and the duty is the same—to say *No*, and to say it with emphasis and decision. "Consent thou not." No use in parleying about it; there is only one right and safe thing to do. Parleying is usually fatal. The shortest answer is always the best. Simply *do not consent.* You have this power. Your house is your castle, and no one can enter it but with your consent. You *need* not yield. You are responsible for the sin if you do. No power in the universe can *compel* us to sin; if we sin it is because we consent to it. The one simple duty in all enticement and temptation is,

"*Consent* thou not," "Resist the devil and he will flee." He can only knock at your door; he can never come in unless you open to him. *Never* open. Follow the counsels of right with undeviating faithfulness, but do not consent to *any* evil suggestion. It is the Devil, no matter how sweet and bland the form of the enticement. Look it in the face and tell it it is the Devil.

Walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path. That means that you are to form no associations whatever with bad people. You are not to walk in the street with them. You are to keep your feet resolutely and determinedly away from their paths. Nobody leaps into a bad life at one jump. No young man becomes a drunkard in a week. He only "goes with" the other boys at first. They are jolly, and he likes fun, but he will never do the wrong things they do. By-and-bye he just *tastes* the liquor. After that the course is downward, and the end is ruin. Now the true thing and the only safe thing is, *not to walk in the way* with such enticers. Politeness is a good thing, but politeness must not lead a young man to do a wrong thing. He had better be rude to the Devil than go a step in his way for politeness' sake. The same counsel is for young women. They have enticements, too, enticements that seem innocent enough at first, but lead to most awful ruin in the end. Their only safety lies in absolutely refusing to walk in the way with those who would entice them to evil. To start in the wrong way is usually to go on to the bitter end.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Lessons learned from experience ought to have great value for the inexperienced. v. 1.

2. One who does not desire to learn has no true idea of life. v. 2.

3. Arithmetic and grammar are not all of learning; more important are good principles. v. 3.

4. The inexperienced need to learn shrewdness for their own defence in this evil world. v. 4.

5. The young must not remain ignorant and giddy if they would make their life of any account.

6. He is a foolish man who at any age thinks he needs to learn nothing more. v. 5.

7. No knowledge begins to count until the heart has taken God into its life. v. 7.

8. Parental counsels obeyed clothe the life in ornaments of beauty. vs. 8, 9.

9. Sinners cannot harm us unless we consent to their enticements. v. 10.

10. We should recognize the Devil in whatever specious garb he appears before us, and plainly tell him he is the Devil.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

INTRODUCTORY.

Have one read the first verse in the lesson. Then ask, What is a *proverb?* If the class fail to give an accurate answer, tell them. A proverb is a short, pithy sentence, expressing some rule of duty or of prudence. You might quote the saying of Earl Russell: "A proverb is the wisdom of many and the wit of one." What is the *use* of proverbs? They contain a great deal of wisdom in a few words. They are easily remembered. They strike and stick and sometimes sting. How do the proverbs of Solomon differ from other proverbs? 1. They are from God. 2. They are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies. Eccles. 12: 2. They spur us to do our duty—they hold us fast to the right. 3. The proverbs of Solomon are the rules of true religion, applied to the minute affairs of life. 4. The proverbs ought to be the hand-book of all *young men.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

If yours is an advanced class, you will call attention to the fact that vs. 1–6 contain *the title* of the book, giving (1) its author (v. 1); (2) its object (vs. 2, 3); (3) its great value. vs. 4–6.

I. *Who wrote the Book of Proverbs?* Of course the scholars will all answer, *Solomon.* What did our last lesson show us of Solomon? That he terribly sinned against God. What sins did he commit? Why should God allow such a sinner to write this book of wisdom? See 2 Cor. 4: 7. Such warnings as the proverbs contain against vice and sinful pleasure come to the young from the heart and lips of the rich, wise, sinful and repenting Solomon with special force. Solomon warns against these awful fires as one who had been scorched by them.

II. *Why did God give us the Book of Proverbs.* vs. 2, 3.

1. To make us *wise.* What is true wisdom? True piety. What is true piety?

2. To instruct us, so that we will know just how to live.

3. "To perceive the words of understanding," so to train us that we can tell what is true and what is false.

III. *How can you illustrate the object of this book?*

1. You travel in Great Britain. You must have a *guide-book.* These proverbs of Solomon are a guide-book to the young pilgrim.

2. Mr. Anthony Comstock has published a book, entitled "Frauds Exposed; or, How the people are deceived and robbed and youth corrupted." The proverbs expose frauds.

IV. *What two kinds of people is this book for?* vs. 4–6.

1. "The simple," "the young man." Why do the young especially need wisdom and instruction? They are inexperienced. Satan and the world are after them. They must be shrewd in order to escape.

2. "The wise," "the man of understanding." No man is so great or good that he does not need this book.

V. *What is the motto of the whole Book of Proverbs?* "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." v. 7. What is "the fear of the Lord?" A *reverence* for God, which makes us honor and obey him. This is not a slavish fear, not a tormenting dread, but the fear of a child for a father whom he loves. On what accounts is the fear of God said to be the beginning of knowledge? 1. As the root of a tree is the beginning of that tree. 2. As the fountain is the beginning of the stream. 3. As the foundation is the beginning of a house. 1 Cor. 8: 2. Whom does God call fools? v. 7.

VI. *On what accounts is obedience to parents like an ornament to the head and as chains to the neck?* Honoring father and mother will give *grace, beauty, wealth* and *power* to a youth.

VII. *When is it necessary to say "No?"*

1. "When sinners entice." Who meets such enticements? Every young person.

2. When evil-doers boldly invite us to sin. The inspired writer brings forward in vs. 11–14 a great temptation of young men of that day. But the spirit of the warning is against all other vices and temptations which now beset your scholars. I beg you to warn them especially against *three:*

(*a*) *Enticements to drink* intoxicating liquor. Every young boy or man will have to meet this temptation. Teach him to say "No."

(*b*) *Enticements to impurity.* It is time for teachers to warn their scholars against that which is destroying tens of thousands.

(*c*) *Enticements to gamble.* Young people are constantly tempted to *bet.* This is not confined to horse-racing or elections, but extends to betting on almost everything. Warn them against lotteries and all gift enterprises, etc.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

This is one of the lessons from which the teacher of little children must select a verse, and group her lesson about it, to the almost entire exclusion of the rest of the text. I suggest a blackboard outline of two roads, one named "WISDOM," the other, "THE WAY OF SINNERS." So much of the lesson might be outlined before the class assembles.

Introduce the day's work by asking where the lesson is found, who wrote the book of Proverbs, what they know about the author, whether he was a wise man, so that his words are worth thinking about, etc. Even of his own wisdom he was well worthy of attention; but these are words which God told him to say, therefore about them there can be no mistake.

In this lesson he talked about two ways, named what? Let your class read from blackboard. Now draw out from class what stations you shall place on the roads; *i. e.*, in the way of "WISDOM," a mark that shall stand for a church, a picture of a Bible, a mark for a Sabbath-school room, a mark for the day-school, a mark for the Christian home. All these names can be called from class rapidly, if you prepare yourselves beforehand with the right sort of questions.

Then take the other road, and fix its prominent stations in the same way. The saloon will be a prominent one. The street corner, where bad boys meet, another. In working up this way, let each teacher study the temptations to which she is aware her children may be exposed, and make them prominent. In this connection teachers must remember that the way of sin is made attractive to the children at a very early age, much earlier than the thoughtless suppose.

The wise way of teaching children is to let them suggest the dangers themselves, the teacher leading their thoughts to the word she wants without letting them see her process. It will then seem to them that they have committed themselves to fight against this thing, because they have discovered it to be wrong.

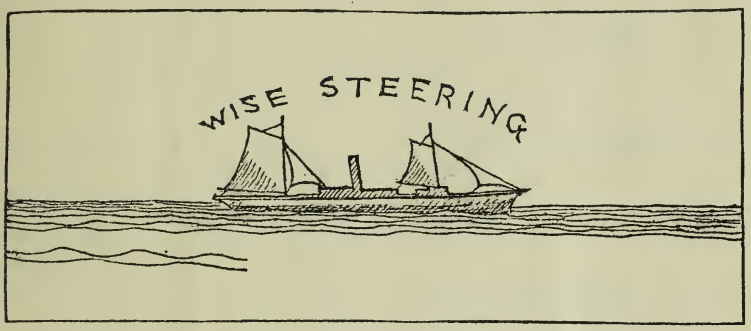
There is a sign-board for this way. At the proper point in the lesson it should be erected, and initial letters put for the words: "W. N. T. I. T. W. W. T."—"Walk not thou in the way with them." I would dwell on this verse, impressing it by the analytical form of questioning, viz.: What does it say we must not do? Who does it say must not do it? In the way with whom? etc. The latter part of the same verse is also important. Cannot the children play *just a little* with those who use wicked words, or break the Sabbath, or disobey? (There should be marks for all these characters on this "Way of Sinners.") Let us see what God told Solo-

mon to say about it (read from Bible): "Refrain thy foot from their path." Not even a step must be taken!

But there is a sign-board for the other road. The words of the golden text may be initialed on it: "T. F. O. T. L. I. T. B. O. W." If your scholars have all memorized the text, dashes may do instead of initials, but if you desire to teach it to any of them, the initials will help materially.

You must now, of course, make plain once more—though you have doubtless done it many times before—what the fear of the Lord is, and the lesson may close with the old and important question: "In which path are the children to-day?"

SUGGESTIONS FOR BLACKBOARD.



Design and Aids in Drawing it.—Begin with the steamer. The distance from the stern to the foot of the nearer mast is the unit of measure. Four of them give the length of the boat, and one the height of her masts. The two wave lines near the lower left hand corner show the key for easy wave-making, having the crown of one wave under the hollow of the other. "Counsels," in v. 5, literally means the power and skill to *steer* a right course on dangerous seas.

Aids for Closing Words.—1. The counsel or steering of folly is not to know what port you mean, if possible, to reach, and to have no plan for the voyage; to get out to sea before deciding; to have no adequate aim when just launching out on that wide and restless sea with its storms, tempests and adverse currents.

2. The counsel of wisdom. Stop at the close of this lesson and thoughtfully and definitely decide your destination. Commit yourself to Jesus' guidance and his divine wisdom in the ordering of your whole life.

Lesson IX. **TRUE WISDOM.** Nov. 30th, 1884.

Prov. 8: 1-17. Memorize vs. 10, 11.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me."—Prov. 8: 17.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Prov. 8: 1-17.....*The Call of Wisdom.*
T. Prov. 8: 18-36.....*The Value of Wisdom.*
W. Prov. 3: 1-18.....*The Counsels of Wisdom.*
Th. Prov. 2: 1-9.....*The Promise of Wisdom.*
F. Job 28: 1-28.....*The Giver of Wisdom.*
S. Matt. 13: 44-58.....*The Price of Wisdom.*
S. Rev. 3: 14-22.....*The Reward of Wisdom.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Call of Wisdom. 2. The Promise of Wisdom. 3. The Value of Wisdom.

Time.—B. C. 1000.

Place.—Written by Solomon at Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 106.—*What do we pray for in the sixth petition?* A. In the sixth petition, which is, *And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*, we pray, that God would either keep us from being tempted to sin, or support and deliver us when we are tempted.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—In the previous chapter Solomon described the solicitations of evil as they come to the young man; here he presents another picture, in striking contrast to the former, showing the *good* that also stands before the young man. As all evil solicitation was personified

in the Temptress of chap. 7, so all goodness and purity are personified in the Wisdom of this chapter. This is no fancy sketch. Every young man *must* make choice between these two guides for his life.

---

1 Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice? [ch. 1: 20; 2: 3.]
2 She standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths.
3 She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors:
4 Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice *is* to the sons of man.
5 O ye simple, understand wisdom: and ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart.
6 Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips *shall be* right things. [ch. 22: 20.]
7 For my mouth shall speak truth: and wickedness *is* an abomination to my lips.
8 All the words of my mouth *are* in righteousness; *there is* nothing froward or perverse in them.
9 They *are* all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.
10 Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.
11 For wisdom *is* better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it. [Job 28: 15; Ps. 19: 10; 119: 127.]
12 I Wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.
13 The fear of the LORD *is* to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate. [ch. 16: 6; 6: 17; 4: 24.]
14 Counsel *is* mine, and sound wisdom: I *am* understanding; I have strength. [Eccles. 7: 19.]
15 By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. [Dan. 2: 21; Rom. 13: 1.]
16 By me princes rule, and nobles, *even* all the judges of the earth.
17 I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me. [1 Sam. 2: 30; Ps. 91: 14; James 1: 5.]

1 *Doth not wisdom cry?* Many persons regard wisdom here as a name for Christ. In a certain sense the name and description may without doubt be thus applied, yet it is more correct to consider Wisdom, not as God, but as an attribute poetically represented as a person. The voice is that which sounds in the gospel, calling men to Christ. *Cry.* Implying intensity and earnestness.

2, 3 *High places.* So as to be heard far off. *Places of the paths.* Where the paths meet. *Gates . . . entry.* Where people were continually passing out or coming in. This naming of different places is to indicate the publicity of the cry of wisdom; it is uttered everywhere that none may fail to hear the invitation.

4 *Men . . . sons of man.* No one is left out.

5 *Ye simple.* See last lesson, v. 4. The word means those who are yet inexperienced and easily influenced either for good or for evil. *Fools.* Those who are already listening to evil and walking in sinful ways.

6, 7 *Excellent things.* Literally, "Princely things," that is, noble and kingly, things belonging to a really princely nature. *The opening of my lips.* In speech. *Right things.* Straight, upright. *An abomination.* Hateful, detested. See Rom. 12: 9.

8, 9 *All the words.* Compare Luke 4: 22, where Christ's words are described. *In righteousness.* Without any falseness whatever. *Nothing froward.* Margin, *Wreathed*, that is, twisted, distorted, hence crafty, false. *Perverse.* Stubbornly wrong. *Plain.* Honest, easily understood, the reverse of froward. *Right.* The reverse of perverse. *To him that understandeth.* To those who are disposed to accept and follow the truth it is plain.

10, 11 *Receive my instruction.* Listen to it that you may know it, and then *do* it. *And not.* In preference to. *Choice gold.* The purest, richest gold. Knowledge is worth more than the finest gold. *Rubies.* Probably pearls. These gems are mentioned as the most valuable of human possessions. Yet wisdom is better. Compare Matt. 13: 46. *All . . . that may be desired.* In all the range, even of possible human desire, there is nothing worthy to be compared in value with true wisdom.

12 *Prudence.* The practical side of knowledge; wisdom applied to the details of life. "Wisdom, high and lofty, occupied with things heavenly and eternal, does not exclude, yea, rather 'dwells with' the practical tact and insight needed for the life of common men." *Find out.* For men, to aid and help them. *Witty inventions.* Referring to all the wise and useful arts by which men are enabled to achieve greater results, whether in religious or secular things.

13 *To hate evil.* Wherever the fear of the Lord is, there is hatred of all evil; and the hatred is strong and intense in proportion to the fear. *Pride.* Glorying in one's self. *Arrogancy.* Disdain of others and exaltation of self. *The evil way.* Every custom or way that is sinful. *Froward mouth.* Deceitful, speaking crafty, designing words. *I hate.* Abhor. The hatreds of life are important.

14 *Counsel is mine.* Good judgment. I am able to advise men how to live. *Sound wisdom.*

The essence of wisdom. *I have strength.* Energy, courage, resolution. Some render the words, "As for me understanding is strength to me," that is, the *source* of my strength.

15, 16 *Kings reign.* In the highest affairs of life men must look to me for direction. *Princes . . . nobles . . . judges.* Embracing all classes of rulers.

17 *I love them that love me.* No matter of what class or rank of life. *Those that seek me early.* There is no word for "early" in the original, but the verb "seek" implies intensity and earnestness. Of course this includes the idea of *early* seeking. *Shall find me.* No one shall ever desire and seek wisdom in vain, but shall always find.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

Doth not wisdom cry? Yes, they can have no excuse who choose the way of folly. They cannot say they did not know the better way, that they never heard the voice of wisdom. Wisdom does not hide herself away in some cloister, or in some holy of holies, or in some deep desert, giving counsel and instruction to the few who find their way to her sanctuary. She goes where the people cannot but hear her. The little child whose mother knows God hears from her lips the words of wisdom in the early tender years before any other voice reaches its soul. Then all along through life wisdom continues to call, in conscience, in the holy word of God, in the Sabbath-school teacher's earnest persuasions, in the preacher's faithful warnings and pleadings, in the winning words of Christian friendship, in sudden startling providences. All these voices are the voices of God, who wants no one to perish, but would have all repent and be saved. No one in this Christian land can ever offer as excuse for taking folly's way, "I never heard the voice of wisdom. I did not know there was a better way." Those who perish can only say, "I *would not* be saved. I knew the right way but I chose the wrong."

Ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart. There are a great many fools in the world. A fool in the Bible sense is not a simpleton, one lacking in brains, but one who lives and acts foolishly. He may be full of learning, and may stand among his fellows for a wise man; yet he makes such poor use of his knowledge that he is in reality a fool. Suppose a pilot of a ship, thoroughly educated in all that belongs to the art of navigation. He understands the compass and all its laws. He understands the currents of the sea, just how and where they run, and their influence on the course of the ship. He understands the winds. He knows perfectly how to use all the instruments that belong to his art, in making observations and calculations. Yet he pays no heed to any of his knowledge, but runs his ship just by his eye, disregarding chart and compass and current and wind and sun and star. He is a fool in the Bible sense, and comes to a fool's end. No one ever heard of such a case on the sea. No, but that is a perfectly true picture of the way thousands play the fool with their lives. They know all the facts needful to wise living. They have the chart and the compass, and are well instructed concerning the currents of evil. But they utterly disregard all their knowledge, and sail their barques in courses that they perfectly know will lead to fatal wreck and ruin.

Hear: for I will speak of excellent things and . . . right things. There are many who want us to listen to their voice who do not speak of excellent things or right things. Their words are poisonous and full of death. In these days the air is full of traitorous voices. They come with lying whispers about the Bible and about Christ and Christianity, and about faith and prayer. They tell us these are all delusions. They say the Bible is not the word of God, but only an old book gotten up by impostors. They tell us that Christ was only a good man, that the story of his resurrection is only a fiction, and that he cannot save any one. They tell us there is no use to pray, for there is no one to hear our prayers. So these whispers bring us only death rather than life. Then there are other voices that whisper enticing words, meant to draw us away from honesty and truth and purity. Every young person continually hears such voices. Now, wisdom speaks only excellent things and right things. Her voice whispers in our hearts incitements to holiness, to truth, to purity, to duty. She speaks to us of the preciousness of Christ, of his love, his grace, his beauty, his power to save. She encourages us to pray, assuring us of the ever-open ear of our Father to catch every accent of supplication. She tells us of the rich things in the Bible and bids us take its words as guidance for our feet in every path. It whispers to us ever of the noble things in Christian character, counselling us to shun the evil things and choose the good. Who questions to which of these two voices we should listen? Shall we not shut our ears for ever to the bad and hear and heed only the good?

My mouth shall speak truth. . . . All the words of my mouth are in righteousness. It is a wonderful comfort to know that every word this

heavenly guide speaks is a true word. In this world's counsels there is a great deal of guessing and speculating. Friends advise us and intend to speak only what is true, yet by reason of the limitation of their knowledge they may often give wrong counsel. Bad advice, though well meant and honestly given, has wrecked many a life. But here is counsel that is always absolutely true. The words that this wisdom speaks to us are always infallibly right words. Here is a guide in whose leading we may put implicit confidence. Here is a counsellor whose advice is always and invariably safe, because right and true. Those who abandon themselves utterly to the word of God and follow its counsels and obey its every precept, are sure of blessedness in two worlds. No one was ever led astray by this divine guide. It never has been heard that the Bible took any person on a course which ended in ruin or disaster, or in any loss or dishonor. It always leads in right paths, and these right paths are safe throughout, and have their unvarying destination in the highest good and blessedness of those who pass over them.

Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold. Wisdom is better than rubies. It is hard to convince people in these days that anything is or can be better than silver or gold or rubies. The best way to look at this subject is, to think of some of the greater and deeper needs of life, and ask what money can do to meet them. Dr. Arnot represents a party of emigrants wrecked on a desert island far from the tracks of men. They get ashore with their stores. They see no way of escape, but they look about. They have food to last for a time. The soil is rich and the climate fine. Soon, however, they find gold, and instantly they all begin to search for the precious metal. They gather much and are rich; but they have not sowed a grain of seed and no harvest is coming, while the season for it is past. Then they begin to discover how worthless is their gold. Famine is upon them, and gold will not feed them. This illustrates the value of that wisdom which is food for the soul. Gold and silver and rubies will be of no avail, if our souls have no bread. In all the great needs of life money and jewels amount to nothing; only the grace of God will do then. In the time of great sorrow no one turns to gold or diamonds for comfort. In the sore struggles of life, in its temptations and hardships and perplexities, these symbols of earthly wealth will not meet the needs of the soul. When death comes these things are utterly worthless, are indeed bitter mockeries.

The fear of the Lord is to hate evil. That is a clear definition. Many people have a very vague and dreamy idea of what religion is. In the Old Testament "the fear of the Lord" is the expression used for piety. Some suppose it to mean dread of God, a slavish, cringing fear, as of a tyrant. Its true sense, however, is, that reverence which springs out of love and trust. He is our Father, but our Father *in heaven;* that is, he is exalted infinitely above us in glory and holiness, and any proper conception of our relation to him leads to humility and reverence. Here we get the *practical* side of this fear. It makes us hate evil. Thus it leads to a life of holiness. This is the only true idea of religion. It is not emotional merely, exhibiting itself in pious feelings, but producing no change in the conduct. It is not intellectual merely, holding to a sound creed and witnessing for doctrines. It is practical, leading to obedience and Christ-likeness, hating everything wrong or evil, and loving everything good and true.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Wisdom has not to be sought, but seeks men, coming to them and entreating for acceptance. vs. 1–4.

2. Wisdom comes to all, without exception, offering to the lowliest the richest things. v. 4.

3. The inexperienced and the foolish will find in this heavenly Wisdom all they need for protection and guidance. v. 5.

4. The counsels of wisdom are all right and true, and therefore safe. vs. 6–8.

5. Those whose hearts God has opened find wisdom's ways plain and easy. v. 9.

6. The blessings of wisdom are of infinitely more value in life's real needs than gold and silver and precious stones. vs. 10, 11.

7. Wisdom gives sagacity and skill even in the things of this world. v. 12.

8. Wisdom makes men hate all evil and abhor all sin. v. 13.

9. Wisdom helps men to do better the common work and business of life. vs. 14–16.

10. None who seek wisdom earnestly fail in their quest. v. 17.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

An introduction may be given by simply asking, Who is the Wisdom that speaks in this lesson? Perhaps some one may answer, Christ. What reason can you give for thinking so? 1. Christ is called *the wisdom of God.* 1 Cor. 1 : 24, 30. 2. Wisdom here speaks just as Jesus speaks. "Doth not wisdom cry?" So Jesus stood and cried, "If any man thirst, let him

come unto me and drink." 3. Wisdom says in v. 15: "By me kings reign and princes decree justice." But Christ is the "King of kings." Rev. 17: 14; 19: 16. In advanced classes the whole subject of the pre-existence of Christ and of his appearances to Abraham, Moses, Joshua, etc., might be brought up.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

I. *In what places does Jesus, the true Wisdom, offer himself to us?*

1. In the most public places. vs. 2, 3. He places his open churches where anybody can see them.

2. In out-of-the-way places. Luke 14: 21, 23.

3. He himself comes to the heart of every sinner. Rev. 3: 20. Have you ever heard Jesus knocking at your heart? Have you opened to him?

II. *To whom does Wisdom or Jesus offer himself?*

1. To all men, women and children, without a single exception. v. 4. He does not say, "My voice is unto the sons of Abraham," but "unto the sons of man." Isa. 55: 1; Matt. 11: 28; John 3: 16; 6: 37; Rev. 22: 17.

2. Jesus specially invites the undecided—those who are easily led astray. He calls, "Oh, ye *simple*, understand wisdom." v. 5. Where does Jesus say that he came not to call the good but the bad? Mark 2: 17.

3. Jesus calls "fools," *i. e.*, those who have chosen the paths of folly and sin, to come to him. He "goes after the sheep that was lost." What should we do for even the worst of men?

III. *Why should we hear Christ?* vs. 6–8.

1. He will tell us the best things. In what respects are the things Christ teaches better than all others? They satisfy our greatest need—for salvation. They help us to overcome sin. They comfort us in trouble. They bring us at last to heaven. How are we to listen to Christ?

2. Christ will not deceive nor disappoint us. How can we prove that all Christ's promises are true and sure? He died for us. He is God and cannot lie, neither is anything too difficult for him to do. Millions have found Jesus' words to be faithful. Here impress upon all the scholars the superiority of the study of Christ's words above all other studies. Ps. 119: 99, 100.

IV. *What shows the plainness of Christ's teachings?* v. 9.

1. "The common people heard him gladly."

2. Christ's words, as we find them in all the Bible, are plain, easy to understand. Isa. 35: 8. Though there are many deep and high things in the Bible, the simplest person can understand all that he needs for salvation.

V. *Why is it better to have Christ than all wealth?* vs. 10, 11.

1. Gold and diamonds cannot feed the soul. Jesus is the bread of life.

2. Silver and choice gold and rubies only make death terrible. Jesus makes death sweet. Illustrate.

3. Jesus brings us to a city of gold and all manner of precious stones. Queen Victoria wears a crown of gold inwrought with diamonds worth twenty millions of dollars. To each of you Jesus will give a richer crown.

VI. *Bring out and impress the glory of Jesus, as set forth in vs. 12–16, as a reason for our choosing him.*

VII. *Who will find it easy to find Jesus?* v. 17.

1. Those who love him. What is included in loving Jesus? (*a*) Believing that he is the Son of God, that he loved us and gave himself for us. (*b*) A delight in his love and loveliness. (*c*) A desire to have him as *our* Jesus.

2. Those who seek him early. What is the meaning of the word *early* here? Heartily, perseveringly, while in the days of childhood and youth. How early in life should a person seek Christ? Just as soon as he sins, as soon as he can be told who Jesus is. Illustrate by the history of Samuel, Josiah, Timothy, etc.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

This lesson is really a continuation of last Sabbath's, and the blackboard diagram can be used again, both for the purposes of reviewing the last lesson and to introduce this. Now let us pick out the special thoughts for the children. The first one that strikes me is, the thought of Wisdom standing in high places by the way of the paths, calling to people to come. The word "COME" might be put on the sign-board. I think I should let Wisdom personify Christ calling, and interest the class in counting his calls—every time the church bell rings, all Bible verses, all Sabbath teaching, mother's prayers' even all funerals—many calls to "COME."

"She crieth at the gates." Jesus calls very early at the opening gate of life. As soon as the little one is old enough to know and love any one, Jesus begins to whisper to his heart what is right and what is wrong, and to coax him into Wisdom's ways. How many calls have your children had in their lives? Can they count them?

Let us now pass to v. 11 of the lesson: "Wisdom is better than rubies." For the pur-

pose of helping the children to realize that Christ is better than all else, I would take a pair of scales into class, and a bit of bread and a silver dollar. Weigh these, and of course the dollar will weigh more than the bread. Now suppose a boy to be very hungry, and in a desert place where he could not buy anything, and obliged to stay there, which would he rather have, the bread or the dollar? Then it is something besides the weight which appears in the scales that makes things of value.

If you have at command a diamond or gem of any sort, it might be well to bring it to class, while you talk about that eleventh verse. If not, take anything, peas or seeds, or little stones, and "suppose" them to be rubies. Suppose you had a great many of these, as many as I put into this scale. Then you would be very rich, and could buy, you think, whatever you needed.

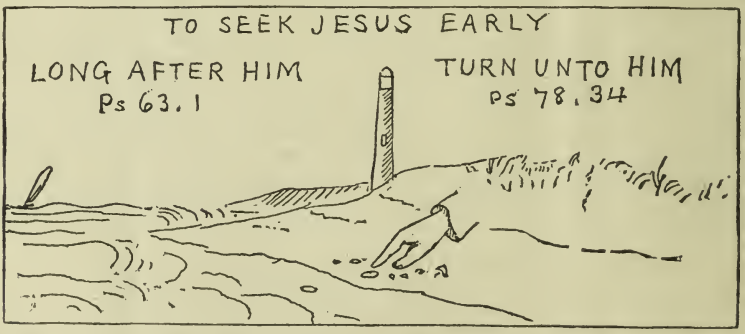
Ah, but, what if some thief should come in the night and steal them all! Or, what if you were in great danger, on a ship in a storm, what good could the gems do you? Or, what if you were dying? Could you take the gems along? Look at this bit of granite. It has a word printed on it—"WISDOM." Now look at this word on the other side—"JESUS." That is what true wisdom gives you, Jesus in your heart all the time. Can anybody steal him from you? If you were in a boat in the storm, would that keep you from Jesus? If you were dying, would you have to leave him behind? Let us put this stone in the scale. Down it drops. This is heavier than all the gems. Why? Because it outlasts them all, and is the only thing that can be taken away with us when we go on that journey which all have to take.

Those unaccustomed to object-teaching will fail to understand why the scales, and the act of apparently weighing these things, should help in the application; but all who have tried it will need no argument to convince them that this is one of the instances where the eye helps the mind. To the skeptical I can only say, make an honest trial and convince yourselves.

The golden text works in as an application. If this gift is greater than all others, we want it. May we have it? Some of us will have to go without rubies, but what says the golden text? "I love them that love me." Who is this? Even Jesus, the true Wisdom. Why, then, if I want his love, I have only to love him? But can I go to him? Am I not too young? Am I sure that I shall succeed if I try? Listen: "And those that seek me early SHALL find me." Notice, it is not "may find me," but "SHALL."

Mrs. Crafts' symbol gift cards for this lesson, to be had of H. H. B. Angell, 354 Fourth Avenue, New York, have the golden text set to music. It would certainly be a valuable new song to teach the children.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BLACKBOARD.



Design and Aids in Drawing it.—Draw the hand first, and the shore diamond or crystal pebble under it. The illustration presents the fondness for pebbles and pebble-hunting, rising early to find them in the pools, seeking them so absorbingly with eyes cast on the beach as to forget the grand ocean itself and all surrounding objects. The sky and sea, vessel and light-house have lost their charm in competition with a pebble.

Aids for Closing Words.—1. Call attention to the two Scripture departments of seeking Jesus by longing after him, and really turning unto him. Some long after him, but not with desires strong enough to turn from sin, self, and the world unto him.

2. Many souls are losing sound wisdom and eternal life for some mere trifle; deaf to wisdom's loud surf-like call, while pebble is king for the time.

THE WESTMINSTER TEACHER.

VOL. XII. DECEMBER, 1884. NO. 12.

—"*Half-Hours with the Lessons of 1885*" *is a volume of bright, brief, practical sermons on the lessons, prepared by twenty-four Presbyterian preachers. This is the third year of the publication, and to put the volume within the reach of all it has been bound in paper covers and the price reduced from $1.50 to* **85 Cents.**

—*The National Baptist* tells us that in an exposition of a recent Sunday-school lesson, in a widely-circulated religious magazine, a distinguished Presbyterian divine discoursed as follows in regard to God's repenting: "The language is thus anthropomorphic and phenomenal, and as such is readily understood by the ordinary mind." But we trust that there are few Presbyterian clergymen who would not put this thought more simply from the pulpit, and no superintendents or teachers who would not translate it into simpler terms for their pupils.

—"I want a separate room for my Infant class," says a teacher, "but cannot have one. What shall I do? I am constantly cramped in my work and annoyed for lack of a room to ourselves." The question is a natural one, and the lament is reasonable, for the separate room for the Infant class is extremely desirable. Get it if you can. But if you cannot have it, you cannot. "What can't be cured must be endured." If it is really impossible for you to secure what you want and need, the next best thing is to secure all the privacy possible. See if you cannot have assigned to your class a corner of the general room, and have a curtain hung by rings on wires, so as to slide readily, to screen you when not uniting in the exercises of the whole school. Even a jointed clothes-horse with a calico cover will be better than nothing. Do the best you can in the circumstances, but do not let small obstacles stand in the way of your having a separate room for your class whilst you are teaching it.

—The family and the ministry are greatly aided by the Sabbath-school in the training of the young in Bible truth not only, but also in bringing them to Christ. In any church in which there is a good Sabbath-school this is manifestly true, and in the churches generally, it is a fact that the school is most helpful in leading our youth to a confession of faith. Thus, of the accessions made to the membership of the Protestant Churches of Philadelphia, during the past year, five thousand four hundred came from the Sunday-schools. And so it is all over the land. It may be that some parents shift their own responsibility to others, but that is *their* fault and sin. The fact is undeniable, that multitudes of young souls are led to Christ and to a confession of him through the Sunday-school.

—Another happy device comes to us for rallying the scholars on fixed days. Mr. E. H. Perkins, Jr., Superintendent First Presbyterian Church Sabbath-school, Baltimore, Md., aims to have every scholar present on the first Sabbath of each quarter, and gives to each a "red-letter" card:

> **FIRST PRESBYTERIAN SABBATH-SCHOOL,**
> BALTIMORE, MD.
>
> *Attendance . . . [Date . . .] . . . Membership.*
>
> In the old calendars special days were marked by red letters; hence, such days were called Red-Letter Days. This day is marked red in our calendar, because of an earnest endeavor to have every member of our school present with us, together with those who were formerly members. This remembrance card is issued to each one present.

—There is no trouble more common in a Sunday-school class, than the lack of study of the lesson at home by pupils. The stereotyped excuse of the scholar is, that he has not time. In nine cases out of ten the difficulty is not in the lack of time, but in the lack of inclination. "Where there's a will there's a way," is a true proverb in this matter. If the scholar is earnestly set upon securing time for the preparation of his lesson, he will secure it. One remedy for this trouble is, visiting the scholar at home, seeing the parents and finding out whether by the co-operation of parents and children, opportunity for Bible study cannot be had. If the pupil be a girl at service, then a visit to the employer may be useful, but in any case, going to the home of the scholar will often prove that the "no time to study the lesson," is either a subterfuge or a self-deception on the part of the scholar who urges it.

The Duty of Joy.

A GREAT deal is said in the Bible about joy. Birds of gladness sing in every chapter. Most of the psalms are anthems of praise. Joy-notes ring out on the saddest pages like songs in the night. Joy is set forth not merely as an accident of a good life, or as a privilege which may be attained, but as a duty, as much a necessary element of a complete Christian character as patience, or gentleness, or honesty, or truthfulness. Christ commanded it, bidding his disciples even in persecution to rejoice and be exceeding glad. The apostles urged it, exhorting believers to rejoice, to rejoice in tribulation, to rejoice always.

Of course Christian joy is not mere happiness. The joys which blaze up in our own hearts are but like dim candles which the merest puff of wind blows out. The joy we are to have as Christians, has its source in God and lives on through all darkness and storm, even when all earthly gladness has failed.

What is that joy worth which stays with us only in prosperity, forsaking us in adversity? It is like the summer birds that visit our clime while the flowers bloom, and the skies are warm, and the earth wears her robes of green. They pour out their songs amid the universal gladness, singing while all voices sing. But when the first chill autumn days come, they are gone, and when all is bare and bleak and the storms beat, they are nowhere to be seen. Any one can rejoice when all things go well. We want the birds that will stay and sing in our bosom in the depths of chill winter. We want a joy that will live under the heaviest snows of trial, like those flowers that do not perish or fade even under the heaviest drifts, and that appear in sweet bloom when the snow melts away in the spring days. This is what Christian joy is. It is a plant whose leaf is always green.

"Ah!" people say, "but there is a difference in temperaments and natural dispositions. It is quite easy for some to be joyful; they are hopeful and sunny, with buoyant spirits. But it is not so with all, for all have not this cheerful temper." No doubt there is a difference, and for some it is easier than for others to rejoice; yet it is the duty of all, and is therefore impossible for none. Every Christian should seek to learn the lesson, and the more he is naturally disposed to gloom, the more earnestly should he strive to acquire the habitually joyful spirit.

One of the helps in the direction of joy is, to live near to God. In the valleys among the mountains, the tourist walks under clouds, seeing no blue skies, no bright sun, no gilded peaks, no wide views of beauty. His area of vision is but a narrow circle about his feet. But now he climbs up the mountain side, higher and higher, and at length passes through the clouds and is above the storms. He walks on the clear, bright summit, and far below his feet he sees the lightnings play and hears the peals of the thunder. His view is widened out to embrace lovely landscapes, sweet valleys, enchanting views, picturesque villages. So in the low valleys of life, the pilgrim walks in deep shadows. Tears rain about him and the world seems dark. He gets no Pisgah glimpses of heaven. But if he goes up higher, he rises above the clouds and the tear-showers. Those who would learn the lesson of Christian joy must live near to God. Then the invisible things of divine love and grace will become real to them, the only real things in the world, and earth's sorrows will be swallowed up and forgotten in the splendor of faith's visions.

Another help in the cultivation of the joyful spirit is, to look more at the blessings of life and less at its trials. Many people make a little gloomy world of their own and stay in it. They build the walls of their soul-house out of the black stones of their troubles and sorrows. They put dark-colored panes in the windows, shutting out the light. They have no cheerful fire on the hearth and no bright lamps shining in the apartments. They have no pictures on the walls but the pictures of their lost joys. They remember all their troubles, and can give you minute lists of their losses and trials; but they keep no record of their blessings, nor do they remember God's benefits. They live in gloom in their dark house, simply because they will not let in God's bright sunshine. They forget that God ever made a flower, or a star, or a sunbeam, or a child's lovely face, or that he ever did a kind and tender thing for them.

Such persons never can be rejoicing Christians until they reverse all this, learning to forget the unpleasant things, the pains, the trials, the sorrows, as the waters forget the keel's rude cleaving when it is past, or as the fields in summer forget the frosts of winter when the flowers have come again. There is enough of divine goodness in the darkest hours of a Christian's life, if we but have eyes to see it, to keep the heart ever full of joy. The secret lies in training ourselves always to find the bright things, and to get from them the joy they were intended to give.

Another help in learning this lesson is to make sure of the source of our joy. It is *in the Lord* that we are commanded to rejoice. It

makes an infinite difference into what wells we let down our buckets. Out of this world's springs we dip up only muddy water; but out of the wells of salvation we draw up joy. And these wells never fail. They have their source in God and no earthly experience wastes them.

The secret of abiding joy is therefore an abiding trust in God, and the fulness and constancy of our joy will always depend upon the measure of our trust. A heart full of confidence makes joy in the time of sorest trial. On the coldest day in winter, when the mercury is the lowest, you have only to hold the bulb of the thermometer in your hand till it becomes warm, and the mercury shoots up to summer heat. And if the heart is kept warm and trustful, even in the deepest winter of trial, the joy goes thrilling up and fills all the life with gladness.

Growing Old.

SOLOMON'S picture of old age is a fit close for the lessons of the year. The young may think that they have nothing to do with this subject, but they are really the only ones who can gather any benefit from it. It is too late for the old to make lovely a life that has been marred through the years. The character of old age is determined and formed in the earlier days. If we would make it happy and beautiful, we must begin in youth. If we would have wood for our winter fires, we must gather it in summer days. If we would have lamps of joy and peace burning in our soul's chambers when the evening comes and it grows dark about us, we must have them filled and lighted before the night-fall.

Old age is the harvest of all the years that have gone before. It is a barn into which all the sheaves of wheat or of tares, are gathered. It is a lake into which all the rills and rivers of life flow from the springs in the hills and valleys of childhood, youth and maturity. It is a picture which the fingers of the years limn, a mosaic in which every day and hour sets its little bit of beauty or blemish.

We are each building a house in which we shall have to live when we grow old. We may make it very beautiful, adorning it with taste and filling it with objects that shall minister to our pleasure or comfort, or we may cover the walls with hideous images and ghastly spectres, which shall look down upon us and fill our souls with terrors, when we are sitting in the gloom of life's nightfall. We may plant lovely roses to bloom beside our doors and fragrant gardens to pour their odors about us; or we may sow weeds and briers, to flaunt themselves in our faces as we sit in our houses.

Old age is not always beautiful; not all old people are happy. It is possible to live so as to make old age very wretched, and it is possible to live so as to make it very bright. Ruskin says: "What fairy palaces we may build of beautiful thoughts—proof against all adversity—bright fancies, satisfied memories, noble histories, faithful sayings, treasure houses of precious and restful thoughts, which care cannot disturb, nor pain make gloomy, nor poverty take away from us—houses built without hands, for our souls to live in!" How can we live so as to build such palaces of peace to dwell in when we are old?

For one thing, we must take care of our bodies. When the laws of life are thoroughly understood and faithfully observed, old people will not be physical wrecks. We must take care of the house we live in.

We must also live a busy, useful life, if we would have a happy old age. Nothing pleasant ever comes out of idleness or out of selfishness. Sweet are the memories of good deeds done and sacrifices made for the Master's sake. Their incense, like heavenly perfume, comes floating up from the fields of toil and fills old age with sweet peace. When a man has lived through active years to bless others, he has no lack of friends when the feeble days come. Some one asks, "What wouldst thou be?" and then answers:

"A blessing to each one surrounding me,
A chalice of dew to the weary heart,
A sunbeam of joy, bidding sorrow depart;
To the storm-tossed vessel a beacon of light,
A nightingale's song in the darkest night,
A beckoning hand to a far-off goal,
An angel of love to each friendless soul."

One who lives thus through life's bright years will find a rich harvest of blessing in old age.

We must live also a pure and holy life, if we would have a glad old age. Every one carries in himself the elements of his own happiness or wretchedness. It is the heart that gives color to our skies and tone to the music we hear. Sins in earlier years put thorns in the pillow of age. Conscience violated heaps up sorrows for life's late days; but a well-lived life stores away memories which make celestial music to cheer the decaying years. Norman McLeod said that "nothing makes a man so contented as an experience gathered from a well-watched past." We can insure full happiness only by living no one day whose memory will make us ashamed or give us pain, as we sit in the eventide shadows and recall it. An unholy life yields a harvest of wretchedness and misery in

old age. But a life of obedience to God, of faithfulness to duty, of personal purity and uprightness, and of unselfish, Christ-like service, will make old age like a garden of fruits and flowers.

It must not be forgotten that Christ only can make any old age either beautiful or very happy. A life consecrated from its dawn to its close to Christ and his service will never fail of peace and joy in the late eventide. No other period of life is so beautiful or so fitted for usefulness. If the powers of the body have lost somewhat of their vigor and energy, the inner life has grown into a power never attained before—

"Rich in experience that angels might covet,
Rich in a faith that has grown with the years."

As a river is broadest and deepest toward its mouth, so a true and well-lived life flows with its fullest stream toward its close. The nearer heaven God's saints get, the more do the heavenly influences fill their lives.

"There is beauty Youth can never know,
With all the lusty radiance of his prime,
A beauty the sole heritage of time,
That gilds the fabric with a sunset glow,
That glorifies the work it soon lays low!
There is a charm in Age, well-nigh sublime,
That lends a new luster to the poet's rhyme,
As mountain peaks are grander crowned with snow.
How gay the laugh of Youth! but, oh, how brave
The stately weakness of a reverend Age!
Be ours the task to solace and to cheer,
To fondly guide its footsteps to the grave,
To print a blessing on the final page,
And cherish memories for ever dear!"

A Vessel Meet for The Master's Use.

BY W. H. GROSER.

PERHAPS there is no branch of art in which our countrymen have made more progress during the last thirty or forty years, than the art of fashioning clay into vessels of various kinds. Some of us are old enough to remember the hideous things we used to have on our tea-tables and our mantel-shelves, and called them ornaments. If we look into the ordinary china and earthenware shops in any part of London, or even in some remote country town, we see there vases and cups and dishes more beautiful in form, more truly artistic in decoration, than we found upon the tables or mantel-pieces of the nobility a hundred years ago. They could not then have been purchased for money; now we can have these beautiful forms in many cases for a few pence. We have attained the present state of advancement in the ceramic art by studying classic models. Speaking of the Christian teacher, Paul says, in his Second Epistle to Timothy, he shall be "A vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use." I fancy Paul was thinking of one of those old forms of which we have now modern reproductions in almost endless variety. The teacher is here spoken of as a vessel, and comparing this figure of Paul with the one he uses in the Epistle to the Corinthians, I judge he was thinking of those vessels of earthenware which we find represented in our museums. That will help us to our first thought, that the young teacher is after all only a vessel, and a vessel of only common earth. The most graceful and beautiful vases that adorn the mansions of the great are, after all, nothing but common clay, like the flowerpot that carries the geranium of the cottager or of the East-end artizan. We need sometimes to be reminded of this in our moments of exhilaration and success. Yet it is possible for a teacher to be a vessel sanctified.

The clay derives its value from its consecration. I was shown some years ago, in the Midlands, a set of china—I think a dessert-service—which was designed, not for the cottage, but for the palace; that made it of special interest in everyone's eyes. So the vessel that Paul uses as the emblem of the Christian teacher, derives its glory from its consecration. Only of the earth earthy, he may yet be sanctified and fit for the Master's use. A vessel is designed for capacity, and the Christian vessel must be filled. With what shall it be filled? I will not venture to enumerate what we have so often termed in more homely phrase, the "qualifications of a teacher." But let me name three elements which I think the vessel should contain. First of all, a vessel sanctified so as to be fit for the Master's use, should be filled with *life*. Our work is the only work, I believe, of which it can be said that the agent, the object, and the instrument, are all living forces. The longer I work as a Sunday-school teacher, the more I feel that the great secret of a teacher's success is the spiritual life within him, the personal power exercised over each individual mind and heart. More than knowledge and temperament, far more than words, is the personal power which each teacher may and ought to exert over each scholar in his class. First, then, the vessel must be filled with life; we must have the living teacher spiritually as well as intellectually alive. Then, the living truth being brought to bear upon the living child, we may expect, indeed, that the vessel will not only be fit for the Master's use, but will be used by him for his gracious purposes.

Secondly, it should be filled with *light*. We are not merely Christian friends of our scholars; we are to be Christian teachers, and that implies knowledge in the teacher, and communication of knowledge to the scholar. Everybody knows that in order that the flame may give light it must contain particles of solid matter. Introduce the solid matter into the hydrogen, and you will get heat and light also. And the solid matter of our teaching must be drawn from the word of God. I am in sympathy with the teachers who entreat the scholars over and over again to give their hearts to the Saviour; but one great thing must not be forgotten, that in every lesson there be the communication of solid Bible truth from the teacher to the scholar. The first time I went out as a deputation for the Sunday-school Union, I heard a teacher say, "What I like is to get through the lesson and come to the heart-work." I suggested that if the heart-work was something distinct from the communication of God's truth it would turn out worse than useless. Thirdly, the vessel must be full of *love*, that love which includes love to the work, love to the Master, love to the Sunday-school as an institution, and love, both to children as children, and to the particular young people who compose our classes. Unless there is a thorough sympathy in all these directions, our teaching must be to a greater or less extent a failure. Every scholar knows whether the teacher is in full sympathy with him, and with the lesson. Full of life, full of light, full of love, must be every vessel that is sanctified and designed for the Master's use. Then for all of these things—for light, and life, and love—we must go to Him who is in this case both the Master for whose use the vessel is designed, and the artist by whom the vessel is fashioned. And if we go to him we shall find in him and derive from him all that we, as poor vessels of clay, need, in order that we may be fit even for his royal use.—*S. S. Chronicle.*

Plain Words on Right Living.

BY THE REV. C. H. PARKHURST, D.D.

WE become like the things we touch. We take the features of that we look upon. Witnessed vice makes us vicious; depravity spreads. Vileness becomes less and less repulsive the more we look at it. "Vice is a monster of such hideous mien," etc. "Evil communications corrupt good manners." An immense amount of adult depravity has its foundations laid for it in the child's first years. The street is Satan's nursery, and flashy literature his circulating library. It takes a great while to wear out a soul's scar. Sin's colors are put on with mordants. Parents are careful to keep their children away from diphtheria and small-pox: sin is worse than scarlet fever and more catching. A mother said to me only this last week, "I will not have my children playing in the street. The average boy that runs the street is a bad boy. If you let a good boy run alongside of a bad boy, the good boy will learn all the bad boy's tricks, without communicating to him any of his own goodness." Iniquity is spryer than virtue. Diseases are catching, health is not. Flowers die, weeds spread. Human nature is like water; it never runs without running down hill, and, left to itself, does not stop till it reaches the bottom.

Of course, there is no making a bad man better except by coming in contact with him. But that is another matter. A missionary will scarcely become a heathen by heathen contacts. Paul ran no risk in living at Corinth. Sea-water will not set back up the river when the river is making steady discharge down into the sea. Sunshine that is trying to illuminate the darkness will not get crushed by the darkness. Social contact with depraved people depraves us, and notably intercourse with coarse or equivocal literature. The one comprehensive fact is, that published crime breeds crime. Thinking what is bad soils the mind, breaks the edge of moral delicacy; and it is all one whether the soiling thought is started by crime dramatized, indelicacy sculptured, indecency painted, or sin printed in a paper and called news. There is no man so clean that he can afford to let his mind rest on a dirty thing.

Another way of keeping the tarnish off of our moral sense is, to call things by their natural and simple names. The real name of a bad thing regularly stigmatizes the thing, and so stirs in us an antipathy to the name. There is much in a name. A fit name not only keeps things distinct that are different, but keeps the snarl out of our ideas of things. A certain amount of distinct thinking is necessary to the maintenance of a conscience that shall work promptly and speak definitely. The Lord never compromised himself or the truth through the attenuating words employed by him to state matters he had in hand. The whole Bible is a tonic in the method in which it meets situations and squares itself to facts. A long name for a short sin argues either poltroonery or moral obliquity. We can play with words, but words will take their turn and play with us. An ambiguous name given to a bad thing saps from the bad thing its essential ugliness. The craggiest sierra relaxes not a thing of green when a cloud-

mantle has been folded into its gritty creases. "Lie" is better than "prevarication," "adultery" preferable to "conjugal infidelity," "theft" cuts closer to the marrow than "embezzlement," though less specific; which last example reminds me of two stanzas I met with a while ago, hardly poetic in spirit or elegant in form, but moving to the point by straight step and a breezy swing, and with an ample commentary furnished them by recent events:

"In olden times when people heard
Some swindler huge had come to grief,
They used a good old Saxon word,
And called that man a 'thief.'

"But language such as that to-day
Upon men's tender feelings grates;
So people smile and simply say
He—'rchypothecates.'"

The safest words are always those which bring us most directly to facts. If we want to keep good and evil apart from each other in our acts, we cannot be too careful to keep them distinct in our thought; and distinct thinking waits on precise and honest wording.—*From a Sermon.*

The Serpent in the Cup.

BY THE REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER, D.D.

THE wise man boiled down a great many speeches into a small compass, when he wrote the last seven verses of the twenty-third chapter of Proverbs. The commentaries and proofs of those pithy and pungent verses are to be seen staggering through our streets. They are heard not only in the ribald songs and in the shrieks of the victims of the wine-cup, but in the wailings of the heart-broken wives of the drunkards. Observe, too, how sharply the wise man sees through the wine-cup, with its deceitful trickiness. Young men say in jolly tones, "Come, take a drink, my dear fellow!" At the dinner-table the polite guest says, as he holds up his champagne, "Here's to your good health!" Some church members push around the bottle of Port and Burgundy, with the bland invitation, "Come, try a little of this old wine; it will do you good!" Even the little boys at the table believe what the old folks say so confidently, and they sip a little of the sparkling stuff, and wake an appetite for more. But the wise man puts the microscope of divine light before the glass of wine, and shows just what it is, and what a deadly serpent there is coiled up at the bottom of the tumbler. We will quote his solemn words in close and literal translation from the Hebrew: "Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow? Who hath quarrels? Who hath wounds without cause? Who hath blurred eyes? Those who tarry long over the wine; those who enter in to try mixed drinks. Look not on the wine when it is ruddy—when it sparkles in the cup—when it goes down smoothly; for at the last it will bite like a serpent, and sting like a viper." Now, if Solomon had been at an American dinner-party or wedding, or if he had stood before the door of "The Arbor," or "The Washington Shades," where young men pour in to try a "cobler," he could not have written a more exact description of what was going on. If anybody says that Solomon was advocating "moderate drinking," he might as well assert that the wise man believed in a moderate playing with serpents, or in being moderately stung by a nest of rattlesnakes. He gives no license to any man to tamper with liquor. He does not preach the modern doctrine that a man may jump halfway down a cataract. It is strange that many believers in God's word—who take other passages literally—are so ingenious in explaining away this tremendous passage. As well try to explain away the passage, "the wages of sin is death." The simple fact is, that the wise man intended to teach total abstinence. He also intended to teach teetotalism, when he said, "wine is a mocker." That is, it is so deceitful that the drinker imagines it is doing him good, when it is doing him fatal mischief. He thinks it is making him stronger, when it is only exciting him for the moment, and leaving him all the weaker when the excitement is over.

Wine and brandy are deceivers too, when their drinkers fancy they can stop drinking just when they choose. This is a terrible mistake. A young man said to a friend of mine, "This abominable drinking has used up my money and ruined my health, and almost killed my parents. It will soon kill me. I shall die and go to hell. I know all this perfectly well, and yet the habit is so strong that I cannot stop it!" And he did not stop. He drank himself into perdition. Now, there are strange things about this matter of using intoxicants. It is strange that persons who will never think of traveling over a road where the bridges are unsafe, will deliberately risk their lives and their immortal souls, rather than say no. They will look at the loathsome sot with horror, and wantonly drink that which makes men sots. Not one drunkard in a million ever intended to become one. He only meant to "enjoy himself," and while he was doing it the viper stung him. Solomon's advice is to let the cup of serpents alone. He who never drinks can never become

a drunkard. It is strange too, that in spite of all the miseries endured by drunkards' wives, so many young women are willing to marry young men who take a social glass. Such foolish wives have themselves to blame for their misery when their husbands break their hearts by hard drinking. They ought to have known that the sting of the serpent in the cup would bring woe on the family. A wise woman will never join her hand in marriage to the hand which holds a glass of liquor.

If every young woman would take this sensible stand, it would soon compel young men to become teetotalers or remain bachelors. Another strange thing is, that fathers will put wine on their own tables, when the Bible says there is a deadly viper in the bottle. If the boys become sots, the father is to blame for it. I would as soon take my boy into a house with smallpox, as to set before him a glass of wine. How strange is it too, that Christians do no more to break up these nests of adders! Many of our churches do not even pray for the drunkard or the temperance reform. In closing, let me beg every young man never to touch the cup in which the serpent is coiled. Remember these awful lines which a genius cut with a diamond on his own wine-glass:

"Within this cup Destruction rides,
And in its depth doth Ruin swim;
Around its foam Perdition glides,
And Death is dancing on its brim;

Nails.

"THE words of the wise," says the royal Preacher, "are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, that are given from one shepherd."

The "words" referred to are the words that are found in the Book of books. "The masters of assemblies," are the servants of the Lord, to whom is entrusted the dispensation of the word and whose business it is to "fasten" it in the hearts and minds and consciences of men. Such masters of assemblies are our Sunday-school teachers; each one of whom is put in charge of a group of immortals, for whom he is to give account to God.

To use a figure which abounds in Scripture, each one of us is a builder, and the truths of God's Word are the nails to be used, to bind and hold the whole structure together. And "nails" in this passage has the wider meaning of rivets and bolts, as well as nails; anything driven as is a nail, and intended to subserve a similar purpose.

In this wide sense it is wonderful to think how absolutely essential is the nail to almost every structure in the world. It is the nail that makes the boiler stand the fearful strain of steam, and the nail that gives to the ship its strength to withstand the shock of the storm-driven sea. It is the nail that steadies the houses we live in, and gives such inflexible stamina to the splendid structures that span ravines and rivers. The nail is the bond of the whole mechanical world. Very inconspicuous is it, but, utterly indispensable. Such is the Word of God in all that higher realm, where spiritual forces come into play. Its truths are nails just fitted to fasten, in enduring union, all the faculties of the individual soul, and the whole fabric of society.

Like nails they are furnished us in every conceivable useful variety, and are adapted to every conceivable exigency of human condition. Wherever there is anything needed to be united, there is just the truth to clinch it; and but for this, everything on earth would presently be tumbling into hopeless ruin.

The villain that should be found attempting to sever the bolts securing the bridge over which trains were flashing, freighted with precious human lives, would presently be strangled with a hempen cord—and justly. Of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy who, with infidel madness, is seeking to break the only bonds that prevent the world from plunging into the bottomless abyss of anarchy and infamy?

These nails that God has put into our hands are not to be curiously classified, and scientifically studied, but to be used in the building of stable structures, and the strengthening of tottering structures. The noblest work in the world is character-building; and here, above all else, the nails are needed. It is not enough with scholarly skill to parcel out the truths of God's Word; we must "fasten" them. That means something more than a little, gentle, steady pressure. A nail will never in the world be driven home that way. It must be smitten with a sharp, quick stroke, if we would have it sink down deep. We must hit it "fair and square," or we shall break off the point, or knock off the head, or so twist it and alter its direction as to defeat the purpose that we had in view. There is any amount of "hammering"; but so much of it is done unskillfully or carelessly, that little is accomplished of profitable result. To hit the nail on the head, and drive it in up to the head, is the mark of a workman that needeth not to be ashamed. Oh, for a great increase of such workmen as shall have a single eye, a steady hand, and that earnest *percussive* power that smites effectively for God and his truth.—*Baptist Teacher.*

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FOURTH QUARTER.

1. Oct. 5.—Solomon's Succeeding David. 1 Kings 1: 22-35.
2. Oct. 12.—David's Charge to Solomon. 1 Chron. 22: 6-19.
3. Oct. 19.—Solomon's Choice. 1 Kings 3: 5-15.
4. Oct. 26.—The Temple Built. 1 Kings 6: 1-14.
5. Nov. 2.—The Temple Dedicated. 1 Kings 8: 22-36.
6. Nov. 9.—The Wisdom of Solomon. 1 Kings 10: 1-3.
7. Nov. 16.—Solomon's Sin. 1 Kings 11: 4-13.
8. Nov. 23.—Proverbs of Solomon. Prov. 9: 1-16.
9. Nov. 30.—True Wisdom. Prov. 8: 1-17.
10. Dec. 7.—**Drunkenness.** Prov. 25: 29-35.
11. Dec. 14.—**Vanity of Worldly Pleasure.** Eccles. 2: 1-13.
12. Dec. 21.—**The Creator Remembered.** Eccles. 12: 1-14.
13. Dec. 28.—**Review.**

Lesson X. **DRUNKENNESS.** Dec. 7th, 1884.

Prov. 23: 29-35. Memorize vs. 29-32.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Be not among winebibbers."—Prov. 23: 20.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Prov. 23: 29-35...*Drunkenness.*
T. Prov. 23: 12-23...*Be not among Winebibbers.*
W. Dan. 1: 1-21.....*A Total-Abstinence Boy.*
Th. Jer. 35: 1-19.....*A Total-Abstinence Family.*
F. Isa. 28: 1-16.....*The Drunkards of Ephraim.*
S. Isa. 5: 11-25.....*Judgments Denounced.*
S. Hab. 2: 12-20.....*Woe to the Drunkard-Maker!*

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Deceitfulness of the Cup. 2. The Curse of the Cup.

Time.—B. C. 1000.

Place.—Written by Solomon at Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 107. *What doth the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer teach us?* A. The conclusion of the Lord's Prayer, which is, *For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever, Amen*, teacheth us to take our encouragement in prayer from God only, and in our prayers to praise him, ascribing kingdom, power, and glory to him: and in testimony of our desire and assurance to be heard, we say, *Amen*.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

INTRODUCTORY.—The word of God touches life at every point. It utters its warning voice against every evil. It hangs out its red light to mark the place of every peril. This chapter is full of solemn warnings against a number of the most common forms of sensual indulgence, one of which we have for our present lesson study.

29 Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? [Isa. 5: 11, 23; Gen. 49: 12.]

30 They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. [Eph. 5: 18; Ps. 75: 8.]

31 Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, *when* it moveth itself aright.

32 At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.

33 Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things.

34 Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.

35 They have stricken me, *shalt thou say, and* I was not sick; they have beaten me, *and* I felt *it* not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again. [ch. 37: 22; Jer. 5: 3; Eph. 4: 19; Isa. 56: 12.]

Solomon drew no fancy pictures in this passage. He had tried pleasure in all its forms. If he had not indulged in the use of wine to the full extent here portrayed, he had seen all this in others and painted from life. And the picture is as true for to-day as it was for the time when he wrote. There is no curse so ruinous as intemperance. It is the great scourge of our own land. It is officially stated that *six hundred millions of dollars* are every year spent in the United States for intoxicating liquors. Then who can estimate in words or figures the fearful *moral* cost of this vice, in wrecked manhood, blasted hopes, devastated homes, and destroyed bodies and souls? No lesson could be more

important than this for the millions of the young who will study it to-day. Its influence should be felt throughout the whole country, stimulating every good temperance cause and leading to renewed and intensified efforts to save the young of our land from this unalleviated curse.

29 *Who hath woe?* The word in the original is an interjection used to express pain or distress. *Who hath sorrow?* This is also an interjection, with similar meaning and used in the same way as the word "woe," to represent a cry of pain. The expressions are intended by the writer to reproduce the actual utterances of the drunkard. *Who hath contentions?* Quarrels and bickerings. Every one knows what the effects of drunkenness are in this direction. *Who hath babbling?* Referring to the incoherent utterances of a drunken man, and to his empty, silly, disgusting speech. *Who hath wounds without cause?* Received not in honorable warfare, but in drunken brawls. *Who hath redness of eyes?* The drunkard's eyes become bloodshot and fiery. Or the words may refer to the dimness of vision which strong drink produces, or to the angry and ferocious aspect which intoxication causes.

30 *That tarry long.* Referring to the long periods spent by drunkards over the wine. *At the wine. Over* the wine, that is, filling and refilling the cup. *That go to seek.* Eagerly tasting and searching for the kind of wine they crave. *Mixed wine.* Flavored or medicated wine, into which certain strong spices or other articles were put, greatly increasing its intoxicating quality.

31 *Look not.* Exercise the extremest precaution, avoiding all solicitations to indulgence. *When it is red.* Referring to certain kinds of wine, as for instance the wine of Lebanon, which was of a rich golden color, and therefore peculiarly tempting. *His color.* Literally, "Its eye," that is, when it sparkles with a brilliance like that of a human eye, or perhaps referring to the eye-like bubbles in the cup. *When it moveth itself aright.* Rather, "When it goeth down smoothly, or sweetly," descriptive of the appearance of the stream as it flows from the vessel into the cup, or from the cup to the throat.

32 *At the last.* In its effects. *Serpent . . . adder.* The reference is to venomous reptiles, which may be beautiful and fascinating to the eye, but which sting with fatal effect, producing death.

33 *Strange women.* Drunkenness leads to all other debasing vices. Or the expression may mean *Strange sights*, referring to the terrible fancies and the spectral terrors of the drunkard, as in *delirium tremens. Perverse things.* Wild ravings, full of all manner of absurdities and foolishness.

34 *In the midst.* Literally, "In the heart," that is, as one who lies down when the ship is in the trough of the sea, when the waves are running high. *Upon the top of a mast.* In the "cradle" at the head of the mast, a place of great danger; yet as one who would go asleep there is the drunkard. The thought seems to be, utter recklessness and unconsciousness of danger. The Vulgate renders this, "As a pilot who falls asleep, having lost his rudder."

35 *They have stricken me.* The drunken man is represented as speaking thus to himself when he has awaked from his heavy sleep. He has been beaten when in his stupor, but was not conscious of it. *When shall I awake?* Better without the interrogation—"When I shall awake, I shall seek it yet again." Instead of profiting by his terrible experiences he only comes out of one debauch to enter another.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

BY THE REV. J. R. MILLER.

Who hath woe? The description in this verse has been called "The Drunkard's Looking-glass." This question is asked as if no one had woe but the drunkard. The reference is to the after-experiences of him who takes strong drink. Until he loses all his manhood, all self-respect, he has remorse and a keen sense of shame and self-reproach. When he comes out of a drunken debauch his conscience burns like a fire in his soul. He feels his degradation, that he has played the fool, that he is a wretched slave. He has no happiness, no peace, no pure joy. Woe is the very word to define his experiences. He is consumed by remorse and shame.

Who hath sorrow? All have sorrow, but not such sorrow as drunkenness produces. Other sorrows may be comforted, but for this there is no consolation, no alleviation. Some kinds of sorrow lift one up, but the sorrow of the drunkard has no blessing in it. Fortune wasted, home torn down, and pleasant abode exchanged for a wretched dwelling-place, furniture pawned, poverty crushing, friends gone, wife, mother, sister broken-hearted, children beggared, name and character lost, manhood wrecked, degradation, dishonor, disease, shame—is there any other such sorrow as sin makes?

Who hath contentions? Wine makes a man

quarrelsome. A drunkard is always in trouble. Drinking-saloons are continual scenes of angry strifes and sharp wrangling. The great bulk of crimes committed are by intoxicated men, as is known from actual statistics. In France it is said thirty-nine per cent. of all murders are committed in drunken brawls, while in Great Britain and in our own country the percentage exceeds fifty. The principal part of the business of the police courts comes from strong drink, which almost inevitably leads to contention, strife and violence, often to bloodshed. It is said that in the United States the liquor traffic annually sends 100,000 persons to prison.

Who hath wounds without cause? There are wounds that are marks of honor. The scars of the soldier are honorable. They were gotten in his country's cause, and tell of patriotism and heroism. So there is no disgrace in wounds received in accidents when one was engaged in doing his duty. But the drunkard's wounds are marks of shame. They were gotten in brawls and fights, or by falling when intoxicated. They are "wounds without cause," and are marks of dishonor.

Look not thou upon the wine. That sounds like total abstinence doctrine, yet some people are fond of saying that total abstinence is not in the Bible. This warning comes to the young with special force. It is against the very beginnings of the indulgence. Even *looking* at the wine, as it sparkles in the cup, may start a desire to *taste* it, and tasting it may kindle a fire of appetite which cannot be put out. Evil in any form should never be tampered with. He is a fool who will carry a candle into a powder magazine. Many a lust begins in the eye. Men look, then desire, then take. No man rushes at one leap into the awful abyss of drunkenness. First he sees, then handles, then tastes, and from a mere sip goes on until he becomes a confirmed and degraded inebriate. Absolute safety lies only in total abstinence—in not even *looking* upon the wine. This is the word for every young man or boy; make this your rule and you will never be a drunkard. Begin once, however, and there are ninety-nine chances in a hundred that you will die a drunkard. Solomon knew what he was talking about, and this is *his* counsel: "*Look not* thou upon the wine." This is the lesson, too, for any who may have been drunkards and have determined to stop drinking. For them to *look upon* the wine is to court temptation and be swept away again by the old tide of appetite. This is a good day for every one, old and young, who studies this lesson, to sign a temperance pledge, and what better pledge can be framed than this:

LOOK NOT THOU UPON THE WINE.

I pledge myself, by God's help, to take this counsel for my rule.

(Signed) . . . . . .

At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. The temptation presents itself at the beginning in most enticing and alluring form—the glowing color, the bright sparkle, the oily smoothness of the wine as it flows into the cup or glides down the throat. It looks harmless, and even beautiful and friendly. Young men say there can be no harm in a social glass. It exhilarates and adds to the brilliance of wit. So "moderate drinkers" argue, as they sneer at temperance principles. So young men say, as they begin to drink. There *is* no woe, no sorrow, no strife or contention, no redness of eyes, no wounds without cause, no loss of home, of character, of standing, of friends. No, not yet. "*At the last* it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." It is deceitful. Did it disclose all its dreadful ruin at first, no man would touch it. Show a young man, with his first cup in his hand, *all* that in twenty years that cup will bring to him, and would he drink it? First it lures, enchants, fascinates, charms; then, when it has its victim in its power, it strikes its deadly fangs into his bosom. There is a story of a goblet which illustrates this terrible truth. In the bottom of the cup was the image of a serpent. Coiled as if for the spring, a pair of gleaming eyes in its head, and in its open mouth fangs raised to strike—there it lay beneath the ruby wine. The man who raised the cup to his lips to drink the wine could not see what lay beneath, until, as he reached the dregs, that dreadful head rose up and glistened before his eyes, as if about to strike its deadly fangs into his face. How well this illustrates the deceitfulness and the fearful end of strong drink! No matter how the wine sparkles, concealed amid the dregs in the bottom of the cup the serpent lies ready with its fatal fangs to strike.

Thine eyes shall behold strange women. Strong drink leads to other sins. It degrades the whole soul, enfeebles the will, destroys the conscience, inflames the passions, kindles the lowest lusts, and is the parent, not only of impurity, but of all "perverse things." Nearly all criminals are first drunkards. You will scarcely ever find in a prison a sober and temperate man. And when one becomes a drunkard no crime is impossible. Some scholars say this should read, "Thine eyes shall behold strange *sights*," referring to the horrid dreams and imaginings of the drunk-

ard; and any one who has ever seen a man raving in *delirium tremens* or *mania a potu*, needs no explanation of the words in this sense.

Thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea. Drink produces the most awful infatuation. The intoxicated man lies down amid the most fearful dangers, and is utterly insensible to peril. His senses are stupefied. He is as unconscious as a drowned man lying at the bottom of the sea. Every few days we read of some poor drunken creature who had lain down to sleep on the railway track, heedless of the approaching train which came thundering on, sweeping him into eternity in an instant.

They have beaten me, and I felt it not . . when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again. This verse describes the hopelessness of the drunkard's case. At the last all moral sense dies. Even the bodily senses are benumbed and stupefied. Men may strike him, but he does not feel it. They may beat him and kick him out of the saloon, and the storm may smite him; but he feels nothing. All self-respect dies. The last spark of manhood is quenched. He only awakes from his stupor long enough to seek again the accursed cup. His charmer holds him, and he has no power to break the spell. What a picture! A man—made in God's image—enslaved by the wine cup! His case is helpless, hopeless for ever, for no drunkard can inherit the kingdom of God. 1 Cor. 6: 10.

LESSON POINTS.

1. Strong drink brings woe and sorrow, destroying all pure joy, and likewise the capacity for it. v. 29.

2. It makes a man ill-tempered, producing irritability, anger, quarrelsomeness, and leading to all manner of crimes. v. 29.

3. It degrades the body, writing its lines in the eyes and on the face, and often in wounds and bruises. v. 29.

4. It deceives by its promise of exhilaration and harmlessness, but at last proves deadly, biting like a serpent. v. 32.

5. It leads the way into all license and all mental disorders. v. 33.

6. It stupefies the senses, and makes one insensible to danger (v. 34), or to suffering and degradation. v. 35.

7. It binds a man with the chains of a slave. v. 35.

8. The only *remedy* is total abstinence—not even *looking* at the wine. v. 31.

[When this same passage was studied in 1876, Dr. Joseph T. Duryea added the following to his exposition in *The Presbyterian at Work:*

There is an argument against intemperance derived from the general spirit and drift of the Scriptures as a whole:

1. Intemperance defiles the body, which is "the noblest work of God." It was intended to be the temple of the Holy Ghost. See 1 Cor. 6: 19 and 3: 17.

2. It blurs, confuses, and temporarily or permanently deranges the mind.

3. It hardens and tends to transform the affections, and gives the baser passions predominance over them.

4. It corrupts and sears the conscience.

5. It enfeebles the will. As a consequence, it destroys self-respect and undermines, and finally lets down into ruin, the entire character.

It is therefore directly in the way of "holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord," and merits the fulfillment of the condemnation, "Nor drunkards . . . shall inherit the kingdom of God." 1 Cor. 6. 10.]

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

BY JAMES A. WORDEN, D.D.

How to Use these Suggestions.

1. Only use them after your own independent, prayerful thought.

2. Whatever plan you adopt, thoroughly master it, so that you can go before your class, if practicable, "without notes."

3. Encourage the scholars to ask questions

4. Hinge your instructions on their answers, though they be very imperfect.

A Topical Outline

DRUNKENNESS { SUFFERING, SIN, SLAVERY.

How to Teach.

Rapidly drill the class on this outline, holding it before them on a stencil, slate or paper.

I. *What is the first topic?* Drunkenness causes suffering. Have a scholar read vs. 29, 30.

1. What is the first word in v. 29 meaning suffering? "*Woe*" (suffering on the mind). Bring out the awful mental agonies endured by men in delirium tremens.

2. What is the second word denoting suffering? "Sorrow." *Suffering in the heart.* What heart-troubles has the drunkard? He is still a man, and all the good affections yet in him torture him. The knowledge of his folly and

sin burns in him. He thus alternates between the brutal pleasure of drunkenness and the awful misery of a heart "set on fire of hell."

3. What is the third word referring to suffering? "Contentions." What can better hint the *sufferings of the drunkard's home?* Mr. Gough narrates how a loving father, for the first time, staggered home drunk. His little boy, two years old, met him in childish glee at the door. "Shut up!" said the drunken man. When the little one, not understanding, ran crowing into his arms, he caught him with fiendish violence and dashed his brains out upon the stone door-step.

4. How does v. 29 refer to the sufferings in the drunkard's body? "Wounds without cause," "Redness of eyes." What is the great producer of murder and crime? A dealer inquired: "What is whiskey bringing?" The answer was, "Bringing women and children to want.

5. What does drunkenness do "*at last?*" It forever stings and ruins the soul. 1 Cor. 5: 11. Bring out the force of the serpent's bite and the adder's sting. Rev. Mr. Wilder, formerly of of India, where serpents abound, says: "Poisonous snakes and reptiles are a serious trouble in hot climates, and sometimes they hinder preaching services. A missionary once about to enter his pulpit saw coiled up in it a cobra, one of the worst reptiles known. A step further and it probably would have killed him." But rum is a snake that "outvenoms all the worms of Nile."

II. *What is our second topic?* Drunkenness causes *sin*. Read vs. 33, 34.

1. To what awful sin does drunkenness lead? Impurity. Drink inflames lust. It leads into many sins. A saloon is the headquarters of all vice. There thieves, gamblers, the unclean, murderers, get their inspiration for crime.

2. How does drunkenness make men talk? v. 33. "Shall utter perverse things." When the tongue is directed by drink it utters things contrary to human decency, to God, and reason.

3. How does drink make men reckless? v. 34.

III. *What is our third topic?* Drunkenness is *slavery*. He suffers the agonies of the lost, yet he says, "I will seek it yet again." Mr. Gough tells of a reformed drunkard who could not even read the word "wine" or "whiskey" without having his terrible passion for drink aroused. He would walk his office wringing his hands and praying against it, while the cold sweat stood in beads upon his forehead. Have you ever heard of "the man with the iron mask" in the time of Louis XIV.? He was of high birth and the rightful heir of vast estates. But he was long imprisoned. They always kept an iron mask over his face. When they hurried him from one prison to another no one could ever see his face. He attempted to escape. But he was well watched. At last his will was broken. He gave up all desire for freedom. He could often have escaped, but he cared not to do it. So the drunkard at last does not want freedom, or friends, or home, or honor, or manhood, or Christ, or heaven. His will is enslaved—all he cares for is drink.

What can I do to avoid being a drunkard?

1. Fly now to Jesus Christ; he is able to keep.
2. Touch not, taste not, handle not, anything that intoxicates.
3. Never enter a drinking saloon.
4. Never make a companion of one who drinks.
5. Make the church and Sabbath-school your second home.
6. Work against intemperance.
7. Read the best books on temperance.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

BY MRS. G. R. ALDEN—"PANSY."

Make a blackboard picture of a bunch of grapes, and question as to what they are, how used, etc. Call out the fact that they are used for sauce, for jelly, and to eat in their natural state. How many like them? Are you glad that God has made them? Can anything bad be made out of something that is good? (If your children have been taught lessons on temperance, and think at once of wine, print the word in large irregular letters, winding in and out among the clusters of grapes.)

Now the question is, Is wine good or bad? In the first place where did it come from? A lady once offered me some home-made wine. She said there was not a drop of alcohol in it, for she had made it herself.

(Show a piece of mouldy bread.) Look at this bread, what is the matter with it? Would you like to eat it? Suppose the woman who made it should say to you: "Why, scholars, you are certainly mistaken; I made that bread myself, and I did not put a bit of mould in it, so of course there can be none there!"

What would you reply? What is mould? Teach, if necessary, that it is a process of decay; that it is not necessary for any person to put it in the bread, for if the bread is left long enough in a damp place the mould will surely gather.

Teach, in this connection, that wine is decayed fruit. And decayed fruit forms a poison called Alcohol as surely as bread forms a poison

called Mould. In this way impress the truth that the so-called harmless home-made wines contain the same poison which the lesson warns us against.

Now take up the first verse of the lesson. Describe the condition of a man who has been drinking wine, when its effects are passing off, and his head is aching, and he feels ashamed to be seen even by his mother. Tell the story so that the children will feel that he certainly has "sorrow." Call from them the fact that men who drink are men who feel cross and quarrelsome. Explain that this is the meaning of the word "Contention." Call out the too well-known fact that a drunkard "babbles" silly talk, which means nothing. Tell the story of of the young man who had a bruised face, and an eye swollen so that he could not see, because he fell from a bridge that a child of five could have crossed easily and safely. What was the matter? Why, his head was made dizzy with wine. Surely his wounds were "without cause," *i. e.*, foolishly gotten.

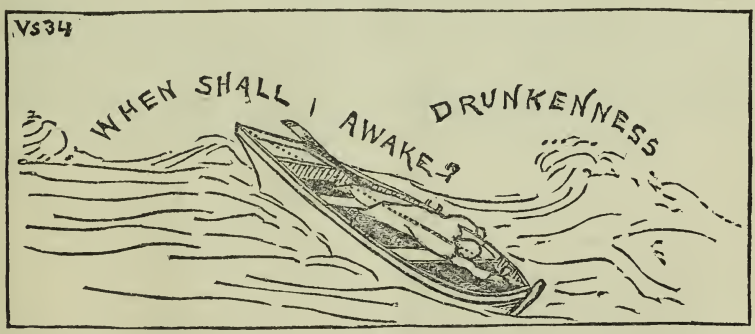
Now take your colored crayons, and use the letters which spell the word "WINE," to form a serpent, whose head shall peer out at the children from among the grape clusters. A little practice will enable one to do this easily. Call from class the verse, "At the last it biteth like a serpent." Where did this serpent come from? His name is Alcohol. Did God put him into the grape juice? Not any more than your mother put the mould into that piece of bread, which dropped from the plate and lay unseen on the cellar floor for days. It is as foolish for people to tell you that wine must be good because it is made from the juice of grapes, as it would be for your mother to tell you that mould was good because it formed on her bread. Both came from decay. Neither was there until the bread and the juice were spoiled.

Suppose a man who was about to drink a glass of wine could see the serpent coiled in the bottom of the glass, would he drink?

Show a glass of pure water, and question about it. Show another looking equally pure, and explain thus: This looks, you see, as though it was as pure as the other, but there is a serpent in it. It is poisoned. If you were to drink it, it would be quite likely to kill you. Who would come now and drink it? Why wouldn't you? Then it is because you believe what I say, though you do not see the poison. Will you remember that it is *God* who says to you, "Look not upon the wine; at the last it biteth like a serpent?" Surely you may believe God, even though the wine looks pleasant and tastes pleasantly. "At the *last*," he says; and he tells you the only safe rule for never getting to that last part of the story: "Be not among winebibbers." "Look not upon it."

SUGGESTIONS FOR BLACKBOARD.

BY THE REV. P. H. BROOKS.



Design and Aids in Drawing it.—Draw the dotted line at or about the angle given. It differs with different drinking men. Divide this descending line into five equal parts, using one of them for the unit of measure. From the top of the head to the bow is one unit; the second is in the centre of the back. The deceitfulness of the cup is here compared, in v. 34, to the sea rocking him sounder in sleep while he is drifting nearer its dangerous trough. The curse of the cup is shown in that idle oar. The right arm may be omitted.

Aids in Closing Words.—What a sad picture! Only the roar of the sea, with its deep moan. Will he awake before one more debauch, or will he take it and sink? When will each person awake to the cure of drunkenness contained in v. 31? When shall we all awake to the rescue? Where shall the drunkard lift up his eyes?

Lesson XI. **VANITY OF WORLDLY PLEASURE.** Dec. 14th, 1884.

Eccles. 2: 1-13. Memorize vs. 10, 11.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness."—Eccles. 2: 13.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Eccles. 1: 1-18.. *Worldly Wisdom Tested.*
T. Eccles. 2: 1-11.. *Worldly Pleasures Tested*
W. Eccles. 2: 12-26. *Human Wisdom and Labor Vain.*
Th. Eccles. 6: 1-12.. *"What is Man the Better?"*
F. Luke 12: 13-21.. *The Rich Fool.* [*Contrasted.*
S. Luke 16: 19-31.. *Worldly and Heavenly Portions*
S. Eccles. 12: 1-14. *The Conclusion of the Whole Matter.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. The World's Pleasures Tested. 2. The Result of the Test.

Time.—B. C. 977.

Place.—Written at Jerusalem by Solomon, after his repentance and restoration from idolatry.

Catechism.—Q. 1. *What is the chief end of man?* A. Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—The question of the authorship of the book of Ecclesiastes cannot be discussed here. No name is prefixed to it, yet there seems little doubt that Solomon wrote it. This has been the constant tradition both of the Jewish and Christian Churches. It is supposed that he wrote it in his old age, when, having tried the world in all its phases, and having found only vanity in all that it had to give, he had come back to God. It is in some sense Solomon's autobiography. In this second chapter we have the record of the search for the highest good. The writer leads us into a number of fields where he points to their best and finest fruits, in none of which, however, he found satisfaction. The last verse gives the conclusion to which this long search brought him.

---

1 I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth; therefore enjoy pleasure: and behold, this also *is* vanity. [Luke 12: 19; Isa. 50: 11.]

2 I said of laughter, *It is* mad: and of mirth, What doeth it? [Prov. 14: 13.]

3 I sought in mine heart to give myself unto wine, yet acquainting mine heart with wisdom; and to lay hold on folly, till I might see what *was* that good for the sons of men, which they should do under the heaven all the days of their life. [ch 1: 17.]

4 I made me great works, I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards: [1 Kings 7: 1-12.]

5 I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all *kinds of* fruits:

6 I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees:

7 I got *me* servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Je-ru'sa-lem before me:

8 I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings, and of the provinces: I gat me men-singers and women-singers, and the delights of the sons of men, *as* musical instruments, and that of all sorts. [1 Kings 9: 28; 10: 10, 14, 21.]

9 So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Je-ru'sa-lem: also my wisdom remained with me. [ch. 1: 16.]

10 And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy: for my heart rejoiced in all my labor: and this was my portion of all my labor. [ch. 3: 22; 5: 18; 9: 9.]

11 Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labor that I had labored to do: and, behold, all *was* vanity and vexation of spirit, and *there was* no profit under the sun. [ch. 1: 3, 14; 7: 25.]

12 ¶ And I turned myself to behold wisdom, and madness, and folly: for what *can* the man *do* that cometh after the king? *even* that which hath been already done.

13 Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness.

1 *I said.* In the first chapter Solomon gave his experience in worldly wisdom. He had learned all that could be known of such learning, and the conclusion was, that "In much wisdom is much grief; and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow." He now relates how he pressed his search still further, trying all that riches could do to bring satisfaction, reaching in the end the same result. *In mine heart.* Or, *To* my heart. The experiment was deliberate. He was honestly trying the value of his great gift of wealth, what it could do for a man. *Go to now.* Equivalent to our "Come now." *I will prove thee with mirth.* Since learning had failed he would try pleasure, securing for himself the best delights of sense which earth could furnish. *Enjoy pleasure.* He is speaking to himself, giving license to his own heart to indulge itself to the fullest extent, and to get the very best possible out of pleasure. *This also is vanity.* This was his conclusion after trial. There was nothing real or substantial in these earthly delights; all was *vanity*, hollowness, nothingness. The word occurs thirty-seven times in Ecclesiastes, and

denotes "breath," "light wind," something which passes away quickly and entirely, leaving no permanent result.

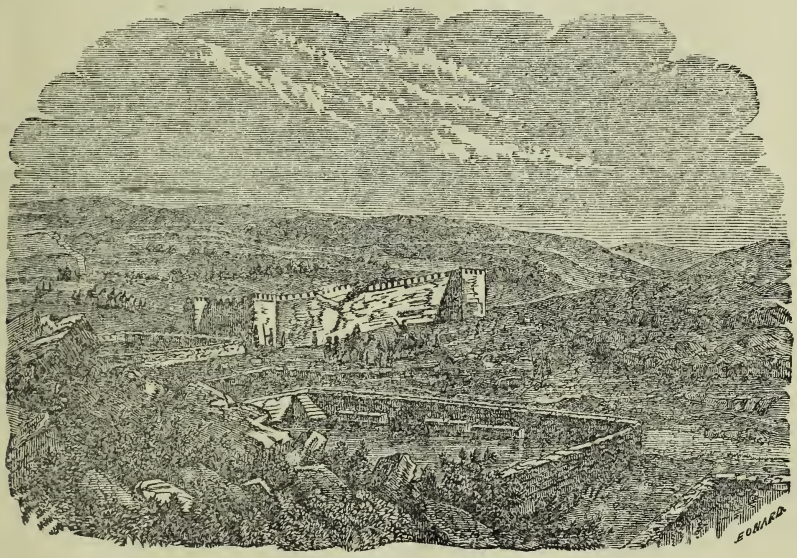
2 *I said of laughter, It is mad.* Referring to gayety, frivolity, reveling, mere amusement for its sake. To pursue such is madness. Men who never stop in their revelry to think of God or their souls or the future judgment, are like the insane man who laughs on the top of the burning building while the flames are sweeping all about him. *Of mirth, What doeth it?* What good does it do? What are its fruits, its results? The question implies that it does nothing which benefits. The reference here is not to proper innocent mirth and good cheer, but to the mirth of this world which involves sin.

3 *I sought in mine heart.* Rather, I resolved. *To give myself to wine.* Literally, to draw my flesh with wine. The exact meaning is not very clear, but the thought seems to be that he turned to wine in his experiment to see what it could do for the strengthening and comforting of his flesh. *Yet acquainting mine heart with wisdom.* He still let wisdom control him, not rushing into drunkenness, but so using wine as to get from it the very best results it could give. He made, therefore, a fair test. *To lay hold on folly.* Senseless pleasure. v. 2. *What was that good.* This was the object of his search, to find out the true way to contentment and satisfaction. The motive seems to have been good, but the effects on him who made the experiment were bitter.

4 *Great works.* See, for an account of Solomon's buildings and public works, 1 Kings 7: 12; 9: 15–19; 10: 14–27; 2 Chron. 8: 4. He built a magnificent palace for himself, occupying thirteen years in its erection. He built also of costly stones a house for Pharaoh's daughter, one of his wives. He built a number of cities, Hazor, Megiddo, Gezer, Beth-horon, Tadmor, and others. He built also walls and fortifications for Jerusalem. *Vineyards.* See Song of Solomon 8: 11.

5 *Gardens and orchards.* The latter word means "paradises," that is, pleasure gardens. These parks were filled with the most beautiful and fragrant trees and plants.

6 *Pools of water.* These were great tanks or reservoirs built for the purpose of furnishing water for the irrigation of the gardens and pleasure grounds Solomon had made. This provision was necessary in that dry country. A little south of Bethlehem are yet shown ancient tanks, which are called "The Pools of Solomon." Dr. Dulles, in "The Ride Through Palestine," thus describes what he there found: "In a ploughed field of chocolate-red soil lies hid a dark cavern of vaulted masonry, into which you can descend by a flight of slippery stone steps. Here you find a glorious stream of crystal water pouring into a stone basin. From this underground basin it is carried by an underground channel to the 'Pools.' The 'Pools' are three great reservoirs faced with stone, stretching eastward in succession, and each on a lower grade than that above it—reservoirs the 'least of which would float a frigate.'



SOLOMON'S POOLS.

The lengths of the first, second and third reservoirs are, respectively, three hundred and eighty feet, four hundred and twenty-three feet and five hundred and thirty-two feet, with a breadth of two hundred and thirty-six, two hundred and thirty-six, and two hundred and seven feet. From the lower end of the lowest pool an aqueduct issued, which was connected with another coming directly from the fountain, and wound along the hillsides by Bethlehem to the city of Jerusalem."

7 *I got.* I bought. *Servants.* Bond-servants or slaves. *Born in my house.* In distinction from those he bought. These were children of other servants. *Possessions.* Herds of oxen and sheep, surpassing in number those of any one who had previously lived in Jerusalem.

8 *Silver and gold.* See 1 Kings 10: 14–29. *Peculiar treasure of kings.* Either, treasure which he had received from kings, both tributary and independent (1 Kings 10: 15; 5: 1; 9: 14; 10: 2), or treasure that only kings could gather, because of its rarity and costliness. *Singers.* To sing at his court, not in the sacred service of the temple, but singers of worldly songs to give pleasure. See 2 Sam. 19: 35. *Delights.* For sensual gratification.

9 *Great.* In a worldly sense, having reached the height of human ambition. *My wisdom remained.* He refers to intellectual wisdom, which remained with him; this was not true, however, of whatever spiritual wisdom he ever had.

10 *Whatsoever mine eyes desired, I kept not from them.* He put no restraint upon his life, denied himself nothing. His great wealth enabled him to bring to his palace from any clime or country whatever his heart craved. He wishes to show that there was nothing in the way of earthly pleasure that he had not tried. *My heart rejoiced.* He really found enjoyment in these pleasures. *This was my portion.* See chaps. 2: 21; 3: 22; 5: 18; 9: 9. The word is used elsewhere to describe a warrior's share of the spoils taken in battle, or a priest's share of the offerings. The thought here seems to be that the transient enjoyment which Solomon received from these pleasures was his only portion from them. They left no permanent profit or good. The transitory gratification was all that they gave.

11 *Then I looked.* After his experiment was completed he looked to see what all his works and labor amounted to. *All was vanity.* He had really nothing in his hand after all his toil. It was as when one grasps a beautiful bubble. *Vexation of spirit.* Literally, A fading upon the wind, or, A grasping at the wind. The phrase is very expressive as showing the utter emptiness of his hand and heart after his costly search. *No profit.* In any of these worldly things.

12 *I turned myself to behold.* To compare. *What can the man do?* He means to say that no other man could have such opportunities for making a fair experiment of all these things; and if *he* had been able to find no real profit in them, who that might come after him could hope to find anything worthy of the search? The experiment and its results should be accepted as final and decisive.

13 *Wisdom . . . folly.* He had made the experiment, first of wisdom (see chap. 1), to know what it could do; and now (chap. 2) of *folly*, that is, of worldly pleasure, and although neither gives satisfaction, yet he here renders his verdict on the comparative value of the two. *As far as light excelleth darkness.* Wisdom is compared to light and folly to darkness. We may go a step further and substitute *true* wisdom, that which comes from above, and then we find something which is not vanity, but which gives to the life rich and full satisfaction, even life, eternal life, and blessedness.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

I said in my heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth; therefore enjoy pleasure. This book tells the story of a search after something good and satisfying outside of religion. First the king tried books and study, but his heart remained hungry as ever. Now he turns to worldly pleasure to see what *it* can give. Yet it must be noticed that he claimed to be making experiment all the while, and that he was not himself carried away by the power of his own lusts and desires. He wanted to see what there was in worldly pleasure. He claimed to be experimenting as a philosopher and as a philanthropist, for the good of others. There are men in these days who claim similar motive in their career of sinful pleasure. They want to "see the world." They want to try just how much can be gotten out of these sinful courses. Or, they want to know for themselves through curiosity what these "pleasures" really are. But all such experimenting is full of awful peril. Most who begin it never come out of it save with blackened soul and ruined life. Going into the enemy's country on any pretext, one never comes back the same. It is better to remain for ever unsophisticated and ignorant of

the ways of evil. "Knowledge of good and evil," gotten by trying the evil, is knowledge too dearly bought. Many a young man thinks it essential to full manliness to run through a course of sinful pleasure; but instead of making him more a man it tarnishes his manhood, degrades his noble dignity, and filches the jewels from his crown. If he "reforms" and becomes a good man, he carries with him always the memory of the sins of his youth and the scars on his soul made by the fires of passion. Then nine cases out of ten he never does "reform," nor come back at all to God.

Behold, this also is vanity. This is the epitaph Solomon wrote on a life of pleasure. There was nothing really good in it. Whatever gratification it gave was only momentary, and it left nothing in the hand. Any one who has ever tried the world's pleasures will certify to the truth of this verdict. There is a sort of enjoyment in them, but it is short-lived. It is like the snow-flake on the water, "a moment white, then gone for ever." Then when the sensation of pleasure is gone there remains not the feeling there was before, but *a sting*. The sweet in the mouth turns a moment after to bitter. The sense of wrong done, the conscience wounded, the calm peace of the heart broken—these are the experiences that sinful pleasure leaves for the morrow. Nor is that all. It is not mere emptiness that remains, the froth of the bursted bubble, the bitter dregs at the bottom of the cup; sinful pleasure is a fire that burns like a conflagration, leaving the fair beauty of the temple blackened and charred by its flames; it is a storm that strikes the noble ship, stripping it of masts and rigging and sails, and leaving it a wreck, an abandoned hulk in the midst of the wild sea. Sinful pleasure costs terribly. No one is ever the same again who tries it. Not only is it vanity, yielding no good, no profit, no benefit; it is hurtful, ruinous, destructive, yielding a harvest of woe and sorrow.

I said of laughter, It is mad; and of mirth, What doeth it? Of course this does not teach that it is a sin to laugh, and that all mirth is madness. The Bible does not condemn innocent fun. Bible saints are not long-faced people, who never smile. The sacred pages ring with gladness. Joy is a Christian duty. [See Editorial on another page.] Christians ought to be the happiest people in the world. Every good man and woman should know how to laugh, and to laugh heartily. I called on a man once who loved birds, and as soon as I entered the door a great shower of bird-notes fell upon my ear. There were birds in parlor, dining-room, kitchen, chamber and hall, and the whole house rang with their music. Every Christian home should be a palace of song, with the birds of joy filling every corner of it. Solomon does not say we should never laugh, that all laughter and mirth are foolish and sinful. He refers to the world's laughter, its revelry, its gayety, its amusements. He says it is madness, insane folly, for an immortal being to turn to these things. They are unworthy. They are vanity. They leave no permanent good. They only waste and destroy the life.

I sought . . . to give myself unto wine, yet acquainting mine heart with wisdom. He wanted to see how much pleasure and gratification wine could give; yet he was not going to become a drunkard. He would keep his wits about him. Wine should not get the mastery over him. He would not allow it to interfere with his pursuits. He merely wanted to study the effects of wine upon himself; and was he not doing it for the good of others, trying to find just what there was in it that was good or helpful? This is the same course over which the Devil has been leading men ever since he deceived our first parents and caused them to fall. "The fruit is pleasant to the eyes, and makes one wise—just try it." It is the Devil's doctrine that sin's experiences prepare one for doing good more effectively. Our last lesson tells us what Solomon learned from wine.

I made me great works . . . I looked on all the works . . . and all was vanity. He tried what splendor would do. He built magnificent palaces. He planted vineyards and gardens. He founded cities. He made great water-works. He had great retinues of servants and attendants. That is, he tried all that luxury would do, and when the experiment was completed, when he had gotten from these things they best they could yield, the verdict was as before, "Vanity." He was disappointed and unhappy. Wandering amid the splendors his hands had piled, he found nothing to satisfy the feverish cravings of his spirit. Were ever sadder words written than these: "I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labor that I had labored to do; and behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun?" This is the story of all human ambition, even the most successful. It yields no satisfaction to the cravings of a thirsty soul. The pleasure is in the excitement of pursuit. When the coveted prizes are grasped, when the things that promised so much have been reached and possessed, it is found that the desire is just as unsatisfied and insatiable as ever. The reason is, that the human soul was made for God and for spiritual enjoyments, and

can never be satisfied with things of earth. Ten thousand worlds would not do it. There is but one thing that *can* meet its desires and needs—that is, the love of God.

All was . . . vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun. Instead of bringing peace, these great possessions and all this fine grandeur brought only vexation of spirit, worry, anxiety, care, trouble. Well, is not that always true? If men who have grown rich would but make honest confession they would agree in saying that they knew more real solid happiness in one of the days when they had to toil hard and when they lived in the little cottage, than in a whole year of the later time when they sat amid splendors and had vast wealth to care for. The other words are pathetic: "There was no profit under the sun." These successes put nothing into the life. They left no residuum of real good. They made one no richer or better. "How much did he leave?" asked one concerning a rich man who had died. "He left *all*," was the expressive answer. Remember the Lord's parable: "This night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall these things be?"

The lesson from all this is, that we should live for things that *will* satisfy. Jesus stands amid all these wrecks of human happiness, amid all these disappointed hopes and these failures of earthly ambitions, and says: "Come *unto me* all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Whosoever drinketh of this water [the world's fountains] shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst."

LESSON POINTS.

1. The unsatisfied heart turns from one earthly spring to another seeking what it craves. v. 1.

2. Gayety and amusement have no power to fill a heart. v. 2.

3. Wine only intoxicates and inflames desires, leading to woe and sorrow. v. 3.

4. The "great works" of ambition prove only vanity and vexation of spirit. vs. 4–6.

5. Wealth and luxury do not satisfy a soul. vs. 7, 8.

6. Lust and sensual gratifications only degrade and bestialize. v. 8.

7. The epitaph on all human glory and achievement is written large in v. 11.

8. It is a pity men cannot learn from the experience of others. If they did this experiment would have saved the world much waste.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

AS TO INTRODUCTION.

You will inquire the meaning of the word "Ecclesiastes." Some scholar will answer, "*Preacher!*" Then you will pass on to other questions. Have each one use his own Bible—taking in his fingers all the leaves occupied by this book. Count the chapters. Why do you think God gave us this particular book of the Bible? God gave us the book of Ecclesiastes to show us that this world cannot give us real happiness. Who wants to be happy? Everybody. How shall everybody be happy? That is the question this book answers. If yours is an advanced class, I would have them turn and mark these divisions of this book: (1) Theme of the book, chap. 1: 1–11: "All hope of happiness from this world is vain." (2) Worldly wisdom cannot give happiness (chap. 1); (3) worldly pleasure cannot (chap. 2); (4) worldly industry cannot (3–5); (5) nor can worldly wealth (6–8: 15); (6) happiness is found in fearing God and keeping his commandments. (11, 12). As we have only two lessons from this book, I would impress upon class the general drift. (See Dr. Miller's Notes.)

PRACTICAL APPLICATION.

I. *What things will make you happy?* This is a question which if rightly put interests every one. All are searching after something which will make them happy. What is that something? Who started out after happiness according to our lesson? v. 1. What things did Solomon try to get happiness out of? Merriment (v. 1), wine (v. 3), palaces (v. 4), parks and gardens (vs. 4–6), servants (v. 7), wealth (vs. 7, 8), music (v. 8), greatness (v. 9), every joy (v. 10). What young person is there in this class who does not think that he would be happy possessing all these? What are they expecting whose motto is, "Laugh and be merry?" Thus take up each of these sources of worldly pleasure.

II. *What great opportunities for enjoying pleasure had Solomon?*

1. He had talent to choose the best.
2. He had unlimited wealth. 1 Kings 10: 27.
3. He had the best architects to build for him.
4. He understood all about trees and plants.
5. He could bring servants from the ends of the earth.
6. He was an absolute ruler, and had the finest chances to gather everything to give him enjoyment.
7. He had all leisure to enjoy pleasure.

III. *What was the result of Solomon's pleasure seeking?* v. 11. It was all emptiness and worry. The outcome of Solomon's experiment of ex-

tracting happiness from worldly pleasure was *failure.*

IV. *What hope is there of our attaining happiness from pleasure after Solomon's failure?* Who can expect to gain happiness where *he* failed to find it? "What can the man do that cometh after the king?" Why should we agree with Solomon's decision?

V. *What is the reason that worldly pleasures cannot make us happy?*

1. We have immortal souls that cannot be satisfied with mere earthly delights.

2. There is always something to cross us in the most pleasurable scene.

3. Worldly pleasures soon pass away and leave us unsatisfied.

4. Death soon comes and ends worldly pleasure.

Filippo Neri was a wise priest in Italy. Once a young man ran to him and with great joy told him that his heart's wish was attained, for his father and mother had consented to his studying law. Neri had known him as a boy. He loved him. He let him tell all his ambitions. At length Neri said to the young man: "Well, when you have completed your studies, what will you do then?" Quickly answered the youth, "Take my doctor's degree." "And then?" said Neri. "Then," said the young man, "I shall have a number of knotty cases to manage, and by my eloquence, learning, zeal and acuteness, I shall draw notice and gain fame." "And *then?*" repeated Neri. "Why, then I shall be promoted to high office, and shall make money and grow rich." "And *then?*" said Neri. "And then," said the young man, "I shall live comfortably and honorably in wealth and dignity, and shall be able quietly to look forward to a happy old age." "And *then?*" persisted Neri. "Then—then I—shall—die." "And *then?*" said Neri once more. The young man went away silent. But that question, "and then?" led him to Christ and his service. This world without Jesus is nothing.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

We have been hearing a great deal about Solomon. Our lesson to-day is about some things that he tried, to see if they would make him happy.

Let us make a picture of the world, and we will print over it, "Solomon's World." Now let me read you something from the first verse of the lesson, and see what you think I had better put down in this space which I have marked off.

N. B.—If you have taught your scholars to study, instead of putting the thought in that form, ask what you shall put down first, then read the verse aloud, that the scholars may see if the correct answer has been given.

"I said in my heart . . . I will prove thee with mirth: therefore enjoy pleasure." Call from class the word "PLEASURE," and print it on the world.

Verse 3 tells that he tried "WINE." Read the sentence as before, and call the word from class before printing. Verses 4–6 may be read slowly, impressing, by questions, the fact that Solomon tried to satisfy his heart with a beautiful home. Mark off a portion of his world for this. Then he tried "WEALTH." "I gathered silver and gold, and the peculiar treasures of kings." Then he tried "MUSIC" in all its choice and expensive forms. He had "SERVANTS" in great numbers to wait on him, so that it is to be presumed that he could be as idle as he pleased. Finally, v. 10: "Whatsoever mine eyes desired, I kept not from them." See if you can call from class the word "EVERYTHING," which print in the centre of "Solomon's World." Nothing was left untried.

Now, what was his conclusion? Put it all into one word, and print it in large letters, reaching across the world in such a manner that they will touch all the things which he has tried:

"VANITY."

Get the children's ideas as to what the word means, and prepare yourself carefully to explain its spirit to them. The little child who tried all day to do nothing but just what she wanted to, and who owned in the early afternoon that she was "just sick and tired of everything," is a good illustration for children, of Solomon's state of mind.

Now, what was the trouble? Are beautiful homes, and servants, and music, and pleasant things, necessarily wrong? Not at all.

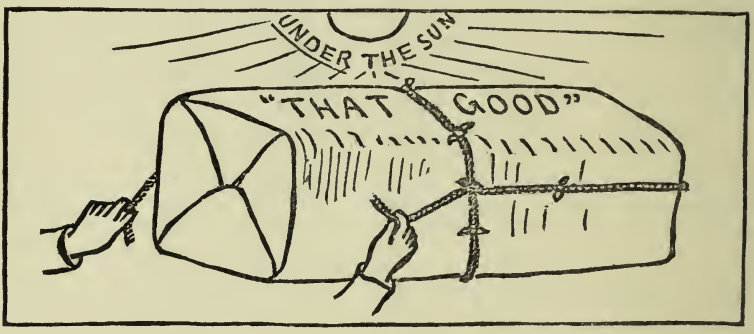
Let me tell you what was the matter. How many of you were ever hungry? Then you know just how it feels. Now suppose you had been all day long without anything to eat—no breakfast, no dinner—and you were very hungry indeed. Toward the middle of the afternoon it seems to you as though you could not wait any longer for some bread and butter and meat. You are traveling through the woods, where there is nothing to eat. But at last you come to a house. "Yes," the woman says, "you can have some supper." So while you wait, you think how good everything will taste. Pretty soon you are called to the table, and

there is nothing on it but a large dish of candy. How many like candy? I thought so, every one. How many would like, when real hungry, to have nothing given to them to eat but pieces of candy? I thought so again, not one. You know that it would not satisfy a hungry body. Now Solomon's *soul* was hungry. It needed feeding, and he could no more feed his soul with all these things that his world is full of, than you could feed your bodies on candy if you had had no food in a long time. No wonder Solomon thought it was all vanity.

Now let us see what conclusions Solomon reached. I am going to print here another word that he used—"FOLLY." He found that he had been a very foolish man. Who can repeat the golden text? You remember that Solomon knew all about what true wisdom was, and now when he thinks of it, he decides that wisdom is as much better than folly as light is better than darkness.

Final Thought.—On what are my scholars feeding their souls? Are they just thinking about themselves, about trying to have fun, and starving those poor souls of theirs that are to live for ever? What is the true food for souls? How often should they be fed? How much money do you have to have, need to have, before you can get food for the soul? Have you fed your soul to-day?

SUGGESTIONS FOR BLACKBOARD.



Design and Aids in Drawing it.—Draw the package first, beginning with the end at the left, and the cords around it afterward. The hands may be omitted if found to be too difficult to draw. Solomon wished to compass "that good" v. 3, the highest good. He tried study, mirth, wisdom with wine, great works, but they were too short, separately or together, for the package. Wisdom was better cord than mirth, but the knot might at any time separate. In v. 11 he says, "No profit," literally following the Hebrew, "Nothing over and above," no cord overhanging. He has used all the cord, and tried it in every way, but still it is too short. Who has more twine?

Closing words, on the expression "under the sun."—It occurs about thirty times in this book alone, and may be the key to it. The true and full satisfaction for the soul is not found *under* but *above* the sun.

Lesson XII. **THE CREATOR REMEMBERED.** **Dec. 21st, 1884.**

Eccles. 12: 1–14. Memorize vs. 13, 14.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth."—Eccles. 12: 1.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Eccles. 12: 1–14.. *The Creator Remembered.*
T. Matt. 6: 16–23... *The Heavenly Treasure.*
W. 1 John 2: 14–29.. *Counsels for the Young.*
Th. 1 Sam. 3: 1–21... *A Young Prophet.*
F. 2 Chron. 34: 1–22. *A Young King.*
S. Ps. 37: 23–40 .... *The Righteous Never Forsaken.*
S. 2 Pet. 3: 1–14.... *The Day of the Lord.*

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Time for Remembering. 2. The Reason for Remembering.

Time.—About B. C. 977.

Place.—Written by Solomon at Jerusalem.

Catechism.—Q. 39. *What is the duty which God requireth of man?* A. The duty which God requireth of man is, obedience to his revealed will.

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON.

INTRODUCTORY.—This chapter contains an exhortation to the young to remember God and dedicate their lives to him in their youth, because of the unfitness of old age as a time for the beginning of a godly life. The writer paints, in the opening verses, a striking picture of an old man as his powers decay and his ability for active duties grows less and less. He then describes death, when the life ends altogether so far as this earth is concerned. He then strives to arouse attention to the great things of life, stating in the closing verses how a life may fulfill its mission in this world, and enforcing the exhortation by giving a glimpse of the great judgment-day and its issues.

---

1 Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them; [Isa. 26: 8; 2 Sam. 19: 35.]

2 While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain:

3 In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened, [2 Cor. 5: 1; Gen. 27: 1.]

4 And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low;

5 Also *when* they shall be afraid of *that which is* high, and fears *shall be* in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets: [Lev. 19: 32; Job 16: 22.]

6 Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.

7 Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it. [Gen. 3: 19; Ps. 146: 4; Eccles. 3: 21.]

8 ¶ Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher; all *is* vanity.

9 And moreover, because the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, *and* set in order many proverbs.

10 The Preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and *that which was* written *was* upright, *even* words of truth.

11 The words of the wise *are* as goads, and as nails fastened *by* the masters of assemblies, *which* are given from one shepherd.

12 And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books *there is* no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh.

13 ¶ Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man. [Deut. 10: 12.]

14 For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil. [Matt. 12: 36; 2 Cor. 5: 10.]

1 *Remember now.* Rather, *And remember.* The "and" connects this verse with the close of the previous chapter. The chapter division should have been made at the beginning of v. 9, chap. 11. The word "remember" here implies more than a mere act of memory, including also in its meaning obedience, honor, love. It is, in fact, an exhortation to habitual godliness. *Thy Creator.* The thought is, that he who made us has a right to our affection, obedience and service. In the Hebrew the word Creator is plural. Compare Gen. 1: 26, "Let *us* make man." *In the days of thy youth.* While young, enter upon this godly life. *While the evil days come not.* Or, "Before the evil days come." The reference is to the days of old age, as described in the following verses, which are "evil" in the sense that they are increasingly feeble and full of suffering. *No pleasure in them.* In the years of old age. Life has not the zest for the old that it has for the young.

2 *While the sun.* Rather, "*Before* the sun and the light and the moon and the stars shall become dark." This description is literally true in the case of the old, whose eyes become dim, so that the lights of the heavens are obscured to them. These lights may also represent in a figurative sense the joys of life which give place in the old to afflictions and trials. See Ezek. 32: 7, 8; Job 3: 9; Isa. 5: 30. Compare also with David's experience in old age as described in 2 Sam. 23: 4, 5. *Nor the clouds return.* In old age the clouds never clear away. Sorrow follows sorrow, and care chases care.

3 *The keepers of the house.* Guards were often necessary for the safety of homes in the East, where there were so many marauders. See Luke 11: 21; Matt. 24: 43; Ps. 121: 4, 5. The body is here compared to a house, and the arms and hands are the guards and keepers. In old age these grow weak and *tremble*, no longer able for their duty. *The strong men.* The legs, which support the body. Ps. 147: 10. *Bow themselves.* Are no longer strong, but bend and tremble under their burden. See Isa. 35: 3; Heb. 12: 12. *The grinders.* In that country female slaves ground the grain into flour on hand mills. The reference here is to

the teeth, which "grind" the food, and which in old age cease their work, being worn away or having fallen out. *That look out of the windows.* The eyes are the windows of the human house, and in old age they become dim or even blind.

4 *The doors.* The reference probably is to the several senses, sight, hearing, taste, etc., which are the doors through which the outside world communicates with the soul. In the case of the old man these are partially or wholly closed, and he knows but little of what is going on outside. *The sound of the grinding.* The hand-mill goes incessantly, and makes much noise; but as the old man's ear grows dull he hears it only as a low and feeble sound. The grinding may represent all the noises of domestic activity. Or, the reference may be to the activities of the man's own life, which become less and less in his old age. *He shall rise up at the voice of the bird.* The figure of the house is here dropped. The old man does not sleep well, and rises at the early dawn, or is awakened by the slightest noise, even the singing of a bird. *The daughters of music.* The reference is either to the musical powers of the old, which are "brought low," failing and growing feeble, or to the singing women whose voices sound low in the dull ears of the old, and whose songs fail to charm or please, or even to be heard.

5 *Afraid of that which is high.* Timid about going up to lofty places where one is made dizzy. *Fears . . . in the way.* They are easily alarmed by real or fancied dangers in the street or highway, and are afraid to go out. *The almond tree shall flourish.* Or, *bloom.* The almond tree puts forth white blossoms before its green leaves appear. It is thus an emblem of old age with its gray hair. *The grasshopper.* Rather, *The locust.* This insect is remarkable for its agility. *Shall be a burden.* That is, *burdensome.* The body in old age fails of its youthful activity. Or, some suppose the meaning to be that the old man grows so feeble that the lightest weight, even a locust, is a burden to him. *Desire shall fail.* Literally, *The caperberry shall fail.* This berry was eaten before meals to quicken the appetite for food, and in the case of the aged it loses its power. *Man goeth.* Is on the way and nearing—*His long home.* Literally, *His house of ages*, or *eternal house.* The reference is to the other world. It cannot mean simply the grave, for in v. 7 it is said that the spirit returns *to God.* Compare 2 Cor. 5: 1–6, in which the same expression is used referring to the spiritual body. *The mourners go.* Are *about* to go. Mourners were hired in that country, and the meaning may be that in view of the prospect of the old man's death these professional mourners are going about waiting to be hired for his funeral.

6 *Or ever.* Before. *Silver cord.* An allusion to the cord or chain by which the lamp was suspended from the ceiling. *The golden bowl.* The bowl of the lamp. When the chain that supports it is broken, the lamp falling is shattered. *The pitcher.* Or bucket, used in bringing water from the *fountain. Wheel . . . at the cistern.* Or well. The shattering of the lamp, the breaking of the pitcher, and the wearing out of the water-wheel, are figures representing death.

7 *Then shall the dust.* See Gen. 2: 7. *The spirit.* The soul. *Return to God.* It shall then continue to live.

8 *Vanity of vanities.* The emptiest of empty things. *The preacher.* Solomon speaks of himself. See also vs. 8–10.

9 *Because the preacher was wise.* He is stating his claim as a teacher. *Gave good heed.* Thought deeply, pondered much, over the things that he wrote for the guidance of others. *Sought out.* Discovered. *Set in order.* Put in form.

10 *Acceptable words.* He put his teachings in attractive form. *Truth.* Not pleasing merely, but also true.

11 *Goads.* The goad was a sharp-pointed iron staff, which was used in driving oxen. So the words of the wise urge men to duty. See Heb. 4: 12. *Nails.* Pegs of wood. The thought is, that the words of the wise are so fixed in the memory that they cannot be forgotten. *The masters of assemblies.* Teachers or preachers. *One shepherd.* Or, *Overseer.* God, who is the great Teacher.

12 *By these.* These "words of the wise." v. 11. *Books.* Rather, Writings, embracing all kinds of documents. He must hasten to a close.

13 *The conclusion.* The summing up of the whole discourse, which he gives in the words, *Fear God*, etc. *The whole duty.* Omit *duty.* To fear God and keep his commandments is the whole of true living.

14 *Shall bring.* Cause to come. *Every work into judgment.* Solomon seems to have understood at least something of the doctrine of a final judgment which is taught so fully and clearly by our Lord and his apostles in the New Testament. Into the decision of this judgment "every work" and "every secret thing" of each life shall come.

APPLICATION AND ILLUSTRATION.

Remember now thy Creator. Certainly that is a very reasonable thing to ask. We ought to remember Him who made us. We remember human friends who have done even small things for us. We cherish their names and keep their memory embalmed in our hearts. Surely we ought to remember God. There are few sadder words in the Bible than those which tell us of Christ that "He was in the world and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not; he came unto his own, and his own received him not." Is it not so yet? He is among us, but do we recognize him? Do we think much about God? Do we not forget him whole days at a time? He never forgets us, but do we always remember him? If we thought of God all the time, it would make our lives very beautiful. It would not make us sad and gloomy, for God is our best friend, but it would make us careful in all our words and conduct. It would keep us from doing wrong things. It would make us thoughtful. Mr. Simeon used to keep the picture of Henry Martyn hanging over his fire-place, and the good man would pause before it and look at it, and then say: "There, see that blessed man! What an expression of countenance! No one looks at me as he does. He never takes his eyes off me, and seems always to be saying, 'Be serious. Be in earnest. Don't trifle.'" Then smiling at the picture and bowing gently, he would add, "And I *will not*—I *will not* trifle." If there is such an impulse to earnestness in the memory of a true, fervent human spirit, as it looks out of a picture, how blessed, how helpful, how inspiring, must be the constant remembrance of God. If we could but carry with us always the thought of him, how pure would our lives be! how softly would we walk! Each moment we should hear a voice say, "Be serious. Be earnest. Don't trifle. Don't sin."

In the days of thy youth. This fixes the time when we should begin to remember our Creator. We should *start* with God. There are very many reasons why we should do this. We all think it very wrong when a child rebels against a parent, and spends the bright days of youth as a prodigal, coming back perhaps with a poor ruined life to die under the home roof. It is far worse for any one to rob God of youth, spending the strength of manhood or womanhood in rebellion and sin, expecting to return in old age, to be taken back again and restored to a place in the heavenly family. The wretched meanness of such a course is enough to make every noble-minded man or woman disdain to treat God so. We ought to give our childhood to God, then the days of our youth, then our manhood or womanhood. We should be God's from the beginning of our life to its last breath. No other way of living is true or worthy of an immortal being. No other brings real and deep happiness. No other reaches the best possibilities of being, for even a few years of sin in youth mar the perfectness of the life and make it incomplete.

While the evil days come not. I saw an old man building a house. He made it very beautiful. He furnished it very richly. But it was built too late. After all his toil and pains he was buried from the old tottering house where he had spent all his years. I saw an old man planting a tree before his door. He said he thought it would be pleasant to sit in its shade. Poor man! he forgot that long before that tree would cast a grateful shade with wide-spreading branches, he would be in his grave. He ought to have planted the tree in the days of his youth, and then he could have enjoyed its shade in his old age. To have the blessedness of God's love pouring into your soul when you get old, you must remember your Creator in youth. The old days are "evil days" in which to *begin* to follow the Lord. The heart is cold. The brain is dull. The machinery of life is almost worn out. Love clings feebly then. It is hard to make the change. An old man said to the preacher who came to speak to him about salvation, "Do not waste your time on me. Go and speak to the young. Their hearts are tender. Their characters are unformed. But there is no use to talk to me. It is too late!"

In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves. It seems to youth that that time never can come. The young feel that their arms shall always be strong, and their limbs shall never totter under their burden. But here is a picture of what the strongest shall some day be. There is no need to linger upon its physical features. The best and holiest living will not keep old age away. Good people as well as bad grow old. There is a difference of course. A sinful life makes old age miserable. But that is not the point here. It is not claimed that religion will prevent one growing old, or that it will keep the arms from trembling and the limbs from tottering and the eyes from growing dim. The whole teaching here is, that old age is a poor time to *begin* to remember God. For one thing, it is dishonorable to give all the strength of youth and manhood to sin, and

then bring God only the old battered wreck. For another thing, it is very hard after living in sin for a lifetime, forgetful of God, to change the habitudes of the life, the feelings, the thoughts, the affections, into new courses. The old stage driver's hands had grown stiff like hooks, from grasping the lines all his lifetime. So the whole nature becomes set and hardened by life's courses, and change is well-nigh hopeless. Not many people ever do begin in old age to serve God. It is a great deal easier to begin a Christian life in youth. It is easier then to learn to sing the praises of God than when the lips have long been used to the ribald songs of sin. It is easier to train the heart's tender affections to twine about the cross before they have learned to cling to earth's sordid things. It is easy to teach young fingers to play on the piano or organ, but next to impossible for the stiff fingers of age to do it; so it is easier far for the young than for the old to strike the harps of heaven. It is easier a thousand times to *keep* the heart pure and tender, than to get back its purity and tenderness when once lost.

Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken. It will be for ever too late then to *begin* to remember God. All is over when the lamp of life is broken. The flame goes out. The day of probation is ended. If we have not before this occurs sought God's mercy and given ourselves to him, there will be no hope. As death finds us, so we shall remain. The character that passes death's gate shall be permanent. He that is unjust then shall be unjust still; he that is filthy shall be filthy still. Unless we begin therefore to remember God before the silver cord is loosed, it will be of no avail then.

Then shall . . . the spirit return unto God who gave it. So a thousand years before Christ came men believed in a future life, that the soul was immortal, and that death did not end all. They believed that they would live on in another world. Of course we have a great deal fuller and clearer revelation on this subject than they had, for Christ has come and has taught us the doctrine of future existence, and then has himself died and risen again. We shall not die when we leave this world. A thousand, ten thousand years hence we shall still be living somewhere—where and in what experiences will depend upon how we have lived in this world.

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments, for this is the whole . . . of man. Our grand old Catechism is right when it says that "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever." The wise man, after his long search in all fields for the thing that is good, writes down this as the "*whole* of man," the very end and object of existence, that for which man was made—"Fear God and keep his commandments." All experiments of any other kind of life are failures. Solomon had tried every other way, and found no good in any. All was vanity and vexation of spirit. We were made for God, and can find blessedness only in him. We were made for obedience to his commandments, and only in this can our lives reach their true ideals.

The preacher sought to find out acceptable words. So should every preacher and every teacher. Indeed, every one who talks should seek for acceptable words, words that will please God, and words that will be acceptable to those who hear. We should keep our speech always true, and clean and loving. We should always remember that we must give account for our words. Our Lord said that of every *idle* word we must give account, and if of idle words which may be harmless, how much more of words that burn and blast and destroy! We should remember that there is an ear which hears our lightest words, and a pen that records our every utterance. How important it is for us to seek for "acceptable" words! We should surely think always before we speak. We should weigh every sentence before we give it breath, and be sure it is something that will please God. Then we should also seek for words that will be acceptable to those who hear us. That is, we should pay attention to our speech, and seek to have it beautiful. We should try to have something worth saying, when we speak at all. It is better to be silent than to speak foolishly, or to utter words that give pain or work injury to other souls. We should think of the *manner* of our speech. There is great power in graceful utterance. We should think of the *form* of our words. Beautiful and fitting language has a charm that wins and attracts. If young people appreciated its value they would cultivate all the finer graces of speech. But we should think still more of the *matter* of our words. There is a vast amount of useless speech, and still more of evil, harmful speech, that had better never be uttered. We should always seek words that will do good, words of cheer, words of comfort, words of instruction, words of wise counsel, words that will inspire and strengthen and help.

The words of the wise are . . . as nails. They go into the memory and stick. Every good word we read or hear ought to be such a nail, and should make such a lodgment in our

mind and heart that it can never be torn out. The trouble with too many of us is, that we hear plenty of good things but do not remember them. They may be very good nails, but we are very poor, soft wood, and they pull out again. There is a lesson here for teachers, too. They should make sure that they drive in the nails so that they will stick. It is better to teach *just one thing* each Sabbath, and teach it so that it will never be forgotten, than to teach twenty things, not one of which will be remembered in a month.

God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing. We are not done with life as it passes through our hands. We shall have to meet it again, not only the open things that the world knows, but the secret things, that no one knows but ourselves and God. The only safe life, therefore, is that which follows in the ways of God's commandments, for these will make the standard of judgment in that day of accounts. Even then, however, the best and holiest will need an atonement, for "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God," and can only appear before God clothed in the righteousness of the Redeemer.

LESSON POINTS.

1. We should remember God, because he is our Creator. v. 1.

2. We should remember God in the days of our youth, giving all the life to him. v. 1.

3. We should remember God in youth, because it is the time when it is easiest to begin a Christian life. vs. 1, 2.

4. We should remember God in youth, because we will need him in old age. vs. 4, 5.

5. We should remember God now, because death drawing near will end probation. v. 6.

6. We should remember God now to be ready to meet him in peace after death. v. 7.

7. We should remember God, because all other ways of living are only vanity. v. 8.

8. We should remember God, because this is the whole of man, what we were made for, and the only way of happiness and blessedness. v. 13.

9. We should remember God, because we must meet him in judgment, with all our life for his inspection. v. 14.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

You are this Sabbath to teach the last lesson of 1884. Could any portion of Scripture be more appropriate than this wherewith to close your year's teaching? Beware of frittering away its practical power in sentimentality and poetic analogies. Preserve the beauty—seek "to find out acceptable words"—but, more important than this, press home the simple, practical bearing of the saving truths.

PRACTICAL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

You will ask such questions as these may suggest. If the class entirely fails to respond, vary the question. If they give only a partial answer, repeat the question in another form until you have drawn out the complete truth.

I. *What is it to remember our Creator in the days of our youth?* Break up this question into three:

1. *Who is our Creator?* (*a*) Our Father in heaven. Gen. 1: 1. (*b*) God the Son. John 1: 3; Eph. 3: 9. (*c*) God the Holy Ghost. Gen. 1: 2, 3; Ps. 114: 30. Christ is our Maker as well as Saviour.

2. *What is it to remember our Creator?* (*a*) Not to forget him or his blessings. Ps. 103: 2. (*b*) To think of him. (*c*) To fear him. v. 13. (*d*) To trust him. (*e*) To love him with all the heart. Illustrate by a dutiful child away from home, remembering father and mother. He calls them to mind then as they come to his thoughts. He feels reverence for them, then confidence in them, then his heart melts with love to them. So are we to "remember" God.

3. *What is meant by "in the days of thy youth?"* How young should a child remember his Creator? Your scholars are in danger of thinking that they are too young to be Christians. Take full time to disabuse their hearts of this fatal mistake. (*a*) The Bible puts no limit as to how young a person may become a Christian. (*b*) The Bible tells of very young persons who served the Lord: Samuel (1 Sam. 3: 1–10), Josiah (2 Kings 22: 1, 2), young children brought to Jesus (Luke 18: 16), Timothy (2 Tim. 3: 15).

4. Many of Christ's ministers and people became Christians when they were very young. Polycarp, the martyr, gave his heart to Christ when he was nine years old; Matthew Henry, the great commentator, when eleven; Richard Baxter, the great preacher, became a Christian very young. Jonathan Edwards was a Christian at the age of seven years. He tells of a little girl only four years old who was soundly converted to God.

II. *Why should you remember your Creator while you are young?* 1. Because your heart is not so hard as it will be. 2. Because you have not so many bad habits as you will have when older. 3. Because you may die before you are older. 4. You will be happier all your life. 5. You will have so much longer time to work for

Jesus. 6. Because thousands who delay till they are older never become Christians. 7. Because old age without God is "evil," and there is no pleasure in it.

III. *How can you be certain that you truly remember Jesus in youth?* 1. When you hate sin. 2. When you want to be good. 3. When you love to pray. 4. When you love the Bible, the Church and the Sabbath-school. 5. When you love Christians. 6. When you long to "do this in remembrance of" Jesus.

IV. *In what respects is a godless old age like winter rains?* v. 2. 1. "The sun, the moon and stars are darkened," *i. e.*, the mind, the memory, the affections and will are failing. 2. The clouds return after the rain. No sooner is one trouble over than another comes.

V. *In what respects is a godless old man like an old house falling to ruin.* vs. 3–6. Carefully study Dr. Miller's Notes. See how all the different parts of the decaying house and household represent the slowly declining body of a godless sinner. The practical point of it all is, do not delay remembering Christ. Find Christ in youth; then old age, which is to others ruin, will be to you only nearing home.

VI. *What is death?* v. 7. Why should the young think of death? What should the thought of death lead us to do? In larger classes, show how the expression, "The spirit shall return to God who gave it," proves that God directly gives souls to men, and that at death all souls immediately appear before God.

VII. *What hints can a Sabbath-school teacher get from vs. 9–11?* 1. Be wise. 2. Persevere in teaching. 3. Devote to this the utmost attention. 4. Take time to set your lessons in order. 5. Prepare not only your thoughts, but the most acceptable words. 6. Do not undervalue wise words—they will act as goads to duty and nails to hang truth in the memory.

VIII. *What is the grand conclusion to the book of Ecclesiastes?* "Fear God and keep his commandments." Impress your scholars with the duty, the privilege and joy of giving their whole lives to Christ. How unworthy and ungrateful to think of neglecting God through life, and then of offering him the mere dregs of life! What more beautiful than an aged Christian bringing forth fruit from early life till summoned home! What more dreadful than an aged sensualist, a godless old man, tottering to a grave of endless despair!

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Print the word "REMEMBER" in large, bright letters on the board. Call from class its connection with the lesson, and the fact that the words of the wisest man who ever lived are worth remembering.

I should have commenced by saying that the manner in which I am about to suggest that the lesson be taught, will necessitate some preparation for it on the previous Sabbath. I will try to tell you in brief what I propose to do in my own class. I mean to have little slips of paper, whereon are printed certain words. To one class I will give the word "KEEPERS;" to another, "STRONG MEN;" to another, "GRINDERS;" to another, "WINDOWS;" to another, "MUSIC;" to another, "ALMOND TREE;" to another, "SILVER CORD;" to another, "GOLDEN BOWL;" to another, "PITCHER and WHEEL;" to another, "FOUNTAIN." I shall explain that on next Sabbath we want to talk about all these things, and we want them to be able to explain what these words mean.

The Sabbath having arrived, after the opening talk about the word "Remember," I shall ask how many have learned what we are going to talk about to-day. Or, in other words, what it was that Solomon described in our lesson. I shall then call a little child—one of the youngest in the class—forward, and ask for somebody to bring to me the papers which have the word "Keepers," and tell me where to place them. Thus through the exercise. Of course some of the papers cannot be placed where they belong, as, for instance, the "Grinders" and "Music," but the talk about them will impress their meaning on the scholars. For the word "Fountain," I shall use a paper heart, with the word printed on it.

There are some who object to this form of teaching because it creates merriment, but the innocent smiles of childhood are not always to be suppressed, even in Sabbath-school, and it will be found that it also creates intense interest in the lesson.

We are now ready to talk about what was said of all these things. Solomon spoke of a time when the "Keepers of the house shall tremble." Have the children ever seen an old man trying with trembling hands to lift his cup to his lips? What makes his hands tremble?

Let us see what he says about the "Strong men." Read, "The strong men shall bow themselves." Question class as to when and for what the limbs move feebly and tremblingly. What about the "Daughters of music?" Describe, or call from class, the feeble, trembling voice of the old grandmother in the home.

What of the "Almond Tree?" Describe, and talk for a moment about the beautiful white hair of the aged.

When this silver cord, about which we have been talking, shall be loosed, and this golden bowl broken, what happens then? Let us read and see: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit unto God who gave it."

Now every boy and girl in this class, if they live long enough, will reach a time when their hands and limbs will tremble, the windows shall be darkened (probably), the almond tree will flourish; but before that time comes Solomon tells us something to do. What is it?

The answer is contained in the golden text, but will need careful explanation. Did Solomon tell us how to do this? Why, really he puts it into two words. Let us make a frame for them on the board, and print them in large letters—

"FEAR GOD."

That is, have the same kind of fear of him that a child has for a good father and mother. Fear to do what will grieve him. Solomon says, "Fear God and keep his commandments," but these two words are enough for our motto, because if we truly fear him we shall certainly try to keep his commandments.

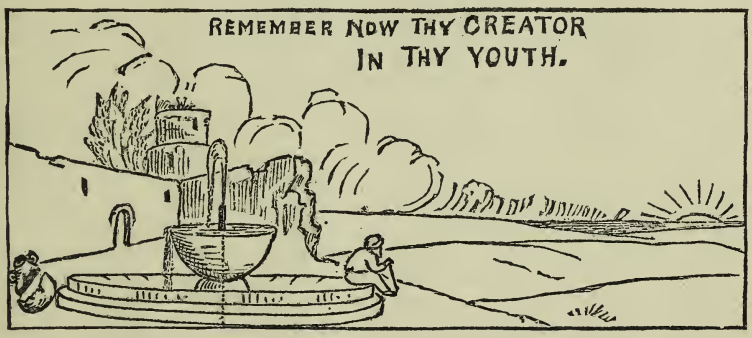
You remember how many things Solomon tried in search of happiness. Now, at last, he has found the only true way. He gives us still another reason for beginning while we are young to serve God. Listen: Read, "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Question on the verse analytically, *i. e.*, Who will? Bring what? Bring them where? Will even our *thoughts* be there?

Closing Thought.—Who among us will take the wise man's advice? Who will begin to-day? This lesson may be further impressed by singing in connection with it the hymn built on the text:

"A wonderful house have I,
That God has made for me,
With windows to see the sky,
And keepers strong and free."

The lesson would most appropriately close with the entire consecration hymn used as a prayer.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BLACKBOARD.



Design and how to Draw it.—The line across the top of the fountain is the unit of measure. Some may prefer to draw only the fountain and the broken pitcher. In that case place one unit of measure in the centre of the blackboard, and with string and crayon draw from its centre half a circle. The fountain's base is three units long. If the whole design is drawn, as in cut, the old man watching the returning clouds and setting sun is in the centre. The white blossoms of the almond tree are to be in white crayon, as well as the decaying old home, which is only occupied in part.

Aids to Closing Words.—The picture here given is the old age of the sensualist. Nothing makes so poor a return for its cost as sensual pleasure. Youthful days and nights of hilarity, followed in old age with the details of cost—money needed, evil days of languor, pain and idleness, a damaged reputation, loss of self-respect, a deadening of moral sensibility, the stock of vitality and capacity for enjoyment reduced, and the sullen pangs of conscience increased. Such an old age ought to teach a solemn lesson to the young. A life well-lived from youth gives a beautiful and happy old age.

Lesson XIII. **FOURTH QUARTERLY REVIEW.** Dec. 28th, 1884.

[*From Westminster Quarterly.*]

HOME STUDIES.

M. Lesson I., II.
T. Lesson III.
W. Lessons IV., V.
Th. Lessons VI., VII.
F. Lessons VIII., IX.
S. Lessons X., XI.
S. Lesson XII.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord: that walketh in his ways."—Ps. 128: 1.

REVIEW CHART.

Lesson Passages.	*Title.*	*Golden Text.*	*Lesson Plan.*
1.—1 Kings 1: 22-35.	Solomon Succeeding David.	And thou, Solomon, my son—1 Chron. 28: 9.	1. Adonijah claims the throne. 2. David declares Solomon king. 3. Solomon anointed king.
2.—1 Chron. 22: 6-19.	David's Charge to Solomon.	Arise, therefore—1 Chron. 22: 16.	1. Solomon's work. 2. David's preparation. 3. The princes' part.
3.—1 Kings 3: 5-15.	Solomon's Choice.	Wisdom is the principal thing—Prov. 4: 7.	1. The choice made. 2. The choice approved. 3. The choice exceeded.
4.—6: 1-14.	The Temple Built.	Mine house shall be called—Isa. 56: 7.	1. The building. 2. God's promise.
5.—8: 22-36.	The Temple Dedicated.	Behold, the heaven—1 Kings 8: 27.	1. God's promise recalled. 2. God's presence sought. 3. God's help invoked.
6.—10: 1-13.	The Wisdom of Solomon.	Behold, a greater than—Matt. 12: 42.	1. The queen's visit. 2. The queen's amazement. 3. The queen's presents.
7.—11: 4-13.	Solomon's Sin.	Keep thy heart with all—Prov. 4: 23.	1. Solomon turning from the Lord. 2. The Lord turning from Solomon.
8.—Prov. 1: 1-16.	Proverbs of Solomon.	The fear of the Lord—Prov. 1: 7.	1. The counsel of wisdom. 2. The counsel of folly.
9.—8: 1-17.	True Wisdom.	I love them that—Prov. 8: 17.	1. The call of wisdom. 2. The promise of wisdom. 3. The value of wisdom.
10.—23: 29-35.	Drunkenness.	Be not among winebibbers—Prov. 23: 20.	1. The deceitfulness of the cup. 2. The curse of the cup.
11.—Eccles. 2: 1-13.	Vanity of Worldly Pleasure.	Wisdom excelleth folly—Eccles. 2: 13.	1. The world's pleasures tested. 2. The result of the test.
12.—12: 1-14.	The Creator Remembered.	Remember now thy Creator—Eccles. 12: 1.	1. The time for remembering. 2. The reason for remembering.
13.—	Review.	Blessed is every one—Ps. 128: 1.	

REVIEW OUTLINE.

The Lord had chosen Solomon to be the successor of David on the throne of Israel. But nothwithstanding this fact, which was doubtless well known, Adonijah, the eldest living son of David, made an attempt to seize upon the throne and establish himself in the government. In this attempt he was supported by Joab, the commander of David's army, and by Abiathar, the high-priest. By the advice of Nathan the prophet, Bathsheba informed David of the treasonable plot. The aged king gave command for the immediate proclamation and anointing of Solomon as his associate and successor. Six months after this event David died, having first given a charge to the youthful Solomon and to the people with regard to the building of the temple. Solomon began his reign wisely. After the offering of solemn sacrifices at Gibeon, the Lord appeared to him and promised to give him whatever he desired. Solomon made choice of wisdom to rule well. The Lord was pleased with his request, and told him that, in addition to the fulfillment of his promise, he would bestow upon him great riches and honor, and also on condition of his obedience the further blessing of a long life.

The temple, for which so great preparation had been made, was begun in the fourth year of his reign, and completed in seven years, and then solemnly dedicated to the Lord, who declared his acceptance thereof by visible signs of his presence, in the cloud of smoke that filled the holy place and the fire from heaven that consumed the sacrifices. Solomon also strengthened his capital with new fortifications, and adorned it with other costly and magnificent buildings. Commercial treaties were formed with other nations, and new avenues of trade were opened. The treasures of many lands were poured into Jerusalem. The nation increased in wealth, and the fame of the prosperity and wisdom of Solomon was spread throughout the world. The queen of Sheba came from her far distant land to see all this glory, and declared that the half had not been told her.

But notwithstanding his wisdom, Solomon in his old age turned aside to folly. Under the influence of his heathen wives he first connived at the worship of their false gods, and afterwards became himself an idolater. Altars and shrines were erected in the holy city, and the offerings and incense and unholy rites of an impure and wicked worship were witnessed in the

very face of the temple of Jehovah. What a contrast to the youthful king seeking wisdom with morning sacrifices and midnight prayer at Gibeon! To the king thus debased, and prematurely old, there came a prophetic voice declaring the wrath of Jehovah upon him and his apostate kingdom—the doom softened, however, in two particulars for the sake of David, who, though long dead, still benefited the land by the effects of his piety. The Lord threatened that in punishment of this sin the kingdom should be divided at Solomon's death, and only a part of it given to his son as his successor. What was the effect of this threatened judgment is not recorded, but there is reason to believe that it brought him at last to repentance, and that the book of Ecclesiastes, written at the close of his life, is the fruit of his sincere penitence and of his returning loyalty to the God of his fathers. He died B. C. 1015, after a reign of forty years, at the age of about sixty years.

Three of the books of the Bible were written by Solomon, viz.: Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. Lessons VIII., IX., X. are taken from the first of these books, and Lessons XI., XII. from the second. All of these lessons are of special importance to the young. Let their teachings be firmly fixed in memory. The lessons are such as all of us should heed, both the solemn lessons of warning and the tender counsels of love.

INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS.

Who was the first king of Israel? How was he chosen to that office? How long did he reign? What were the principal events of his reign? Of what sin was he guilty? How was he punished? Give an account of his death.

Whom did the Lord choose to succeed Saul? From whom was David descended? When and by whom was he first anointed king? For what purpose was he first brought to the court of Saul? What was his first great exploit? Why did Saul become his enemy? What were the leading events in his life before the death of Saul?

By which of the tribes was David then made king? What city was his capital? How long did he reign in Hebron? Who was made king by the other tribes? How did his reign end? What did all the tribes then do? What city did David make his capital? How long did he reign in Jerusalem? What were the leading events of his reign? What part of the Bible did he write?

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSONS.

Lesson I. What is the title of the first lesson? Golden text? Lesson plan? Who now claimed the throne? Who favored his claims? Who informed David of the plot? What did David do? How did the people receive the proclamation?

II. What is the title of the second lesson? Golden text? Lesson plan? What did David charge Solomon to do? Why had David not built the temple himself? What had the Lord promised respecting Solomon? What had David provided? What charge did he give to the princes of Israel?

III. What is the title of the third lesson? Golden text? Lesson plan? How did the Lord appear to Solomon? What did he say to him? For what did Solomon ask? What did the Lord think of his request? What more did he promise him?

IV. What is the title of the fourth lesson? Golden text? Lesson plan? When did Solomon begin to build the temple? Of what parts did the building consist? Of what was *the house* built? What were its dimensions? How did the Lord encourage Solomon in his work?

V. What is the title of the fifth lesson? Golden text? Lesson plan? Who offered the prayer of dedication? With whom did he say God keeps covenant? How had God kept his promise to David? Whose prayers did Solomon ask God to hear? What blessings did he ask in answer to prayer?

VI. What is the title of the sixth lesson? Golden text? Lesson plan? For what purpose did the queen of Sheba visit Solomon? How many of her questions did Solomon answer? What did she say of what she saw and heard? What presents did she give to Solomon? What does the golden text say of Jesus?

VII. What is the title of the seventh lesson? Golden text? Lesson plan? What happened when Solomon was old? What did he worship? How did the Lord regard Solomon? What made Solomon's conduct the more wicked? What punishment did the Lord foretell?

VIII. What is the title of the eighth lesson? Golden text? Lesson plan? What is the beginning of wisdom? What is the counsel of wisdom? What must we do when tempted? What good advice does the wise man give? Why should we follow this advice?

IX. What is the title of the ninth lesson? Golden text? Lesson plan? Whom does wisdom call? What does she say? What does

she promise? What is the value of wisdom? What is wisdom's call to the young?

X. What is the title of the tenth lesson? Golden text? Lesson plan? What evils of drunkenness are mentioned in v. 29? What counsel is given in v. 31? What does it do at the last? How may we avoid the danger of drunkenness? What should we do to check the evils of intemperance?

XI. What is the title of the eleventh lesson? Golden text? Lesson plan? What did Solomon first test? From what did he next seek enjoyment? What other sources of worldly pleasure did he test? What source of worldly pleasure did he pronounce the greatest? Did it stand the test?

XII. What is the title of the twelfth lesson? Golden text? Lesson plan? With what counsel does this lesson begin? Why should we begin a life of piety in youth? What becomes of us at death? What is the whole duty of man? How is this duty enforced?

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS.

When was Solomon born? Where? What were the names of his father and mother? At what age did he become king? How long did he reign? In what year did he die? At what age? What was the great event of his reign? What the extent of his kingdom? What the general character of his reign? What books of the Bible did he write? What do we learn from his early years? What from his later years?

CATECHISM QUESTIONS.

98. What is prayer? 99. What rule hath God given for our direction in prayer? 100. What doth the preface of the Lord's prayer teach us? 101. What do we pray for in the first petition? 102. What do we pray for in the second petition? 103. What do we pray for in the third petition? 104. What do we pray for in the fourth petition? 105. What do we pray for in the fifth petition? 106. What do we pray for in the sixth petition? 107. What doth the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer teach us? 1. What is the chief end of man? 39. What is the duty which God requireth of man?

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING.

To Superintendents and Teachers.

1. Divide the time between class and general review.

2. Decide beforehand the precise plan of review and prepare accordingly.

3. The opening and closing worship should be somewhat shortened, to give ample time for this important review.

4. Bring out all the salient points in the last twelve lessons. But do not dwell upon all.

5. Select a few of the most practical points, and give your time and strength to impressing these. While all are important, some are more applicable and necessary than others.

Invariable Elements.

No matter how much we love variety, there are certain things in a Quarterly Review which are constant factors. Patiently go over them.

I. *The Twelve Titles.*

1. S. S. D.	5. T. T. D.	9. T. W.
2. D. C. to S.	6. T. W. of S.	10. D.
3. S. C.	7. S. S.	11. V. of W. P.
4. T. T. B.	8. P. of S.	12. T. C. R.

II. *The Twelve Golden Texts.*

1. And thou—	7. Keep thy heart—
2. Arise, therefore—	8. The fear of the—
3. Wisdom is the—	9. I love them that—
4. Mine house shall—	10. Be not among—
5. Behold, the—	11. Wisdom excelleth—
6. Behold, a greater—	12. Remember now—

If care has been taken the preceding Sabbath to announce the review, and to request all to be ready with titles and golden texts, this drill need not occupy over six minutes.

Special Features in this Review.

III. *Doings.* There are really eight of these lessons which are chiefly occupied with narratives of facts—I., II., III., IV., V., VI., VII. and XI. This latter is history as well as philosophy. Rapidly educe the main facts contained in these lessons. For example, ask who tried to usurp the throne of David? How was Solomon brought to the throne? Where did Jehovah appear to Solomon? What did he offer Solomon? What did Solomon ask? Get thus the backbone of historic facts for your review. If you find the class cannot recall them, then picture the different scenes in words, *e. g.*, Solomon anointed at Gihon, Solomon's dream at Gibeon, the building of the temple, etc.

IV. *Four Beacon Lights of Warning.*

What is a beacon? A fire lighted on a height as a signal to sailors or to give alarm. There are four of these twelve lessons which give alarm of danger. Which are they? Look down the list of titles and see if you can discover those containing warnings against sins. Lesson VII.—Solomon's Sin. VIII.—Proverbs of Solomon. X.—Drunkenness. XI.—Vanity of

Worldly Pleasure. Take up each of these, *e. g.*, What is the warning from Solomon's sin? Against backsliding. What things made Solomon's sin exceeding sinful? Against what sins did Lesson VIII. guard us? Bad company, violent crimes, enticements of sinners. Against what did Lesson X. warn us? Drunkenness, looking on wine. Against what were we warned in Lesson XI.? Against making pleasures and amusements the great end of life, against trying to be happy without God.

V. *Eight Guiding Stars of Encouragement.*

Stars help us when journeying on moonless nights. There are eight of these lessons which shine as lights in a dark place. Which of these twelve lessons contain encouragement?

1. Lesson I. What is there in this encouraging for a young man or woman? God will not allow your enemies to defeat his plan concerning you. God has designs of good for you in life. All your foes cannot defeat you.

2. Lesson II. Have your class recite the title, then ask, What is there here of good cheer? God has a work for *you* to do, just as he had for Solomon in *building the temple.*

3. Lesson III. Title? What did Solomon choose? How did Jehovah exceed his prayer? What encouragement to prayer is there here for us? Eph. 3 : 20. What encouragement is here for us to ask wisdom? James 1 : 5.

4. Lesson IV. Title? What encouragement here for us? Build up your bodies and your souls for Christ's eternal temple.

5. Lesson V. Title? Encouragement? To dedicate our souls and bodies to Christ as his living temples.

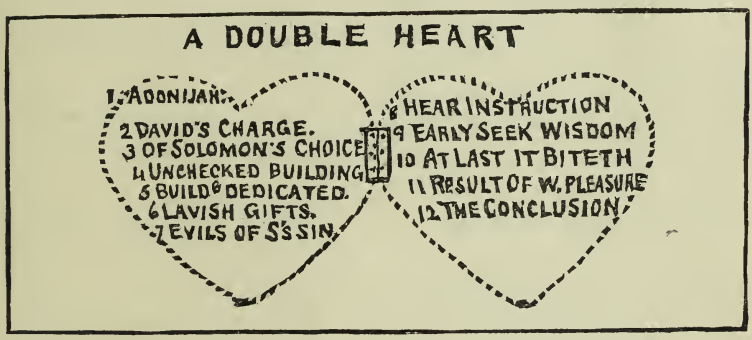
6. Lesson VI. Title? Encouragement? Seek Christ, who is wiser, greater than Solomon.

7. Lesson IX. Title? Encouragement? Jesus will fill you with blessings.

8. Lesson XII. Title? Encouragement? Remember Jesus while you are young.

Here is your last opportunity to win your scholars to Christ in 1884. Could you have a better lesson? Could you ask greater promises than Christ gives you? Do not let any desire to make a brilliant review prevent you from doing all that in you lies to lead your scholars to decide for Jesus.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BLACKBOARD.



Design for Blackboard Review for Fourth Quarter.—Draw the dotted lines for the hearts, faintly. Print in plain block letters the acrostic, *a double heart*, as in cut. The twelve lessons may be used to teach one new lesson of the utter failure of Solomon's attempt to combine and comfortably carry one heart for the Church and one for the world. Draw amid the closing words a heavy line over the dotted line and the hinge.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE FOLKS.

The Quarter's work is so constantly connected with Solomon, that the review is like looking at pictures in his life. I suggest a great book, say two feet square, containing twelve pages. Pin this to the board in such a manner that you can turn the leaves.

Let the first page be *Blue.* God keeps his covenant with David and sets Solomon on the throne. Hold up a brown paper crown, and ask who tried to get the kingdom away from Solomon, and found that his crown was as worthless as that bit of paper. Who is the children's King?

Page 2—*Gold color.* Solomon has come to the kingdom. David, his father, is giving him work to do. What is it? What has your Heavenly Father given you to do?

Page 3—*Blue.* It is the promise-lesson,

"Ask what I shall give thee?" said the Lord. What did Solomon ask? What did he get? What have your scholars asked of the King to-day?

Page 4—*Yellow.* No other color fitly suggests the richly adorned temple. This is the work-lesson. Solomon did as God had commanded. What are the children doing? How can they give their gold to God? What will he count as jewels by-and-bye?

Page 5—*Red.* It is the prayer-lesson. And as there would have been no place of prayer for us, but for the blood of Jesus, red fitly symbolizes it. Solomon dedicated his house to God. To whom are the human houses in which the children live dedicated?

Page 6—*Royal Purple.* Gold and gems and crowns! A king and a queen! How astonished is the queen visitor at the glory everywhere. She has traveled far to see it. She brings gifts to the king. "Behold, a greater than Solomon is here!" Do we think about him? What shall we give him?

Page 7—*Black.* Oh, the dreadful story! Solomon building altars for heathen gods! How came he to be guilty of so great a sin? Are there any idols worshiped now? Do little people ever bow down to them?

Page 8—*White.* The way of wisdom. It is plainly pointed out. It is contrasted with that black way over which Solomon had been walking. Whose feet are set in this way to-day? Can it be that any of your children are following in that other path?

Page 9—*White* again, and dotted over with stars. They stand for those whom God has called early, and who have heard his voice and are journeying in the right path. Solomon reminds the children how early in life they are called. "She crieth at the gates," he says. How many calls have your scholars had? Could you put a star for any of them?

Page 10—*Black.* Solomon the wise man tells the story of sorrow and woe and wounds. A dreadful road with a dreadful end! "No drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of heaven." Who would dare to set foot on such a dangerous road as that?

Page 11—*Gold color*, but all dotted over with great black spots. Such a chance as Solomon had! A king, and very wise, yet he tried foolish things. Six foolish things represented by these black spots. He was seeking happiness, and he covered his life over with black in search of it, because he chose "vain things." What have your scholars chosen?

Page 12—*Grey.* About an old, feeble, trembling man. Just one word printed on the page:

"REMEMBER."

It is Solomon's last word to the children. Remember his life, his bright beginning, his sorrowful fall, his prayers, his follies, and learn from them this, "Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." What have your scholars learned from these leaves from Solomon's life?

LARGE WORDS AND SMALL.

Big words, in the mouth of either preacher or teacher, are not a sure proof of strength or wisdom. The short, sharp, plain words are full of force and of pith. It will not hurt our superintendents and teachers to think this thing over, and to note how much can be said in short and well-known words. The following lines, written entirely in words of one syllable, by that great scholar and writer, J. A. Alexander, D.D., will give a hint as to what may be said without the use of long or large words:

"Think not that strength lies in the big round word,
Or that the brief and plain must needs be weak.
To whom can this be true who once has heard
The cry for help, the tongue that all men speak,
When want, or woe, or fear is at the throat
So that each word gasped out is like a shriek
Pressed from the sore heart, or a strange, wild note
Sung by some fay or fiend? There is a strength
Which dies if stretched too far or spun too fine,
Which has more height than breadth, more depth than length.
Let but this force of thought and speech be mine,
And he that will may take the sleek, fat phrase,
Which glows and burns not, though it gleam and shine;
Light, but not heat—a flash without a blaze.

"Nor is it mere strength that the short word boasts;
It serves of more than fight or storm to tell—
The roar of waves that dash the rock-bound coasts,
The crash of tall trees when the wild winds swell,
The roar of guns, the groans of men that die
On blood-stained fields. It has a voice, as well,
For them that far-off on their sick beds lie,
For them that weep, for them that mourn the dead,
For them that laugh and dance and clasp the hand.
To joy's quick step, as well as grief's low tread,
The sweet, plain words we learn at first keep time,
And, though the theme be sad, or gay, or grand,
With each, with all, these may be made to chime
In thought, or speech, or song, or prose, or rhyme."

REVIEW EXERCISE.*

Usual signal for silence.

Reading of part of Psalm 72.

Superintendent.—Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son.

Teachers.—He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment.

Pastor.—The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness.

School.—He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor.

Boys.—They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations.

Girls.—He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers *that* water the earth.

School.—In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth.

Pastor.—He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.

Supt.—They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust.

Associate Supt.—The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.

All.—Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him.

Boys.—For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and *him* that hath no helper.

Girls.—He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy.

Supt.—He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight.

All.—And he shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: prayer also shall be made for him continually; *and* daily shall he be praised.

Singing.—*Westminster S. S. Hymnal*, No. 7:

All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem
And crown him Lord of all!

Oh that, with yonder sacred throng,
We at his feet may fall!
We'll join the everlasting song,
And crown him Lord of all!

Prayer: Closing with Lord's Prayer.

Recitation of Ten Commandments.

Singing.—*Westminster S. S. Hymnal*, No. 5:

Praise to thee, thou great Creator!
Praise be thine from every tongue;
Join, my soul, with every creature,
Join the universal song.
Father, source of all compassion,
Pure, unbounded grace is thine;
Hail the God of our salvation,
Praise him for his love divine.

REVIEW QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

LESSON I. **Superintendent.**—What did Nathan ask David?

School.—My lord, O king, hast thou said, Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne?

Supt.—What did David say to Bath-sheba?

School.—Even as I sware unto thee by the Lord God of Israel, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead; even so will I certainly do this day.

II. **Supt.**—What charge did David give to Solomon?

School.—Now, my son, the Lord be with thee; and prosper thou, and build the house of the Lord thy God as he hath said of thee.

III. **Supt.**—What did the Lord say to Solomon in Gibeon?

School.—Ask what I shall give thee.

Supt.—What was Solomon's request?

School.—Give thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?

IV. **Supt.**—What were the dimensions of Solomon's temple?

School.—The length thereof was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty cubits, and the height thereof thirty cubits.

Supt.—Of what was it built?

School.—The house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither; so that there was neither hammer nor axe, nor any tool of iron, heard in the house while it was building.

Singing.—*Westminster S. S. Hymnal*, No. 209:

Whom have I in heaven above?
Only thee, my Saviour;
Whom have I on earth to love?
Only thee, my Saviour.
Who my wounded heart can heal,
Who my every sorrow feel,
Who the light of joy reveal?
Only thou, my Saviour.

Who has led me all my days?
Only thou, my Saviour;
Who deserves my highest praise?
Only thou, my Saviour.
In my weakness who is strong,
Who has loved and loved me long,
Who should claim my noblest song?
Only thou, my Saviour.

V. **Supt.**—How did Solomon begin the prayer of dedication?

School.—Lord God of Israel, there is no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart.

VI. **Supt.**—What did the queen of Sheba say of the wealth and wisdom of Solomon?

School.—Behold the half was not told me;

* Extra copies of this Review Exercise furnished, on application to the Board, at 50 cents a hundred.

thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard.

Supt.—How did she bless the God of Israel?

School.—Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighteth in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the Lord loveth Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice.

VII. **Supt.**—What happened when Solomon was old?

School.—His wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God.

Supt.—What punishment did the Lord threaten?

School.—I will surely rend the kingdom from thee and give it to thy servant.

VIII. **Supt.**—What wise counsel does Solomon give?

School.—My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother: for they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.

Singing.—*Westminster S. S. Hymnal*, No. 25:

God eternal, Lord of all,
Lowly at thy feet we fall;
All the world doth worship thee:
We amidst the throng would be.
All the holy angels cry,
Hail, thrice holy God most high!
Lord of all the heav'nly powers,
Be the same loud anthem ours.

Martyrs, in a noble host,
Of thy cross are heard to boast;
Since so bright the crown they wear,
We with them thy cross would bear.
All thy Church, in heaven and earth,
Jesus, hail thy spotless birth:
Seated on the judgment-throne,
Number us among thine own.

IX. **Supt.**—What is the value of wisdom?

School.—Wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

X. **Supt.**—Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow? Who hath babbling? Who hath wounds without cause? Who hath redness of eyes?

School.—They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.

Supt.—What counsel and warning are given?

School.—Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.

Singing.—*Westminster S. S. Hymnal*, No. 126:

Who hath sorrow? Who hath woe?
Who hath babbling? Who hath strife?
Who to swift destruction go,
Turning from the path of life?

REF.—Who hath sorrow? who hath woe?
Who tarry long at the wine.
Who hath sorrow? Who hath woe?
They that tarry long at wine.

THE LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS.

XI. **Supt.**—What did Solomon say after he had tested the value of worldly pleasure?

School.—I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labor that I had labored to do; and behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit.

XII. **Supt.**—With what counsel does this lesson begin?

School.—Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.

Supt.—How does the lesson close?

School.—Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

Singing.—*Westminster S. S. Hymnal*, No. 91:

Jesus is tenderly calling thee home—
Calling to-day, calling to-day;
Why from the sunshine of love wilt thou roam
Farther and farther away?

REF.—Calling to-day, calling to-day,
Calling, calling to-day, to-day,
Calling, calling to-day, to-day,
Jesus is calling, is tenderly calling to-day.

Jesus is calling the weary to rest—
Calling to-day, calling to-day;
Bring him thy burden and thou shalt be blest:
He will not turn thee away.—REF.

Review-drill on Titles, Golden Texts, Lesson Plans, etc.

Singing.—*Westminster S. S. Hymnal*, No. 237:

There is a land of pure delight
Where saints immortal reign;
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain.

REF.—Oh, the land, the lovely land—
The land o'er Jordan's foam:
On the golden strand
Wait the happy, happy band
To welcome the ransomed home.

Could we but climb where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er,—
Not Jordan's stream nor death's cold flood
Should fright us from the shore.—REF.

Secretary's and Librarian's Distributions.

CLOSING SENTENCES.

Remainder of Psalm 72.

Pastor.—There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and *they* of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.

Supt.—His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and *men* shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed.

Teachers.—Blessed *be* the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things.

All.—And blessed *be* his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled *with* his glory; Amen, and Amen.

— S. R. Kyle —

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA
3 0112 104280315